

School Safety Advisory Committee Meeting

Oct 22nd, 2018 from 5:00-6:40pm

Absent: Leah Agne, Travis Voshell, Anita Gerling, Ginny Naso, Tyson Landgard

Threat Assessment Presentation by Peter Berkson and Eli Hotchkin

Mandate after Virginia Tech for universities and colleges to implement threat assessment teams.

Now these mandates have expanded to K-12 education, especially after Parkland, FL shooting.

Places where violence have occurred almost 70% are on social media first before they actually happen.

Threat assessment and management definition: systematic and evidence-based process of

- Identifying individuals whose behaviors indicates a capacity for committing violence
- Investigate and gather information to assess whether such individuals pose a real threat
- The subsequent management of such threat (something this is the most difficult, complex, and nuanced part of the process; vitally important)

Pathway to workplace and campus targeted or intended violence:

- People are planful – most hard acts of violence are planned, it is not that people just snapped.
- Escalation process starts with a grievance – violent ideation – research and planning the attack – pre-attack preparation – probing and breaches – and attacks.
- The idea of threat assessment is to intervene as soon as possible and to de-escalate.

Important considerations for doing threat assessment in a K-12 context

1. People that go through this stage do not have capacity or support to get off their grievance and help them not have the grievance escalate. Interventions
2. People usually tell someone that they are going to commit an act, and so it is important to take every threat seriously because many times people who know about it don't report it.
3. Importance of when someone is going through grievance and might be escalating – treat the person with respect and dignity because this can be the last domino that makes the person more likely to continue to escalate.

What do threat assessment teams do?

- When the threat assessment team is brought in, they take a balanced approach for case intakes. They will do full investigation before determining to take any action. Will always talk with the person who brought the team in before taking action.
- The team then determines whether to have direct (law enforcement, mental health commitment, administrative action) or indirect interventions (3rd party monitor, refer to resources, background check).
- No easy answer to how to prevent hard acts of violence
- Need violence prevention efforts that include threat assessment (both by individuals in the setting but also by professionals).
- Threat assessment and management is not predictive but proactive

Government Mandates

Lots of different levels of government have mandates. Prefers federal because most evidence-based. Some states have mandates as well.

Final report of the Safe Schools Initiative (2002)

Highlights: acts done by current students, not impulsive acts, other people knew about the attack, most attackers engaged in some behavior that caused concern or indicated a need for help, most attacks stopped by non-law enforcement efforts, and most acts done as individuals.

Enhancing school safety report (2018)

Step-by-step process: establish multi-disciplinary threat assessment team, define behaviors, establish and provide training on a central reporting system... plus more steps.

Considerations from same report (2018)

- Foster a climate of respect and trust
- Build relationships
- Promote communication
- Identifying concerning behaviors
- Maintain a threat assessment team
- Reinforce clear policies and procedures
- Provide resources to manage concerning students
- Promote information sharing between the school and community stakeholders
- Liaison with law enforcement
- Require consistent training among stakeholders

HR 4909 Stop School Violence Act includes school threat assessment teams

HR 664 Threat Assessment Prevention Acts (not school-specific)

Ideas for schools and districts moving forward now

- Figure out general security and make sure you have plans, then you can add threat assessment.
- Have threat assessment team that includes principal, counselor, mental health support, and meet regularly to talk about concerns and bring in professional occasionally.
- Have response and team that is mediated to the kinds of threats that you have and works collaboratively with counselors and mental/emotional health support to support individuals over time.

Sandy Hook Promise Presentation

Some basic points:

- The programs are free, training is available but schools can also lead their own.
- Sees a lot of overlap with the threat assessment team presentation and the Sandy Hook approach – thinks they could work together.
- These programs are well-targeted because statistics show that most students tell someone about the acts of violence and show signs of distress.
- These programs are also evidence-based with some of the most well-known school culture and climate work who helped build the programs.

Showed video of program which has three parts: part 1 is the know the signs programs; part 2 is the engage and educate the public; and part 3 is legislation piece.

Presentation is focused on the know the signs programs

The Sandy Hook Promise(SHP)is not just about gun violence – it is about assessing bullying and isolation i.e. school culture and climate more generally.

See handout with facts about gun violence

Showed Evan video and gave See Know the Signs handout within info on the different programs in this piece of SHP.

Say something is now the tip line for ICCSD. There is a handout that has the curriculum that says how to implement it. One important point to remember is that the students need to be trained how to use it appropriately. Program can be student-led or teacher-led if that is something a school wants to do. It is designed for 6th-12th grade students.

Start with Hello is another program – specifically directed at teaching kids who are feeling isolated. An example is the human bingo and role playing with isolated and bullying students.

Warning signs handout is also available

Suicide Prevention Program also available – requires 4 hour trainings for guidance counselors

Has list of references of schools and districts that have done the programs, and testimonials as well.

First two programs are meant to be more self-led and the second two require training. SHP brings trainers out for free.

Districts can do all 4 or just 1 at a time.

Discussion

Principals work as threat assessment team now by default but without any training or evidence-based practices to follow.

This year just put up the Say Something signs and didn't train kids on what to look for.

SRO discussion seems like it brought up issues of threat assessment and conflict resolution and it seems like these approaches would fit those goals and not have some of the downsides.

Gathering resources... preparing Hanover reports and UI reports on research.