

Behavioral Threat Assessment

TEAM TRAINING EXERCISE

What is Behavioral Threat Assessment?

Behavioral Threat Assessment (BTA) is a fact-based, systematic process designed to identify, inquire, assess, and manage potentially dangerous or violent situations. BTA is crafted to gather a holistic picture of an individual that may be on a pathway to violence and to design a plan to mitigate harm and intervene effectively.

What Behavioral Threat Assessment is Not.

- Behavioral Threat Assessment is NOT a simple checklist of warning signs and red flags.
- Behavioral Threat Assessment is NOT criminally profiling individuals or conducting psychoanalysis.
- Behavioral Threat Assessment is NOT used to label students as trouble makers.
- Behavioral Threat Assessment is NOT used as a means to remove students from school systems.
- Behavioral Threat Assessment is NOT used to find the next school shooter.

Purpose of Exercise

The purpose of this exercise activity is to prepare Behavior Threat Assessment (BTA) team members to; effectively perform their individual role and responsibilities, collaborate as a member of the team, and consider information that culminates in a decision.

RESOURCES



Visit schoolsafety.maryland.gov, go to "Resources", then "Training & Exercise".



CONTACT INFO



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Date: _____

Exercise Facilitator: _____

Team Member & Role: _____

Scenario

FAMILY TIES

Part 1

A 9th-grade English teacher gives a creative writing assignment asking students in the class to list five things that make them different from others. Larry completes the assignment, and when he turns in his work, his teacher is concerned when she reads the following:
Five things that make me different- 1) My knowledge of fireworks, 2) My knowledge of homemade explosive devices, 3) Bombs and how they are constructed, 4) Emergency Response Operations 5) My knowledge of combat first aid.

The teacher takes the assignment to the school counselor, and the Principal is notified.

BACKGROUND:

- Straight A student
- No behavioral/mental health issues previously identified
- Appears outwardly very social with friends and peers
- Lives in a single-family home with his mother
- Mother is a Police Officer assigned to the Explosive and Other Devices Unit

Part 2

A meeting between school administrators and the mother occurs. During the meeting, it is revealed that when mom is at work Larry has been spending a lot of time with his uncle, who is an anti-government extremist. The mother has confiscated from Larry pamphlets in support of anti-government ideology and extremist activity. Two weeks prior, Mom noticed that several cleaning supplies were missing, and when cleaning his room, she found a stockpile of cleaning supplies in his closet in addition to a copy of the Anarchist Cookbook. Several pages in the book were marked, including how to make homemade explosive devices from household materials. The mother also found a journal with a sketch of his school, marking exits, entryways, and the time 12:06 p.m. circled in the top right corner of a page. She also stated that the sketch had classroom numbers marked with a red "X".



Start Here

IDEATION	Notes, information, and general considerations
Is there a real or perceived grievance? If so, identify the grievance.	
Is there a history or pattern with violence?	
Does a risk of danger exist?	
Is the individual expressing thoughts or fantasies considering violence to address their grievance?	

***NOTE: Many people have occasional or fleeting thoughts of violence but do not act, we should still be alert of the possibility and that the individual may be struggling with a grievance of some sort.**

Decision:

PLANNING	Notes, information, and general considerations
Are there details revealed; i.e. who, what, when?	
Expressions referenced in timing, location, targets, means, etc.?	
Research and references being relayed on how?	
Has the individual begun obtaining information on materials and weapons?	

***NOTE: Research and references alone do not constitute that an individual is planning an attack.**

Decision:



PREPARATION	Notes, information, and general considerations
Are steps being taken to execute the acts of violence?	
Has the individual made attempts to obtain materials, clothing, tools to fulfill their plans?	
Has the individual attempted dry runs or to alter plans to overcome potential obstacles or challenges that would prevent them from carrying out their plan?	
Have boundaries or restricted areas been tested?	

***NOTE: This stage is beyond just acquiring weapons, this stage involves attempts to prepare for the violent act.**

Decision:

IMPLEMENTATION	Notes, information, and general considerations
What clues, facts, indicators are present that the threat is imminent?	
What indicators are present that the individual has moved from Ideation to Implementation?	
What resources and partners are readily available?	
What resources are available to stop the act of violence?	

***NOTE: This step may be expedited by a sense of desperation, or influences of others encouraging escalation through social media or direct communication.**

Final Conclusion	Case Manager
	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 90%; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> 30 day review date: _____

