

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



Drew Turner, Regional Prevention and Intervention Specialist drew.turner@maryland.gov



Date: _____

Exercise Facilitator: _____

Team Member & Role: _____

Scenario

WAR GAMES

Jerry is a 15-year-old student. When completing art assignments, a majority of his work consists of war scenarios and military tanks. While he has a strong social media following from other students, he does not have a lot of friends and is described by other as socially awkward. Students have reported that all of his posts are war related, consisting of large caliber guns, rifles, missiles, bombs, and death. Since the war with Ukraine, Jerry has become more vocal in school and on his social media claiming that he 'has to do something.' Russian students at the school have become fearful and uncomfortable because of how vocal Jerry has become about the war in Ukraine.

BACKGROUND:

- Two Parent home; Father is Police Officer
- Has plans to become a tank operator in the military
- Subscribes to a European news outlet
- Tank enthusiast
- Identified as high functioning autism



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
	30 day review date: _____

