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THREE RIVERS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM TRAINING




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THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM (“TAT”)

REASONS FOR TEAMS

- Assembles relevant skills at one table
- Allows specialized training
- Concentrates and magnifies experience level
- Increases case finding
- Divides labor
- Improves management plans and follow-up



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CRITICAL STEPS

1. Sponsorship
2. Team Structure
3. Team Process
4. Training



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STEP 1

SPONSORSHIP



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OBTAIN SPONSORSHIP

- Need sponsorship
- Need commitment from HR, Security, EAP (if internal), Legal
- Need cooperation from Benefits, Workers' Compensation, Medical/Nursing, Managers, Supervisors



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STEP 2

TEAM STRUCTURE



Disciplines

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- Management designee
- Human Resources
- Clinical Staff
- Security
- EAP provider
- Labor Relations or Attorney General Office
- Union official, as appropriate



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Core Members

- Management designee
- HR
- Clinical Staff
- State Police/Security
- EAP Provider
- Office of Labor Relations
- Union Official



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Functional Team Members

- Core Members
- As Necessary



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Core Members

- HR
- EAP Provider
- Office of Labor Relations
- Management designee



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As Necessary

Risk Management

- Internal Security
- Legal Counsel
- Affirmative Action



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Desired Expertise

- Personality
- Psychopathology
- Criminal Investigation
- Interviewing
- Criminal Behavior
- Violence, including domestic violence
- Dangerousness
- Employment Law



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Desired Expertise

- School culture, policy, and organization
- The subject's culture
- Interacting with dangerous people
- Facility security
- Personal security
- Compensation
- Benefits
- Workers' Compensation



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Attributes

- Flexibility
- Creativity
- Empathy
- Logical decision-making
- Calm under stressful condition



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Attributes

- Discreet
- People skills
- Team Players
- Accuracy
- Ability to communicate
- Available

Tip

Direct supervisor of threatened person should never be on team if there is a concern that he/she:

- May be friend or ally of the person who is making the threat
- May leak information
- May become victim
- May be too close to situation




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Tip

Victim should never be on the team because

- Changes team focus from all employees to one employee
- Not objective and will bias team
- May become adversarial in future and should not have access to team deliberations



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Tip



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Teams should be as stable as possible

- Decreases training costs
- Preserves evidence
- Preserves coordination and follow-up
- Require 3-5 year commitment
- Avoid most mobile people



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ROLES AND TASKS



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Team Roles

Identifying the potential for violence

- Trends analysis

Prevention

- Procedures
- Recommend/Implement Training
- Internal Communications
- Inspections
- Surveys



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Team Roles

Responding to Acts of Violence

- Investigation and Intervention
- Response Planning and Corrective Actions

Threat Assessment Team Review

- Agency Response
- Effectiveness of Emergency Procedures
- Outside Responders
- Prevention Strategies
- Organizational Culture
- Supervisory and management issues



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Team Tasks

- Obtain training for the team
- Obtain training for HR and Security organizations
- Plan manager/supervisor training
- Evolve the process
- Request investigations
- Case management
- Advise intervention plans
- Case follow-up



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Team Tasks

- Record-keeping
- Statistics and trend analysis
- Policy recommendations
- Survey planning
- Program evaluation/quality assurance
- Training updates



STEP 3

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DEVISE TEAM PROCESSES



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Communications

INPUT CHANNELS:

- Receiving reports
- Preserving multiple entry points
- The “hot-line” question
- Need for case definition



Internal Team Communications

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- Calling/Email tree
- Scheduled meetings
- Communications between meetings
- Network access to database
- Records of input data, decisions, and follow-up



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Case Management Process

- Intake procedures
- Triage/screening
- Assemble file
- Interviews
- Special investigation
- Develop plan
- Implement plan
- Follow-up



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Documentation and Records

- Decide who will keep the records
- Decide who will have access to the records
- Document intake data
- Collect existing documents
- Document interviews
- Document special investigation
- Document all new information



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Documentation and Records

- Record the process and results of committee decisions
- Document plan
- Document implementation and response
- Document follow-up
- Keep running case summary
- Collect standardized statistical data



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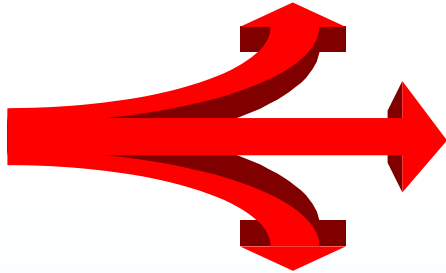
THREAT ASSESSMENT PROCESS



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3 Goals of a Threat Assessment

1. Identify potential perpetrator
2. Evaluate risks posed by a given individual
3. Manage both the individual and the risk posed to employees



Four Essential Areas of Inquiry

- Facts of the situation that initially brought attention
- Identifiers
- Background Information
- Current life situation and circumstances



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Conducting a School Threat Assessment

- The facts that drew attention to the student, the situation, and possibly the targets.
- Information about the student.
 - Identifying information
 - Background information
 - Current life information
- Information about “attack-related” behaviors



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Conducting a School Threat Assessment

- **Motives**
- **Target Selection**
 - School Information
 - Collateral School Interviews
 - Parent/Guardian Interview
 - Interviews with the Student of Concern
 - Potential Target Interview
 - What are the Student's Motive(s) and goals?



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Conducting a School Threat Assessment (Cont.)

- Have there been any communications suggesting ideas or intent to attack?
- Has the student engaged in attack-related behaviors?
- Does the student have the capacity to carry out an act of targeted violence?
- Is the student experiencing hopelessness, desperation and/or despair?



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Conducting a School Threat Assessment (Cont.)

- Does the student have a trusting relationship with at least one responsible adult?
- Does the student see violence as acceptable or desirable or the only way to solve problems?
- Is the student's words and "story" consistent with his or her actions?
- Are other people concerned about the student's potential for violence?
- What circumstances might affect the likelihood of an attack?

Assessment Grid

<h2>Escalating Aggression</h2>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One or two indirect threats or intimidating actions ▪ Intimidating style, at least occasionally ▪ One or two angry outbursts/ hostile style ▪ One or two incidents of perceived harassment ▪ Unacceptable physical actions short of body contact or property damage (e.g., door slamming, throwing small objects) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Two or more threats with increasing specificity ▪ Conscious intimidation or repeated bullying; impulsive ▪ Repeated angry outbursts/overt angry style, inappropriate to context ▪ Repeated pattern of harassment ▪ Intentional bumping or restricting movement of another person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clear, direct, multiple threats; ultimatums – especially to authority; evidence of a violent plan ▪ Intense undissipated anger ▪ Repeated fear-inducing boundary crossing or seeking direct contact; stalking; violating physical security protocols with malicious intent ▪ Grabbing, grappling, striking, hitting, slapping, or clearly using harmful force
<h2>Weapons Involvement</h2>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Firearm in home ▪ Long term, sanctioned use (e.g., hunting, target shooting, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Firearm in vehicle ▪ Increased training without known reason (e.g., not hunting season, competition approaching, etc.) ▪ Emotionally stimulated by the use of a weapon for any purpose ▪ Acquire new weapons or improve weapon(s) ▪ Inappropriate display not directed toward others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Carries firearm on person outside of home ▪ Escalated practice or training in association with emotional release or issue preoccupation ▪ Intense preoccupation with or repeated comments on violent use of weapons ▪ Use of display of any weapon to intimidate or harm

Assessment Grid

<h2>Negative Mental Status</h2>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tendencies toward depression, agitation, or “hyper” behavior ▪ Tendencies toward suspiciousness, blaming others, jealousy or defensiveness ▪ Low/moderate substance use without links to violence related behaviors ▪ Anger, some felt entitlement or humiliation over any negative employment action or relationship setback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Depressed, mood swings, “hyper”, or agitated ▪ Paranoid thinking, bizarre views, defensiveness, blaming others, hostile attitude; hostile jealousy ▪ Substance abuse, especially amphetamine, cocaine, or alcohol ▪ Unremorseful but compliant to avoid punishment (e.g. jail) ▪ Mental preoccupation, persistent anger, entitlement, or humiliation over any negative employment action or relationship setback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Depression unrelenting or with notable anger, high agitation or wide mood swings ▪ High paranoia; homicidal/suicidal thoughts; psychotic violent thoughts ▪ Substance abuse drives or exacerbates aggression/violence, or verified amphetamine or cocaine dependence ▪ Obsession & strong feelings of anger, injustice, or humiliation over any negative employment action or relationship setback; feels desperate, trapped
<h2>Negative Employment Status</h2>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Possible discipline, negative performance review or termination, non-violence related ▪ Bypassed for raise, promotion, recognition, or opportunity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recent/pending disciplinary action or negative review ▪ Probable/pending termination or demotion, reinstatement unlikely ▪ Unstable employment in last year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Separation/termination inevitable ▪ Terminated & all legal & other resources for reinstatement or compensation exhausted & rules against subject
<h2>Personal Stressors</h2>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mild disruption in primary intimate relationship ▪ Mild financial problems ▪ Minor legal issues ▪ Minor health problems ▪ Inconsistent support system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Primary relationship disruption (birth, separation, betrayal) ▪ Significant financial pressures – to increase with job loss ▪ Legal problems ▪ Demoralizing health problems ▪ No or marginal support system ▪ Negative coping style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recent relationship loss (death, divorce, betrayal, abandonment) ▪ Serious financial crisis ▪ Serious legal problems ▪ Serious health problems ▪ No support system ▪ Destructive coping style ▪ Target of high provocation by associates or intimates

Assessment Grid

History of Violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Early life problems at home/school ▪ Pattern of mildly conflictual work relationships in past ▪ Behavior related job turnovers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Victim or witness to family violence as child or adolescent ▪ History/pattern of litigiousness ▪ Arrests/convictions, non-violence ▪ History of serious work conflicts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has violated protective orders ▪ Arrests/convictions for violence ▪ Credible evidence of violent history ▪ Failed parole/probation programs ▪ Highly isolated; “loner” style
Buffers & Conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evidence of respect or restraint shown ▪ Responded favorably to limit setting, especially recently ▪ Wants to avoid negative consequences for threatening behavior (e.g. jail, legal actions) ▪ Genuine remorse for scaring people ▪ Genuine understanding that violence or threats is not an acceptable course of action ▪ Lack of inappropriate emotional associations or attachment to weapons ▪ Appropriate seeking of legal help or other guidance with issue ▪ Wants to genuinely negotiate or appropriately resolve differences ▪ Job/relationship not essential to self-worth or survival strategy ▪ Engages in planning for future ▪ Adequate coping responses ▪ Positive family/personal relationships; good support system ▪ Religious beliefs prohibit violence, provide solace ▪ No financial, health, or legal problems 		
Organizational Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employee(s) fear of violence ▪ Supervisory/management personal fear of violence ▪ Highly vulnerable specific target(s) of serious harassment/stalking/predatory searching ▪ Fear-induced employee(s) performance disruption, job avoidance/absenteeism 		
Organizational Influences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Heavy workload, high stress environment ▪ Generally adversarial/conflictual/mistrustful work environment ▪ Counterproductive employee attempts to intervene/prevent violence ▪ Co-worker or supervisor provocation of subject ▪ Co-worker (or others) support of or encouragement of violent course of action ▪ Management lack of knowledge of workplace violence dynamics or warning signs ▪ Management denial or minimization of potential seriousness of situation ▪ Management lack of crisis management experience/skills/tolerance level ▪ Management active negative case management responses ▪ Management resistance to accepting appropriate/specialized assistance ▪ Management unavailability/remoteness from location of situation/key individuals 		

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