



# Behavioral Threat Management Protocol: Secret Service Themes

Print Form

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**Special Instructions:** Gather a variety of information from diverse sources. The Behavioral Threat Assessment (BTA) team should then review and assess the available information using the following key themes and questions. Use the information related to these themes and questions to determine the seriousness of the threat or behaviors and the elements of an appropriate action and support plan best suited to this student and situation. Attach this completed form to the Behavioral Threat Assessment (BTA) Documentation Form. For consultation at any time please contact your Site Supervisor or the Assistant Superintendent of Instruction. **This form must be typed.**

## 1. What seems to be the student's motive(s) and goal(s)?

- a. What motivated the student to make the statements or take the actions that cause him/her to come to attention?
- b. Does the situation or circumstance that led to these statements/actions still exist?
- c. Does the student have a grievance or grudge? Against whom or what?
- d. How far does the student seem willing to go to achieve his/her goal(s)?
- e. What efforts have been made to resolve the problem and what has been the result? Does the potential attacker feel that any part of the problem is resolved or see any alternative?

## 2. Have there been any concerning, unusual, or threatening communications?

- a. What, if anything, has the student communicated to someone else (targets, friends, other students, teachers, family, others) or written (in a diary, journal, class assignments/tests, text messages, photo/video sharing sites, or other social media) concerning his/her ideas and/or intent?
- b. Do any communications suggest grievances, warnings, ideas, or intent to attack?

## 3. Has the subject shown inappropriate interest in any of the following:

- a. School attacks or school attackers?
- b. Firearms or other weapons of any kind (including recent acquisition of any relevant weapon)?
- c. Other incidents of mass violence (terrorism, workplace violence, mass murderers)?

**4. Does the student have access to weapons?**

a. Does the student have access to firearms, other weapons, or other means to carry out an attack (such as explosives, incendiary devices, bladed weapons, etc.)? This can be at home, from relatives, friends, etc.

b. Are home firearms or weapons stored safely?

**5. Does the student have the capacity to carry out an attack?**

a. Does the student have ability with firearms, other weapons, or other means of attack (such as explosives, incendiary devices, bladed weapons, etc.)?

b. How organized is the student's thinking, behavior, or ability to plan?

**6. Has the student engaged in attack-related behaviors such as planning? These behaviors might include:**

a. Developing an attack idea or evidence of any planning.

b. Creating a list of individuals or groups.

c. Making efforts to acquire or practicing with firearms or weapons of any kind.

d. Mapping, casing, or checking out possible sites and areas for attack.

e. Rehearsing attacks or ambushes.

f. Does the student have ability or training with firearms, other weapons, or other means of attack (such as explosives, incendiary devices, bladed weapons, etc.)?

g. How organized is the student's thinking, behavior, or ability to plan?

**7. Has the student experienced stressful life events, such as setbacks, challenges, or losses?**

a. Has the student experienced a recent failure, loss, breakup of relationships, and/or loss of status?

b. Is the student known to be having difficulty coping with a stressful event or events at school, home, in the community (bullying, coursework, friendships, romantic relationships, parents, siblings, jobs, etc.)?

c. Are there supportive friends or family assisting the student to cope?

**8. What is the impact of age, social, mental, or emotional development?**

a. Is the student's behavior outside the norm for their age, social, mental, or emotional development?

b. NOTE: Behaviors exhibited by a student with a diagnosed disorder need to be evaluated in the context of that diagnosis and the student's baseline of behavior. Appropriate intervention planning should take place.

**9. Is the student experiencing desperation, hopelessness, despair, or suicidal thoughts/gestures?**

a. Is there information to suggest that the student is experiencing desperation, hopelessness, depression, and/or despair (any communications that are concerning)?

b. Is the student now, or has the student ever been suicidal, or engaged in a suicidal gesture?

c. Has the student engaged in other behavior or communication that suggests that he/she has considered ending their life?

d. How were previous feelings/behaviors managed and what resources were used? Are those resources available to the student now?

**10. Does the student see violence as acceptable, desirable, or the only way to solve problems?**

a. Has the student used violence in the past to solve problems?

b. Does the setting around the student (friends, fellow students, parents, teachers, adults) explicitly or implicitly support or endorse violence as a way of resolving problems or disputes?

c. Has the student been "dared" by others or "dared" others to engage in an act of violence?

**11. Is there consistency between the student's statements and their behaviors?**

a. Does the information from collateral interviews and from the student's own behavior or communication confirm or dispute what the student says is going on?

b. Attempt to determine reasons for inconsistency. Is it deliberate or does it stem from other issues?

**12. Are other people concerned about the student's statements, behaviors, or potential for violence?**

a. Are there examples of concerning or bizarre statements, ideas, thoughts, or behaviors? Get specific information.

b. Are those who know the student concerned that the student might take some action based on violent ideas or plans?

c. Are those who know the student concerned about a specific target?

**12. (continued)**

d. Have those who know the student witnessed recent changes or escalations in mood and behavior?

e. Are other concerns noted, such as alcohol or drug use, behavioral changes related to academic performance, social habits, mood, physical appearance, conflicts with others, withdrawal or isolation, etc.?

**13. Does the student have positive or prosocial influences and events?**

a. Does this student have a positive, trusting relationship with at least one adult at school?

b. Is the student emotionally connected to or disconnected from other students?

c. Does the student have prosocial connections or activities at school or in other areas of their life?

d. Has the student previously come to someone's attention or raised concern in a way that suggested he/she needs intervention or supportive services?

Adapted from:

National Threat Assessment Center. (2018). *Enhancing school safety using a threat assessment model: An operational guide for preventing targeted school violence*. U.S. Secret Service, Department of Homeland Security. [https://www.secretservice.gov/data/protection/ntac/USSS\\_NTAC\\_Enhancing\\_School\\_Safety\\_Guide\\_7.11.18.pdf](https://www.secretservice.gov/data/protection/ntac/USSS_NTAC_Enhancing_School_Safety_Guide_7.11.18.pdf)

Fein, R., Vossekuil, B., Pollack, W., Borum, R., Modzeleski, W., & Reddy, M. (2002). *Threat assessment in schools: A guide to managing threatening situations and to creating safe school climates*. Washington, DC: United States Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools Program and U.S. Secret Service, National Threat Assessment Center. A complete copy of the guide is available online at <http://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/threatassessmentguide.pdf>