THE MID-VALLEY STUDENT THREAT ASSESSMENT SYSTEM: A COLLABORATIVE, MULTIAGENCY APPROACH TO IDENTIFYING AND MANAGING STUDENTS AND SITUATIONS OF CONCERN [635]

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Session Plan

Workshop Summary

Threatening remarks are commonplace in school settings, and fortunately, violent action does not follow most verbal threats. Unfortunately, those who engage in violence at schools often do not make threats in advance of their attacks.

A critical problem for schools is how to determine if a particular student, regardless of whether he or she has made a threat, actually poses a threat to others, and if so, what to do about it.

In this workshop, the presenters will discuss one region's approach to addressing this problem. They will discuss how a collaboration of schools, local law enforcement, and mental health and juvenile justice agencies formed the Mid-Valley Student Threat Assessment System—an ongoing multiagency effort to reduce the risk of violence in 150 urban and rural schools in three Oregon counties. They will describe the actual system in some detail and show how it is directly aligned with the recommendations made by the Secret Service and Department of Education in their guide, *Threat Assessment in Schools* (Fein 2002). In addition, the presenters will share outcome data and actively involve participants in actual case studies, so as to give them a first-hand impression of how students who make and or pose threats at school can be identified and effectively managed.

Workshop Goal

• To use lecture, discussion, and case studies, to give workshop participants enough information about the Mid-Valley Student Threat Assessment System to make informed judgments about the system as a model and about its potential applicability to their own schools and communities

Workshop Objectives

- 1. To provide participants with an introduction to or a review of key threat assessment terminology as well as the findings of the *Safe School Initiative*
- 2. To give participants a conceptual understanding of the key elements involved in the formation and operation of the Mid-Valley Student Threat Assessment System
- 3. To engage participants in case study exercises so they can experience the workings of the system in hands-on fashion
- 4. To provide participants with the knowledge of the basic steps needed to implement such a program in their schools and communities

Workshop Activities

- 1. Pretest on student threat assessment/findings of the Safe School Initiative
- 2. Discussion of threat assessment terminology and the key findings of the Safe School Initiative
- 3. Exposition of the Mid-Valley Student Threat Assessment System from a formative and operational perspectives
- 4. Case study exercises
- 5. Discussion of outcomes and steps to implementation
- 6. Questions and answers

Assessment

Short pretest on student threat assessment; audience involvement in case study exercises to provide an opportunity for participants to apply workshop concepts

Resources

Presentation materials

References

- Cornell, D. and Sheras, P. (2005). *Guidelines for responding to student threats of violence*. Longmont, Colorado: Sopris West.
- Fein, R.A., Vossekuil, B., Pollack, W.S., Borum, R, Modzeleski W., and Reddy, M. (2002). *Threat assessment in schools: A guide to managing threatening situations and to creating safe school climates.* Washington, DC: U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education.
- Mohandie, K. (2000). School violence threat management: A practical guide for educators, law enforcement and mental health professionals. San Diego, CA: Specialized Training Services.
- Reddy, M., Borum, R., Berglund, J., Vossekuil, B. Fein, R.A., and Modzeleski, W. (2001). Evaluation risk for targeted violence in schools: Comparing risk assessment, threat assessment, and other approaches. *Psychology in the Schools*, *38*(2), 157–172.
- Vossekuil, B., Fein, R.A., Reddy, M., Borum, R, and Modzeleski W. (2002). *The final report and findings of the safe school initiative: Implications for the prevention of school attacks in the United States*. Washington, DC: U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education.

The Mid-Valley student threat assessment system: A collaborative, multiagency approach to identifying and managing students and situations of concern

Evaluation Form

Presenters: Michael J. Cunningham and Vicki M. Nishioka

Please rate the overall training by circling a number for each statement.

	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Strongly Disagree
I was satisfied with the quality of the workshop.	1	2	3	4	5
I found the training useful to my work.	1	2	3	4	5
I will be able to incorporate material from the workshop into my work.	1	2	3	4	5
The presenter had adequate knowledge of the topics covered.	1	2	3	4	5
Presentation of the material was understandable.	1	2	3	4	5
My questions/needs were addressed.	1	2	3	4	5
The opportunity to actively participate in and practice curriculum components was helpful.	1	2	3	4	5
The handouts provided were helpful.	1	2	3	4	5

Comments:

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