



# Threat Management Resources

• PREVENTION

*Threat Management Resources is dedicated to the prevention of, reaction to, and recovery from targeted violence. We are committed to promoting best practices on threat management for our communities.*

This Campus Team Investigative Guide & Handbook was developed by Rebecca Bolante. The questions were developed through a review of literature and practice specific to targeted violence including: *(Further references available upon request.)*

- |                               |                           |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Randy Borum, Psy.D.           | William Modzeleski        |
| James Cawood, Ph.D., CPP, CTM | Reid Meloy, Ph.D.         |
| Gavin De Becker, Ph.D.        | Dave Okada                |
| Gene Deisinger, Ph.D.         | Mary Ellen O'Toole, Ph.D. |
| Robert Fein, Ph.D.            | Andre Simons              |
| Rebecca Hillyer, JD           | John VanDreal             |
| Bill Kohlmeyer                | Bryan Vossekuil           |
| Marissa Randazzo, Ph.D.       | Stephen White, Ph.D.      |

Use and copy: The author grants consent to educational institutions (public and private) to copy or use part or all of this Team Investigative Guide & Handbook. (rebecca.bolante@chemeketa.edu)



# Threat Management Resources

• PREVENTION

## Campus Team Threat Assessment

### Investigative Guide

# HANDBOOK

*If imminent danger exists, call law enforcement*



## Purpose of GUIDE & HANDBOOK

The Campus Team Threat Assessment GUIDE is to assist in the investigative and information-gathering process for threat assessment teams.

The Campus Team Threat Assessment HANDBOOK is a supporting document to assist with more details while working with the Campus Team Threat Assessment GUIDE.

## REMEMBER

The assessment is of the situation and not the person.

These situations are dynamic in nature and should be constantly updated.

Chemeketa Community College is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer and educational institution. To request this publication in an alternative format, please call 503.399.5192. For a disability related accommodation, please contact Disability Services at least two weeks prior to this event at 503.399.5192 (TTY/voice) or [disability@chemeketa.edu](mailto:disability@chemeketa.edu).

**Leakage:** communication revealing clues about planned attack, verbally or through social media or homework, etc.

- **Leakage:** can be in various forms revealing clues about planned attack through various third parties. This can be intentionally or unintentionally disclosing information of feelings, thoughts, fantasies, attitudes, or intentions that may signal an impending violent act.
- **Examples of leakage:** might include: verbal communication (boasts, innuendos, and predictions), social media, homework, email, written language exercises, essays, poems, songs, drawings, doodles, tattoos, videos, etc.
- **Communication:** can be indirect (such as ominous warning) or even casual references to possible harmful events or previous violent events (such as past mass killings).
- **Upcoming events:** Are there any upcoming, important events (grievance, lawsuit, financial aid appeal, inability to graduate, removal from academic program, break-up, loss, etc.)?

**Trigger:** What situations agitate or trigger aggressive thinking, threats and behavior? Is there an indication that the person of concern is awaiting an event or action before making a final decision regarding violent behavior? Significant anniversary

dates (either positive or negative)?

**Mitigators/Inhibitors:** Are there any indications of mitigators that would decrease the likelihood of targeted violence?

- Identify all positive influences that promote responsible and accountable pro-social behavior.
- The situation that lacks inhibitors is one of greater risk since there is less to lose by acting out and little motivation toward healthy solutions.
- **Examples of Mitigators:**
  - Is there an indication that the person is able to form positive relationships?
  - Does the person have positive relationships?
  - Are there indications that the person is involved in activities, events, interests, relationships, goals, organization memberships, faith-based connections, personal health?

happened”; “You might not be at school tomorrow”.)

**Energy Burst:** days or weeks prior to the event, there is an increase in activities related to the target.

**Fixation:**

- **Homicidal Ideation:** preoccupation with thoughts, feelings, or fantasy of killing. This could range from vague thoughts of revenge to detailed plans for killing.
- **Externalizing blame:** Are there indications of externalizing blame for behaviors and problems onto other people?
- **Injustice Collector:** Does the person of concern have a profound sense of injustice or entitlement? Are there indications of being victimized, outcast, marginalized, or disconnected?

**Aggression**

- **Novel-Aggression:** To conduct an act of violence to see if they are capable of carrying out their plan (“try-outs”). This target could be completely unrelated to their intended target.
- **Capacity:** Are there indications of a capacity or ability to carry out an act of targeted/planned violence? What is the likelihood of a successfully organized and executed planned attack? If someone is making fairly exaggerated or complex threats, but is unable to organize and execute them due to supervision, cognitive ability, or overall

functioning, then feasibility drops.

**Last Resort**

- **Suicidality:** The wish to die, be killed, or commit suicide combined with a threat to harm others increases risk, especially if the self-destructive behavior is the last part of a plan to harm others, and carry out revenge or justice. Suicidal thoughts can easily and quickly progress to homicidal ideation.
- **Coping skills:** The ability to handle stressful situations. There is little, if any, ability to handle frustration, criticism, disappointment, or rejection. Are there mental health issues that indicate a low reserve of coping strategies and lack of emotional resiliency?
- **Hopelessness:** Are there indications of feeling trapped and not having options? Are there indications of giving away possessions and not having any plans for the future? As people lose hope of resolving stressful or overwhelming situations through acceptable social or coping skills, they are more likely to engage in desperate solutions and last-ditch efforts to take control. It is important to note that the point of this question is to examine the perception of the person of concern, not necessarily what has been observed by others (staff, parents, other students, or the community).

**CONTENTS**

<b>Purpose of Guide &amp; Handbook</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Who should use this Guide?</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>When?</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>What?</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>How should this Guide be used?</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Terms/Definitions</b>	<b>4</b>
Pathway Warning Behavior	4
Identification:	5
Pseudo-commando/Warrior mentality:	5
Communication:	5
Threats	5
Energy Burst:	5
Fixation	5
Aggression	5
Last Resort	6
Leakage	6
Trigger	6
Mitigators/Inhibitors	7

---

### ◆ WHO should use this GUIDE? ◆

---

The *GUIDE & HANDBOOK* are designed for threat assessment professionals and teams focused on preventing and mitigating potential situations of targeted violence.

- Multi-Disciplinary Teams: Complete the GUIDE through a multidisciplinary approach. The members of the team should have training on threat assessment and they should represent various areas across the institution. (e.g. director of public safety, dean of student services, counselor or mental health professional, legal, and human resources representative, etc.)
- The team might also include representatives from partnering agencies such as law enforcement and mental health.
- The team should consider all available sources for information including: instructors, students, staff, community members, and social media.

---

### ◆ WHEN? ◆

---

- When a team member receives a report, the GUIDE can help you to remember the types of questions to ask to the reporting person.
- A team member might want to use the GUIDE to gather additional information prior to the threat assessment meeting.
- The team might want to use the GUIDE to structure part of the meeting when they are discussing both new and current cases.

---

### ◆ WHAT? ◆

---

- **Campus Team Threat Assessment GUIDE:** A resource to assist threat assessment professionals and teams during the investigative and information-gathering process.
- **Campus Team Threat Assessment HANDBOOK:** A supporting document to the GUIDE which provides additional details and definitions.

---

### ◆ HOW should this GUIDE be used? ◆

---

- The GUIDE can be used several ways:
  - Hard-copy/form*
  - Laminated copy (for a “cheat-sheet”)*
  - Electronic copy (pdf/form)*
  - Data-base, with GUIDE as the structure or format*
- Seek further assessment and advisement from law enforcement or Community Threat Assessment Team if you are:
  1. Unable to confidently answer the questions in the GUIDE
  2. Not confident that your institution can supervise the situation safely
- Document all communication. Consider outlining and documenting a safety plan for the targeted individual(s).
- Consider all options available to inhibit or decrease the chances of violence.
- Options may also include restricting access to target(s) or campus; however, it is important to remember that removing the person who poses a threat does not

necessarily decrease the risk of violence. Therefore, since the use of suspension, expulsion, or trespassing may actually increase risk, the resulting elevated risk should be factored into the assessment.

---

### ◆ TERMS/DEFINITIONS ◆

---

**Pathway:** research, planning, preparation, and implementation (also called “pre-attack behaviors” and “attack related behaviors”)

- A plan (complex or simple) to carry out a targeted act of violence against a specific individual or group. The plan would have a sequence of actions necessary for its success and almost always requires a motive. The more plausible and detailed the plan, the greater the risk.
- Acquisition of a weapon, attempted acquisition of a weapon, or research about how to acquire a weapon.
- Rehearsal or simulation is often necessary before a targeted event can be completely planned and carried out. Rehearsal can be indicated through art, fantasy games, writing or film projects, video games, movies or Internet sites with themes and sequences of targeted violence, etc.
- Scheduling an attack. A scheduled attack may be clear and detailed or flexible, awaiting a triggering event (teasing, rejection, loss) that further justifies the violence as a solution.

**Identification:** the subject of concern identifies strongly with groups (e.g., past perpetrators, military, radical organizations, law enforcement)

- **Pseudo-commando/Warrior mentality:** mindset of being military like; fascinated with firearms, military fatigues. Closely associates with law enforcement or military.

**Communicated Threats:** If threats are made but lack attack-related behaviors, motives, or a specific target(s) consistent with that threat, then risk decreases. Threats can be written or oral, implicit or explicit.

- **Direct threat:** straightforward, clear and explicit, (e.g., “I am going to put a bomb in the library”; “I’m going to kill you”)
- **Indirect threat:** tentative or implied, (e.g., “If I wanted to, I could kill everyone in the financial aid office”; “I could make the psychology instructors disappear if I wanted to”)
- **Conditional threat:** contingent on certain circumstances, usually contains the words “or” and “if”. (e.g., “If I can’t re-take my test, you will pay”; “You better approve my financial aid or you will die”)
- **Veiled threat:** vague and subject to interpretation, sometimes having two meanings and can come across as a joke, (e.g., “The College would be a better place without you”; “I can see how something like Virginia Tech