

**School Behavioral Threat Assessment &
Title IX Requirements**

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Mission

*The Texas School Safety
Center serves schools
and communities to
create safe, secure, and
healthy environments.*



Presentation Overview

- Who We Are
- What We Do
- What is School Behavioral Threat Assessment
- Title IX Overlap
- Trainings & Resources Available

Tasked

*Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code
and the Governor's Homeland Security
Strategic Plan with key school safety
initiatives and mandates*

Clearinghouse

Dissemination of safety and security information through research, training, and technical assistance for K-12 schools, charter schools, and junior colleges in Texas



86th Legislative Additions

- Provide behavioral threat assessment training for Safe and Supportive School Program Team members
- Review/Approve Emergency Operations Plans
- Provide guidance to TEA for Drill Mandates
- Provide School Safety Committee Guidance
- Develop review/approval process for Safety and Security Consultant Registry



Safe and Supportive School Program

Senate Bill 11 (September 2019) defined:

- Composition of behavioral threat assessment team
- Threat assessment training by TxSSC or an ESC
- Data submissions on trainings & threat assessments (TEA)
- TEA to adopt SSSP rules- **The Commissioner Rules are in progress (ETA: December/January)**. The Rules detail 6 functions of the SSSP.

Safe and Supportive School Program



The Safe and Supportive School Program:
A comprehensive approach to school safety driven by six primary responsibilities

Safe and Supportive School Program Team

- 1 Promotes a positive school climate
- 2 Builds Multi-Tiered Systems of Support
- 3 Conducts Behavior Threat Assessments
- 4 Ensures staff is well-trained
- 5 Collects data to continuously improve
- 6 Supports facility, safety and security



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Safe and Supportive School Program

The team may serve more than one campus of a school district, provided that each district campus is assigned a team that can conduct behavioral threat assessments.



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Safe and Supportive School Program

SB 11

Team members that **conduct threat assessments** shall have expertise in:

- Counseling
- Behavior Management
- Mental Health and Substance Use
- Classroom Instruction
- Special Education
- School Administration
- School Safety and Security
- Emergency Management
- Law Enforcement

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What Threat Assessment IS

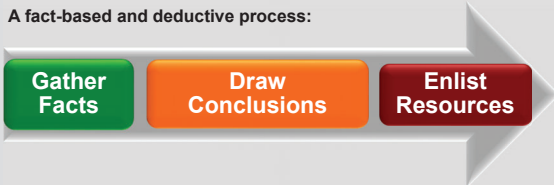
A systematic process to:

- 1 Identify persons of concern
- 2 Gather more information
- 3 Assess whether person poses a threat
- 4 If needed, manage situation to reduce risk

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What Threat Assessment IS

A fact-based and deductive process:



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Why Threat Assessment Works

School threat assessment is based on research of US school shootings. Research shows that:

- School shooters typically don't "just snap." These are rarely impulsive events.
- Instead, school shooters plan out their attacks beforehand.
- Their planning behavior often follows a "pathway to violence."

For more information:

U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education, *Final Report and Findings of the Safe School Initiative: Implications for the Prevention of Targeted School Violence in the U.S.* (2002). Washington, DC: Authors.
National Threat Assessment Center (2019). *Protecting America's Schools: A U.S. Secret Service Analysis of Targeted School Violence*. U.S. Secret Service, Department of Homeland Security.

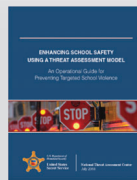


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What Threat Assessment IS NOT

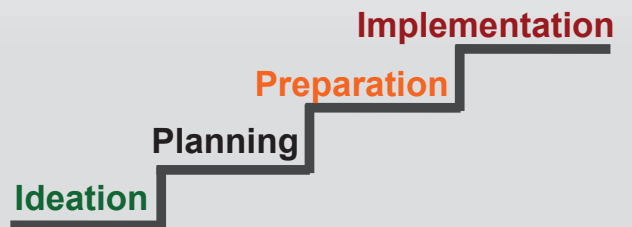
Behavioral Threat Assessment is

- NOT profiling
- NOT adversarial
- NOT the same as a disciplinary process
- NOT a panacea for safe schools
- NOT the same as a "behavioral assessment"



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Pathway to Violence



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Why Threat Assessment Works

School threat assessment is based on research on US school shootings. Research shows that:

- In most cases, school shooters tell other people beforehand that they are planning a school shooting.
- There is no accurate or useful profile of a "school shooter."

For more information:

U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education, *Final Report and Findings of the Safe School Initiative: Implications for the Prevention of Targeted School Violence in the U.S.* (2002). Washington, DC: Authors.
National Threat Assessment Center (2019). *Protecting America's Schools: A U.S. Secret Service Analysis of Targeted School Violence*. U.S. Secret Service, Department of Homeland Security.



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Why Schools Use Threat Assessment

- Many incidents of school violence can be prevented.
- Information about a student's ideas and plans for violence can be observed or discovered before harm can occur.
- Available information is likely to be scattered and fragmented.
- We must act quickly when alerted about a threat to gather more information (collect the dots), make an assessment (connect the dots), and take steps to move the person OFF the pathway to violence.

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Why Threat Assessment Works

School threat assessment is based on research on US school shootings. Research shows that:

- Most school shooters had seriously concerned others in their lives prior to the attack.
- Most had significant difficulty coping with losses or failures.
- Most were experiencing despair / hopelessness, or even suicidal.
- We have resources to help those who are despondent or suicidal.

For more information:

U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education, *Final Report and Findings of the Safe School Initiative: Implications for the Prevention of Targeted School Violence in the U.S.* (2002). Washington, DC: Authors.
National Threat Assessment Center (2019). *Protecting America's Schools: A U.S. Secret Service Analysis of Targeted School Violence*. U.S. Secret Service, Department of Homeland Security.



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Key Take-Aways

In a nutshell, threat assessment involves asking:

- Is this person on a pathway to violence?
- If so, why are they on the pathway to violence? Why are they considering or resorting to violence?
- How can we get this person off the pathway to violence? How can we help them solve their problem, fix their situation, or address their condition in a non-violent way?

Threat assessment is most effective when it is non-adversarial and focused primarily on support and problem-solving. **Interventions!**

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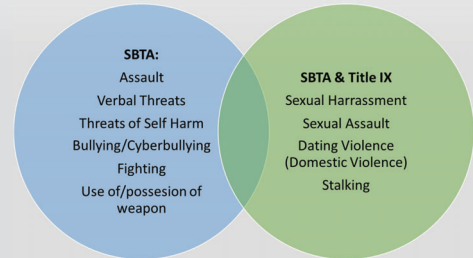
Texas Definitions

“Harmful, threatening, or violent behavior”:

Behaviors by a student such as:

- Verbal threats
- Threats of self harm
- Bullying
- Cyberbullying
- Fighting
- Use or possession of weapon
- Sexual assault
- Sexual harassment
- Dating violence
- Stalking
- Assault

SBTA & Title IX Overlap



Receive and Screen Report

Screen for two issues

- A. Is it an emergency or imminent?** **B. Need to conduct full threat assessment?**

If YES:

- IMMEDIATELY notify law enforcement
- Notify superintendent
- Conduct full threat assessment
- If report involves student suicide risk, follow district's suicide prevention program (in addition to threat assessment)
- Notify others (anyone directly impacted)

If NO:

- Screen for threat assessment

- Threat of violence?
- Harmful, threatening, or violent behavior?
 - verbal threats
 - threats of self harm
 - bullying / cyberbullying
 - fighting
 - use / possession of weapon
 - sexual assault / sexual harassment
 - dating violence
 - stalking
 - assault

Title IX Response to Sexual Harassment

“A recipient (i.e., a school district)

- with **actual knowledge** of sexual harassment
- in an **education program or activity** of the recipient
- against a person in the United States
- must respond **promptly** in a manner that is **not deliberately indifferent.**”

34 C.F.R. § 106.44(a)

What is “actual knowledge”

Notice of sexual harassment or **allegations** of sexual harassment to:

1. Title IX Coordinator
2. Any official with authority to institute corrective measures
3. **Any employee** of an elementary and secondary school (this includes the SSSP team that conducts threat assessments)

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Can use threat assessment process for a removal—if justified.

- **34 C.F.R. 106.44(c)**
- A district may remove a student who is alleged to have engaged in sexual harassment, without first following the complex grievance procedures that the regulations normally require, if the school undertakes an “**individualized safety and risk analysis, determines that an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any student or other individual arising from the allegations of sexual harassment justifies removal.**”
- District must provide the student with notice and an opportunity to challenge the decision immediately after the removal.

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TxSSC Guidance

- **Notify Title IX Coordinator of any threat reported that falls under the definitions of sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, stalking or assault that could be attributed to domestic violence**



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“Safety and Risk Analysis”

- Your threat assessment team could perform that safety and risk analysis as they are trained to assess threats.
- Only for physical threats
- Threat can be to *any* individual (including the harasser if, for example, threatens suicide)

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TxSSC Guidance

- Title IX procedures should align the individualized safety and risk analysis with your District's Threat Assessment procedures.
- See Texas School Safety Center Model Policies and Procedures in the School Behavioral Threat Assessment Toolkit for more information.



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Data Collection per TEA (continued)

Mandatory Questions

1. *Has your LEA established Safe and Supportive School Program team(s)? Yes/No*
2. *If Yes, answer the following:*
 - a. Number of campuses in your LEA served by your SSSP team(s)? (enter number)
 - b. How many people from your LEA's SSSP team(s), have been trained in the Behavioral Threat Assessment prior to September 1, 2020 (enter number)?
 - c. Estimate the extent to which your team(s) are trained in behavioral threat assessment at the time of this survey (select one):
 - i. All team members
 - ii. More than half of the team members
 - iii. Less than half of the team members
 - iv. No team members are trained

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Data Collection from TEA Update: September 17, 2020 (TTA)

- TEA will be phasing in the Senate Bill (SB) 11 mandatory data reporting requirement for your Safe and Supportive School Program teams.
- TEA will issue a two-part survey via *Qualtrics* to all school districts and open-enrollment charters to collect a minimal amount of data regarding LEA behavioral threat assessments conducted by SSSP teams and training received.
- **The SSSP survey will be sent to superintendents on or about November 1, 2020 and must be completed by November 30, 2020.**
- **Step One** of the survey is the mandatory reporting requirement for the time period of September 1, 2019, through August 31, 2020.
- **Step Two** is a set of optional questions to help TEA understand what gaps and needs LEAs may still have in terms of the implementation of their SSSP programs.
- The information will be used by TEA and the Texas School Safety Center to help improve and support SSSP teams and programs throughout Texas.

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Data Collection per TEA (continued)

Mandatory Questions (continued)

3. *Provide the following data regarding threats in your LEA for the period of September 1, 2019, through August 31, 2020:*
 - a. Number of threats reported (enter number)
 - b. Number of threats assessed as not posing a risk and not referred for interventions or help/supports (enter number)
 - c. Number of threats assessed as not posing a risk but referred for interventions or help/supports (enter number)
 - d. Number of threats assessed as posing a risk and referred for interventions or monitoring (enter number)
 - e. Number of threats assessed as posing an emergency/eminent risk and referred to law enforcement, the superintendent and referred for interventions and monitoring (enter number)

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Virtual Training Opportunities

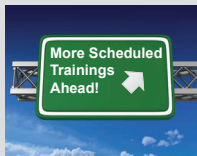


80 virtual trainings for the 20-21 school year
Conducted most Tuesdays and Thursdays

<https://txssc.txstate.edu/>

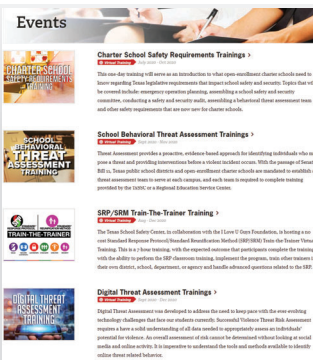


Training Available



All trainings have been moved to a live virtual platform using Zoom:

- School Behavioral Threat Assessment Training
- Digital Threat Assessment Training
- Standard Response Protocol & Reunification Training
- Law Enforcement TCOLE 4064
- Charter School Training
- Sandy Hook Promise Training



New Training



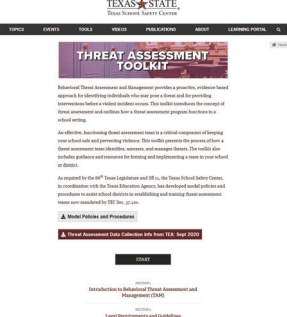
Empower students to know the signs of potential violence or self-harm and act immediately to get help.

Virtual Training

Sandy Hook Promise is partnering with the Texas School Safety Center to bring Say Something, the proven violence prevention program to middle and high schools in Texas. Say Something is a no-cost, easy to implement, and life saving program that will help school personnel and school based law enforcement to teach students how to recognize warning signs of potential violence or self-harm and act immediately to intervene. The training will take 2.5 hours with a wide range of activities and resources to ensure training integration within the school culture, supported by student-led SAYE Promise Clubs.

After the Say Something training, educators will:

- Develop an action plan to carry out the Say Something message year round.
- Learn how to reinforce the Say Something three step process through the use of easy-to-implement mini-lessons
- Learn how to cultivate a culture of trusted adults



THREAT ASSESSMENT TOOLKIT

Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management provides a proactive, evidence based approach for identifying individuals who may pose a threat and for providing interventions before a violent incident occurs. This toolkit illustrates the concept of threat assessment and outlines how a threat assessment program functions in a school setting.

An effective, functioning threat assessment team is a critical component of keeping our school safe and operating smoothly. This toolkit presents the process of forming a threat assessment team (abilities, activities, and ongoing focus). The toolkit also includes guidance and resources for training and implementing a team to train school or district.

As required by the 86th Texas Legislature and SB 10, the Texas School Safety Center, in collaboration with the Texas Education Agency, has developed model policies and procedures to assist school districts in establishing and training threat assessment teams per requirements SB 10, § 2.01.

Model Policies and Procedures

Threat Assessment Policy Collection (by Title) (Sept 2016)

UNAT

Introduction to Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management (UNAT)

Legal Implementation and Guidelines

<https://txssc.txstate.edu/>



TOPICS EVENTS **TOOLS** VIDEOS PUBLICATIONS ABOUT

TEXAS STATE
TEXAS SCHOOL SAFETY CENTER

Questions?



Thank you for your service!

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