



# Forming a School Behavioral Threat Assessment Team



U.S. Department of Education  
Office of Safe and Healthy Students

# Agenda

***1. Introduction to Threat Assessments in Schools***

2. Common Elements of an Effective Threat Assessment

3. Q&A Session

# Threat Assessment Definition

*A fact-based investigative and analytical approach that:*

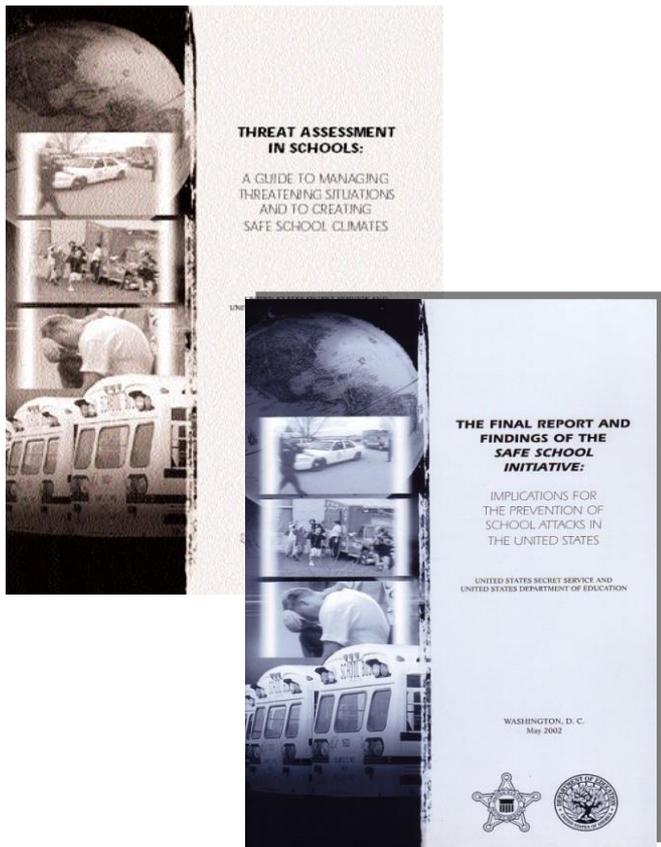
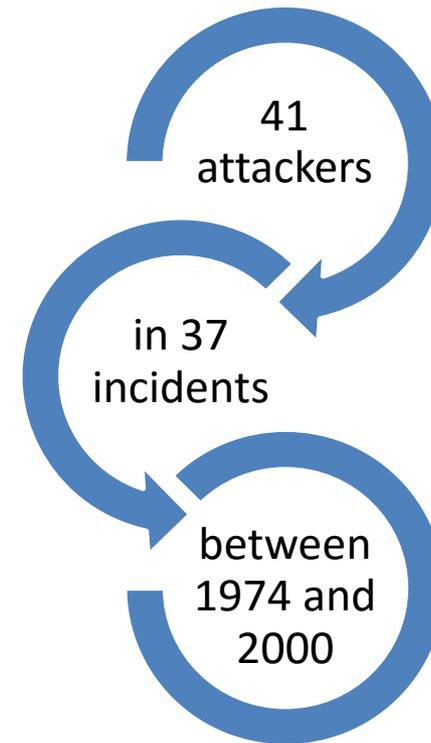
- *focuses on **what a particular student is doing and saying**, and;*
- ***not on whether the student "looks like"** those who have attacked schools in the past.*

*Threat assessment emphasizes the importance of such behavior and communications for identifying, evaluating and reducing the risk **posed** by a student who may be thinking about or planning for a school-based attack.*

*(The Final Report and Findings of the Safe School Initiative, p. 41)*

# The Safe School Initiative (SSI)

Examined targeted  
violence from



# Purpose of Threat Assessment

The primary purpose of a threat assessment is to **prevent targeted violence in schools by students.**

Additional considerations include:

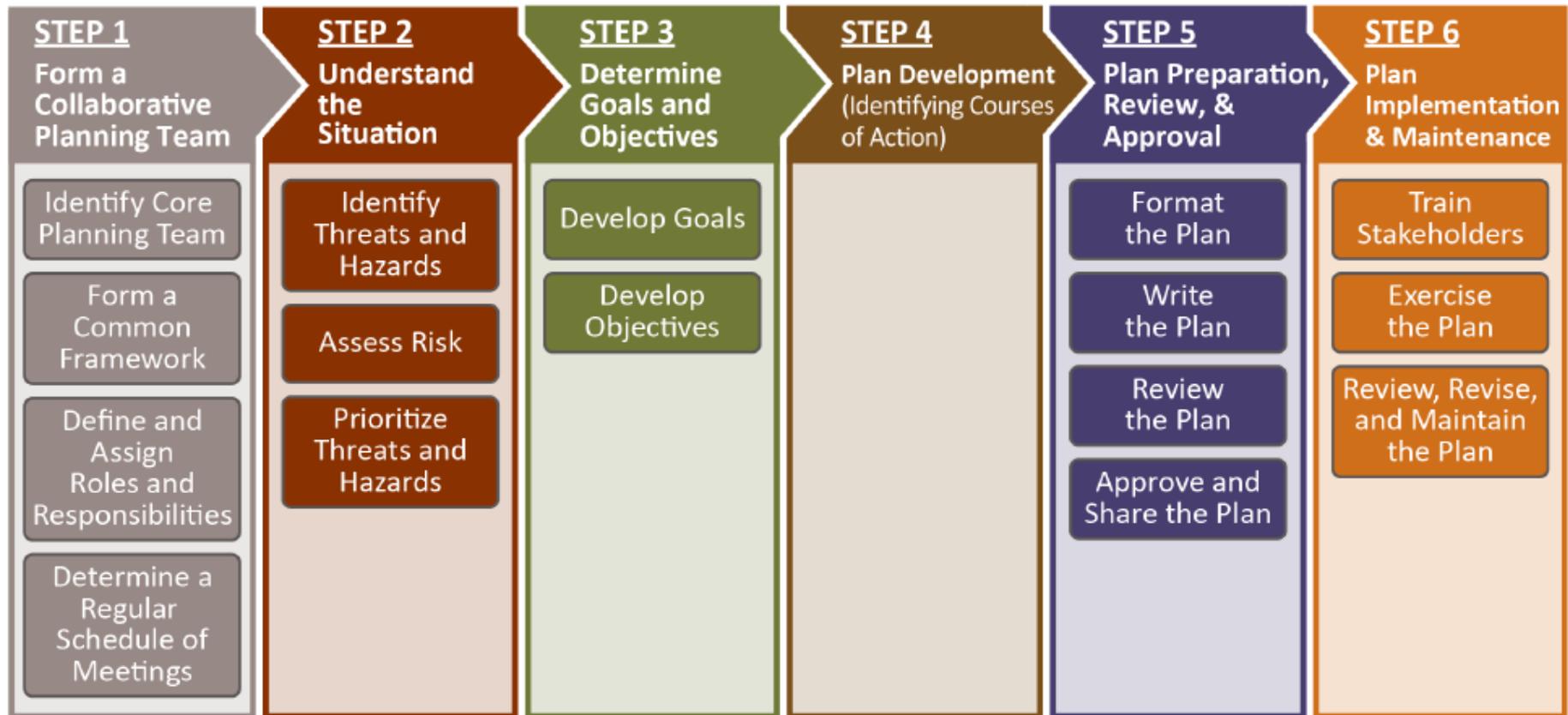
- 1. Type of threat(s):** Targeted violence and bullying, self-harm, fighting, etc.?
- 2. Population:** Students and adults?

# What is a Threat Assessment?

Threat assessment is a multi-step process that is designed to:



# Threat Assessments and the Six-Step Planning Process



# Traditional EOP Format



# Inclusion in EOP

## Behavioral Threat Assessment Annex

- Identify team representatives
- Comply with applicable laws

## Public Health, Medical, and Mental/Behavioral Health Annex

- Support the needs of identified students

## Security Annex

- Respond to threats

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# Identification of Elements

Elements are based on:

- A comprehensive literature review of:
  - Findings from the SSI
  - Existing threat assessment approaches and their impacts on school climate and school violence
  - Lessons learned
- Subject matter expertise of the REMS team.

# Common Elements

1. Integrated into a K-12 school safety and emergency management framework

2. Supported by mandates, laws, and partners

3. Defined with clear policies, purpose, roles and responsibilities

4. Conducted with a collaborative process

# Common Elements

5. Performed by a trained, multidisciplinary team

6. Conducted along a continuum

7. Supportive of the student(s) posing the threat and target(s)

8. Continually evaluated and adjusted, if needed

# Common Elements

1. Integrated into K-12 school safety and emergency management framework

May be one tool to help improve school climate

Included in an EOP

# Common Elements

## 2. Supported by mandates, laws, and partners

**Mandates or laws**

**Partners**

# Common Elements

3. Defined with clear policies, purpose, roles and responsibilities

**Policies**

**Purpose**

**Roles and  
Responsibilities**

# Common Elements

4. Conducted with a collaborative process with information coming from various sources

**Internally**

**Externally**

# Common Elements

5. Performed by a trained,  
multidisciplinary team

Team structure

Training

# Common Elements

## 6. Conducted along a continuum



School Enquiry

Law Enforcement Investigation

# Common Elements

## 7. Supportive of the student(s) posing the threat and target(s)

**Student(s) posing threat**

**Target(s) of threat**

# Common Elements

8. Continually evaluated and adjusted, if needed

Evaluation

Adjustment

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# Q&A Session



# Contact Information

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