

This brochure gives a partial list of actions, behaviors and circumstances that may indicate greater risk for targeted violence.

If you have concerns please contact your school administrator or principal, the School Resource Officer or

for further consultation.

If you have concerns of imminent danger, contact Law Enforcement immediately by calling 911.



School Phone Number _____

Person to Contact _____

_____ Police Department _____

_____ Police Department _____

_____ County Sheriff _____

_____ County Sheriff _____

Department of Human Services (DHS)

_____ County _____

_____ County _____

Mental Health Services

_____ Psychiatric Care Center _____

_____ Crisis & Mental Health _____

The _____ School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs and activities. This policy implements state and federal laws (including Title IX); inquiries about the non-discrimination policies should be directed to the

_____, Superintendent

Student Threat Assessment

Risk Factors

Associated with Targeted Violence

A Guide for Parents
and Teachers

Risk Indicators Associated with Targeted Violence

Has there been a shift toward a threat of extreme aggression or violence?

Violence is aggressive behavior that is intended to, or results in, serious or lethal injury.

Have there been threatening communications suggesting a potential violent attack?

Is the communication an expression that suggests details of planning or ongoing consideration of an attack? Communications may include verbal expressions, artwork, email, internet messaging, texting, written language exercises or any other medium of communication. A communication can also be made by indirect, veiled or casual references to possible harmful events, warnings of potential harm or references to previously occurring violent events such as school or community shootings.

Are there indications of a specific target or targets?

Is there an ongoing consideration or focus on a particular person or a group of people?

Are there indications of a motive, goal or justification for a serious or lethal attack?

While there can certainly be many motives for acting out violently or aggressively, the most common is the need to establish or re-establish control, often disguised as revenge or vendetta for lost love or humiliation and the desire to prove bravery after making a threat or taking a dare. Pay close attention to motive themes of loss, being wronged or excessive anger.

Are there any indications of behavior that increase the possibility of violence occurring? Such indications may include a plan, acquiring weapons, rehearsing or practicing the attack, scheduling the attack or other preparations.

A communication that threatens an attack is only an expression and does not suggest a “posed threat” unless there are behaviors supporting the intent to carry out the attack. Many threats are not stated with clearly expressed language but are indicated by veiled threats and/or behavior that relates to a possible attack. Attack related behavior includes but is not limited to, the following:

- A plan to carry out a targeted act of aggression against a specific individual or group. A plan would have a sequence of actions necessary for its success. The more plausible the plan the greater the risk.
- The acquisition of a weapon, the attempted acquisition of a weapon or research about how to acquire a weapon. If the threat is the use of physical force to the point of serious or lethal injury, then the physical force is the weapon.
- The rehearsal of the event or a similar event. Rehearsal is like simulation or practice. Rehearsal can be indicated through art, fantasy games, writing or film projects. It can also be indicated by the use of movies, internet sites or video games that have themes and sequences of violence that can serve as a kind of simulation or practice. However, it must be noted that the use of such games or films as entertainment does not lead or cause students to act out violently. Their use is only attack-related behavior when it serves as rehearsal or practice.
- Scheduling an attack. Scheduling the act can be indicated through vague communication or actually noted in clear detail. Sometimes the schedule is flexible, awaiting a triggering event (teasing, rejection, loss) that further justifies the violence and locks it in as the only solution.

Are actions and behaviors consistent with communications?

If threats are made but not accompanied by attack-related behaviors, motives or a specific target(s) consistent with that threat, then the risk decreases.

Is there peer collaboration?

Are peers aware of, or concerned about, a potential attack? Are peers encouraging the attack?

Are alternatives and emotional coping reserves decreasing?

For example, a person who is low on coping strategies or alternatives may consider violence to be the only option available to solve problems.

Are there indications of suicidal thoughts?

Is there a history of suicidal ideation, gestures, references or intent? A desire to die, be killed by another, or commit suicide, combined with a threat to harm others, increases the overall risk, especially if the suicidal behavior is one feature of a plan to kill others and carry out revenge or justice. If there is a risk of suicide, seek out advice and assessment from a doctor, mental health professional or call the Psychiatric Care Center or Crisis Center. (See back of brochure)

Are there personality or behavioral traits, family dynamics, school system issues or social dynamics that lead to a more vulnerable and potentially dangerous situation?

Reckless and vindictive behavior, family dysfunction, academic failure and social crisis are all risk factors that can aggravate an already at-risk situation.