



ANN ARBOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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Implementing a Threat Assessment Protocol



MASA
May 2, 2023

Today I will...

- Share the Ann Arbor Public Schools Threat Assessment protocol
- Review how AAPS selected the CSTAG Threat Assessment tool
- Share the training and implementation process
- Discuss the importance of the multiple tools and supports AAPS uses to define our threat assessment protocol

Ann Arbor Public Schools

Threat Assessment Protocol

- The Ann Arbor Public Schools is dedicated to student and school safety.
- All schools in AAPS have trained threat assessment teams who use a combination of tools and supports to fully investigate the threat and take action to ensure the protection of students, staff and schools.
 - Administrators
 - Counselors
 - Social Workers
 - Psychologists
 - Behavior Intervention Staff
 - Community Assistants

Ann Arbor Public Schools

Threat Assessment Protocol

- **Threat Assessments Steps**

- When district staff learn of a threat, immediate action is taken:
 - Investigation begins to determine origin of threat.
 - Local law enforcement is notified.
 - A Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines (CSTAG) is conducted that will determine if the threat is **transient** or **substantive**.
The threat assessment helps to determine next steps.
 - Columbia Suicide Assessment is conducted, if warranted.
 - Child Protective Services (CPS) report is made.

Ann Arbor Public Schools Threat Assessment Protocol

- **Resulting actions may include:**
 - Emergency removal of the student(s) - generally the first step when a threat assessment is warranted.
 - Closing of a school if the threat contains specific information, working with law enforcement.
 - Is the threat specific?
 - Has the origin of the threat been determined?

Ann Arbor Public Schools Threat Assessment Protocol

Investigation

- Parents will be asked about means if a threat involves any type of weapon.
- Parent are not present when the assessment is being conducted.
- Child Protective Services (CPS) is called.
- Local law enforcement will be contacted and a police report will be made.
 - It is highly likely that law enforcement will begin their own investigation of the threat.

Ann Arbor Public Schools Threat Assessment Protocol

A Partnership...

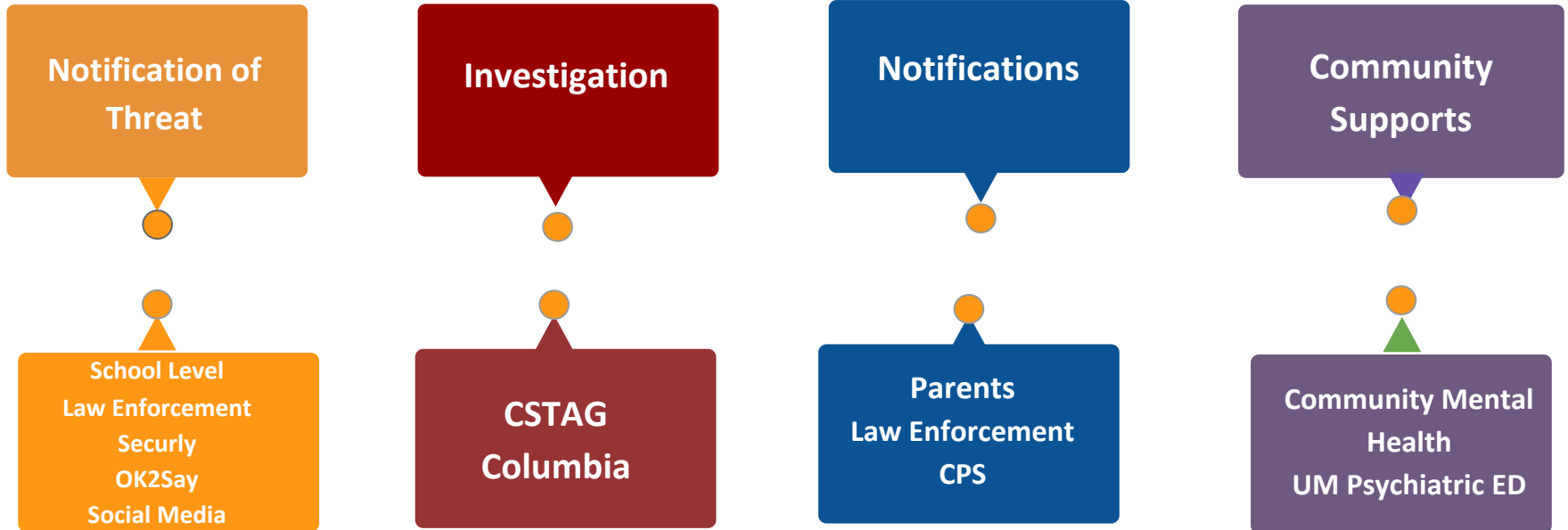
- We ask the AAPS community of students and parents to work with us to partner in creating a school culture of safety.
- Jokes of threats, emails, social media posts, statements made in anger or figures of speech without intent to do harm will be revealed through the threat assessment process but *we urge students to think before they make these kinds of threats* because it will be taken seriously and fully investigated.

Ann Arbor Public Schools Threat Assessment Protocol

CSTAG - Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines

- Trained threat assessment teams in every school work diligently, including through the night and over the weekend, to determine the threat origin to resolve the situation as soon as possible.
- *An emphasis is made to help the student who has made the threat with both support and minimize the use of disciplinary action, when warranted.*

Threat Assessment Protocol



Notification Of Threat

- At the school or district level
 - Students
 - Counselors
 - Trusted adult
 - Staff
- Law enforcement
- Securly
- OK2Say
- Social Media

Investigation CSTAG

CSTAG - Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines - Dr. Dewey Cornell

Evidence-based - field-tested, controlled studies

Behavioral threat assessment is a problem-solving approach to violence prevention that involves assessment and intervention with students who have threatened violence in some way.

Emphasizes early attention to problems such as bullying, teasing, and other forms of student conflict before they escalate into violent behavior.

Flexible, problem-solving approach.

Encourages a more positive school climate in which students feel treated with fairness and respect.

Investigation CSTAG

CSTAG Assessment:

1. The Threat Assessment team evaluates the seriousness of the threat.
2. The team initiates assistance to address the underlying problem, conflict or need. In the most serious cases, protective action is taken.

Investigation CSTAG

Threat Determination

Transient Threats

Team members investigate and determine whether the threat can be readily resolved as a transient threat that is not a serious threat.

Examples of transient threats are jokes or statements made in anger that are expressions of feeling or figures of speech rather than expressions of a genuine intent to harm someone.

Substantive Threat

Any threat that cannot be clearly identified and resolved as transient is treated as a substantive threat.

Substantive threats always require protective action to prevent the threat from being carried out.

Investigation CSTAG

CSTAG

What are some reasons why a threat is determined to be not serious or transient?

1. The student was young and not capable of carrying out the threat.
2. The threat was not realistic or feasible. (e.g., “I am going to blow up the whole world.”)
3. The threat seemed to be a momentary expression of anger or sarcasm.
4. The student apologized and retracted the threat.

Investigation CSTAG

CSTAG -

What is some of the evidence that the threat is serious or substantive?

1. The student seemed capable carrying out the threat.
2. The threat seemed feasible.
3. The student seemed to have a serious intent or was evasive about their intentions.
4. The student did not apologize or retract the threat.
5. The student has a means to follow through on the threat.

Investigation CSTAG

CSTAG - Process

Raptor Student Safe platform

Can assign the threat assessment steps to different staff members

Maintain assessment in a central protected location

Noted in student data - “follows” student

Notifications

Parents - Law Enforcement - CPS

Parents are notified of threat and the assessment.

Parent consent is not needed to conduct the threat assessment and, yes, safety trumps confidentiality.

Parents are informed that choosing not to give consent may limit the school's insight into reported threat (s) and/or threatening behavior, thus, potentially limiting a school's ongoing response/recommendations

Parents do not participate in the assessment interviews

We do ask that they partner with us to support the student.

Law Enforcement is notified. Police report filed. Investigation may occur. Law Enforcement action to prosecutor.

CPS - Is always contacted.

Community Supports

Community Mental Health & UM Psychiatric ED

Therapeutic Resources - the reality of supports, or lack of them...

Partnership with local Psychiatric Emergency Department

Final notes on Threat Assessment protocol...

- ▷ Parents as partners in the process....

Supports upon return to school...

- ▷ Upon return to school a Safety Plan is developed and agreed up by both student and parent/guardians

A word about IEPs...

- ▷ We obviously have to follow the IEP in terms of a manifestation timing and hearing, if needed

We always emphasize that threat assessments are conducted for the safety of the student and the safety of the school....

Threat Assessment Protocol

Questions?

Comments?



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