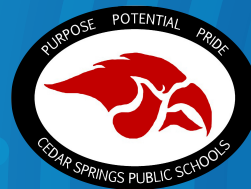


# Operationalizing district threat assessments;

*What we have learned and lessons we wish we  
learned earlier*



**Stacie Voskuil**  
**Assistant Superintendent**  
**Cedar Springs Public Schools**



**OXFORD STRONG**



1999

2007

2022

2023

*School mass violence is preventable!*

*Attacks are rarely sudden or impulsive. Over 80% of attackers warned someone or engaged in pre-attack behaviors prior to attacking.*

**Proactive systems are the key!**

Columbine

Virg

valde

MSU

24 injured  
13 killed

26 i  
32 l

injured  
killed

5 injured  
3 killed



#NEVERAGAIN



## Charles Andrew Williams

- School Shooter at age 15
- Killed 2 students, wounded 13 in March 2001
- Reason for shooting(at age 15): bullying, access to weapon, felt like he had no other option
- Santana High School, California
- Sentenced 50 years - life



Do you blame anyone?



# During our time together:

- Review the Cedar Springs **initial threat screener**
- Learn essential components to create and operationalize **threat assessments**
- Understand the strength of a **multidisciplinary team** that includes outside agencies and law enforcement
- **& lessons learned!**

- Ask questions
- Take a break if it gets too heavy

## Steps to prevent targeted school violence. Per NTAC:

1. Establish a multidisciplinary team
2. Define concerning behaviors
3. Reporting mechanism
4. Threshold for law enforcement
5. Establish assessment procedures
6. Develop risk management
7. Create safe school climate
8. Conduct training for all

# US School Shootings

\*\*\*compared by State

<b>Michigan</b>	Number	Ranked in US
School shootings	<b>82</b>	<b>5</b>
School Shooting Victims	<b>80</b>	<b>9</b>
School Shooting Fatalities	<b>16</b>	<b>9</b>

1840-2022 The Center for Homeland Defense and Security

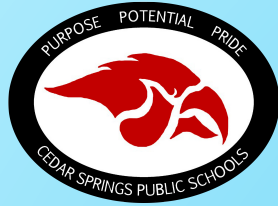
“

“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.”

*Benjamin Franklin*

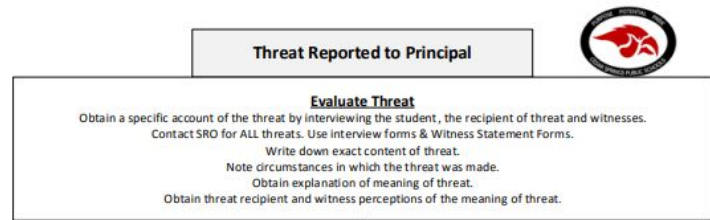
**Lesson learned:  
Teach, teach, teach students to  
see something, say something!  
& focus on positive school  
climate**

# CSPS

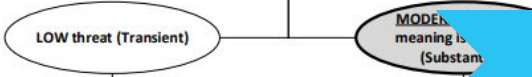


# Initial Threat Screener



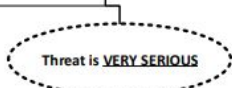


**Decide if threat is clearly low or moderate/high.**  
 Consider criteria for transient vs. substantive threats (below).  
 Consider student's age, credibility, and previous discipline history.



**Respond to LOW (Transient) Threat**  
 Depending on severity and chronicity of situation, responses may include: contact parents, resolve threat, consult SRO, follow discipline policy, peer mediation, refer to counseling if appropriate, restorative justice, monitor intervention.

**Moderate/High (substantive) threat**  
 A serious threat might involve a threat to assault someone (I'm gonna beat that kid up). A VERY serious threat involves use of a weapon or is a threat to kill, rape or inflict severe injury.



**Respond to serious threat**  
 Take immediate precautions to protect potential victims.  
 Contact Superintendent.  
 Notify parents.  
 Complete STAT referral & assessment.  
 Refer for counseling or other intervention.  
 Follow discipline policy. Monitor intervention.

**Conduct**  
 Take immediate precautions to protect potential victims.  
 Provide direct supervision.  
 Contact Superintendent.  
 Notify parents.  
 Begin mental health intervention.  
 Evaluate threat.  
 Complete STAT referral & assessment.

**Implement**  
 Complete STAT referral & assessment.  
 Maintain communication with parents.  
 Revise intervention plan as needed.  
 Monitor intervention.

**LOW/Transient:** non-genuine expression or intended as joke or figure of speech, tactic in argument. Non-sustainable intent to harm or temporary anger that is resolved. Conflict is resolved and ends with apology retraction or clarification.

**Mod/High/Substantive:** Specific plausible details such as a specific victim, time, place, and method. Threat has been repeated over time or people. Reported as a plan with substantial thought and preparatory steps.. Recruitment of accomplices or invitation for an audience. Written plan. Credibility of student and witness accounts.

**WHEN IN DOUBT: consider threat as moderate/substantive and assess further.**

From this to that...

**Lesson learned:  
 Need a CLEAR screener  
 to support decision  
 making while emotions  
 are high**

	or SSW
Is the concerning behavior a known baseline behavior?	Contact Casemanager
	Contact Casemanager

**PSPS STAT Screener**

**\*\*Confidential - staff use only\*\***



Make a copy of this form. This is a guidance document. This form is used to determine the need for a full STAT Assessment. This form is used to determine the need for a full STAT Assessment. Do not place in CA-60. If deemed low threat, create a PS log with summary of threat and response. Upon the need for a full STAT, contact Stacie Voskuil ASAP.

Name of student	Date:
Student ID	Current grade:
Threat description:	

	Yes	No
1. Does the threat require immediate police response? Is there imminent danger to a person or place?	Call SRO or 911, Secure potential victims, Start full STAT	
2. Has the person threatened violence or made any other communications about intent or plans for violence? (log entries, others concerned? Title IX violations, past removals, social media & tech search)	Start full STAT or get more information	
3. Have other behaviors raised concern about violence to others or sexual assault, dating violence, stalking, cyberstalking,	Start full STAT & consider including Title IX Coordinator	
4. Has the student threatened violence to a third party (someone who is taking protective measures) or someone concerned about the behavior?	Start full STAT or get more information	
If any "Yes" answers above, document responses and proceed with restorative practices, discipline as appropriate. Consider re-entry plan, as appropriate. If any "No" answers above, continue with screener part 2.		

	Yes	No
Does the student have an IEP or 504 or plan of care?	Contact Casemanager	Run STAT
Does the student have a health care plan?	Contact Nurse	Run STAT
Does the student have a PBSP?	Contact Psych	Run

**& full STAT**

Concerns of... for the f...

**Threat:**

vague, indirect?

is unrealistic, unlikely, implausible, lacks

of the threat/behavior specific & direct, has

to weapons?

ive and conduct



# Essential components for screeners

## Who?

- Determine who best to conduct the screener
- Consider a 2+ person team

## When?

- Threat to harm should be taken seriously each time
- ASAP

## What?

- Thorough but condensed & fast
- Guides thinking during event
- Clear & concise
- Easily accessible
- User friendly

## Communication & Documentation Needed:

- To person of concern, parents, witnesses, relevant staff, SRO, administration
- CA-60, student information system

# CSPS STAT Screener

**\*\*Confidential - staff use only\*\***



Make a copy of this form. This is a guidance document to identify if a student poses reasonable suspicion. This form is used to determine the need for a full STAT Assessment.

Do not place in CA-60. If deemed low threat, create a PS log with summary of threat and response. Upon the need for a full STAT, contact Stacie Voskuil ASAP.

Name of student:	Date:
School:	Current grade:
Name & Role of Person Screening:	

+  **Screener Section 1**

Does the matter require immediate police response? Is there imminent danger to a person or place?

**Yes**

*Call SRO or 911, Secure potential victims, Start full STAT*

**No**

*Proceed to section 2*

<b><u> Screener Section 2 </u></b>	<b><u> Yes </u></b>	<b><u> No </u></b>
Does the student have an IEP or 504 or plan of care?	<i>Contact Casemanager</i>	<i>Proceed to section 3</i>
Does the student have a health care plan?	<i>Contact Nurse</i>	<i>Proceed to section 3</i>
Does the student have any type of PBSP, Safety Plan, or Re-entry Plan?	<i>Contact Psych or SSW</i>	<i>Proceed to section 3</i>
Is the concerning behavior a known baseline behavior?	<i>Contact Casemanager</i>	<i>Proceed to section 3</i>
Can the behavior be managed by an existing plan?	<i>Contact Casemanager</i>	<i>Proceed to section 3</i>

<b><u> Screener Section 3 </u></b>	<b><u> Yes </u></b>	<b><u> No </u></b>
2. Has the person threatened violence or made any other communications about intent or plans for violence? (log entries, others concerned? Title IX violations, past removals, social media & tech search)	<i>Start full STAT or get more information</i>	
3. Have other (current or past) behaviors raised concern about violence to others or self & others? (Such as sexual assault, dating violence, stalking, cyberstalking, domestic assault, unusual bizarre or threatening statements, intimidating or aggressive acts, indications of planning, suicidal ideation, or fixation on a target or topic)	<i>Start full STAT &amp; consider including Title IX Coordinator,</i>	
4. Is there a fearful victim or third party or is someone concerned about the behavior? **Is someone taking protective action due to the behavior? (Ex. avoiding interactions, changing travel routes in or out of school, protective orders from LE, etc)	<i>Start full STAT or get more information</i>	
<p><i>If NO to ALL parts above, document responses and proceed with restorative practices, intervention &amp; discipline as appropriate. Consider <a href="#">re-entry plan</a>, as appropriate.</i></p> <p><i>If YES to ANY answer above, continue with screener part 2.</i></p>		

**Notes for Screener to use for investigation & full STAT**

Red Flags

Need to know  
& who to talk to

Concerns or triggers  
for the future

**Information on determining level of threat:**

**Low or Transient:** non-genuine expression or intended as a joke or figure of speech, tactic in argument. Non-sustainable intent to harm or temporary anger that is resolved. Conflict is resolved and ends with apology, retraction or clarification.

Are the details vague, indirect?

Plan or threat is unrealistic, unlikely to be implemented, implausible, lacks detail?


**Moderate/High/Substantive:** specific plausible details such as a specific victim, time, place, and method. Threat has been repeated over time or people. Reported as a plan with substantial thought and preparatory steps. Recruitment of accomplices or invitation for an audience. Written plan. Credibility of student and witness accounts.

Are the details of the threat/behavior well thought out, specific & direct, has a timeline and plan is plausible?

Is there accountability?

**WHEN IN DOUBT:** consider threat as mod/high/subst

**Lesson learned:  
Administrators need to  
know who to partner  
with for screeners.**

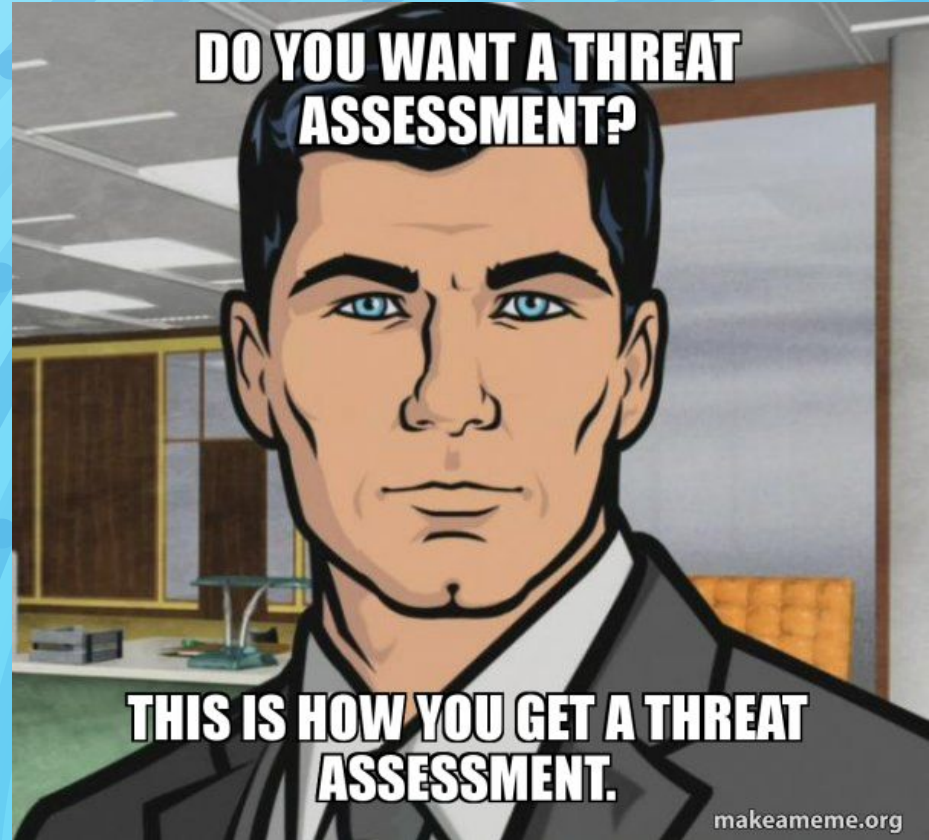
An illustration on a teal background with concentric circular lines. Two hands, one from the left and one from the right, are shown holding three glowing yellow lightbulbs. The lightbulbs are arranged in a diagonal line from the top right towards the bottom left. Three large, dark grey question marks are scattered in the upper left quadrant. The text 'Questions? Comments? Ideas?' is centered in the middle of the image.

Questions?  
Comments?  
Ideas?



# Essential components of threat assessments

*If you don't implement a threat assessment, you are missing a lot of information to get the student help, monitoring and supervision.*





Network 180  
Kent County Community Mental Health Authority



FEDERAL

STAT VERSION  
19.0  
2017-2023



NASP  $\Psi$

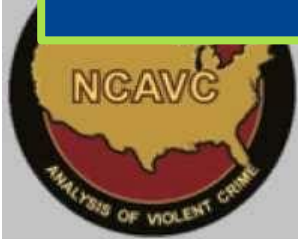
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
School Psychologists



N  
P. C.

SIGMA  
THREAT MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATES | AN ONTIC COMPANY

National Association of Safety  
**NASP**  
Professionals



**NASSP**  
National Association  
of Secondary School Principals



Homeland  
Security



204 E. Muskegon Street Cedar Springs, MI 49319  
www.credhows.org Ph: 616-696-1204 Fax: 616-696-3755

## Student Threat Assessment Team

### PROCESS

**Mission:** The mission of the Student Threat Assessment Team (STAT) is to identify, investigate, assess and intervene/manage potential human threats. Management includes interacting with mental health and law enforcement agencies. Threat assessment and prevention of violence without profiling potential attackers. Once a threat is made, having a fair, rapid, and consistent process for evaluating and responding to threats is critically important.

**The STAT team:** RECOMMENDED TEAM: school counselors, social workers, psychologists, technology personnel, administration, probation officer, nurse and outside agency personnel including: Cherry Health, Network 180, Child Protective Services and Juvenile Probation Office.

**Minimum team to include:** Active administrator, active mental health provider, 1 outside agency, 1 additional mental health provider, 1 additional administrator, Facilitator

### Process:

Note: Principal leads the process and documents timeline on Google form

Principal must define who is "acting Principal" and train on this process in

Action	Principal	ASAP
1. Staff have concerns regarding a threat of violence or concerning behavior from a student. Staff brings concern to administration. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact Law Enforcement for each threat, as appropriate for other behavior.</li> <li>Keep student in direct supervision of staff. Consider removing access to phone.</li> <li>Administrator attains witness statements <a href="#">Form 1 witness statement</a></li> </ul>		
2. Administrator works with staff to determine if threat is Low (transient) or moderate/high (substantive). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use <a href="#">Threat flow chart-doc 2</a> and <a href="#">risk rubric - doc 3</a> if high (substantive), <a href="#">complete step 3 on STAT Process below</a>.</li> <li>If low/moderate (transient) move to discipline and/or restorative justice. For all threats, complete summary of action form to identify steps for student. <a href="#">Summary of Action - doc 4</a></li> <li>Consider a plan to support potential victims/target</li> </ul>	relevant staff	from staff

**\*\*STAT Start Here!\*\*\***

**Lesson learned:  
One stop shop for all  
needed documents and  
flow of process**

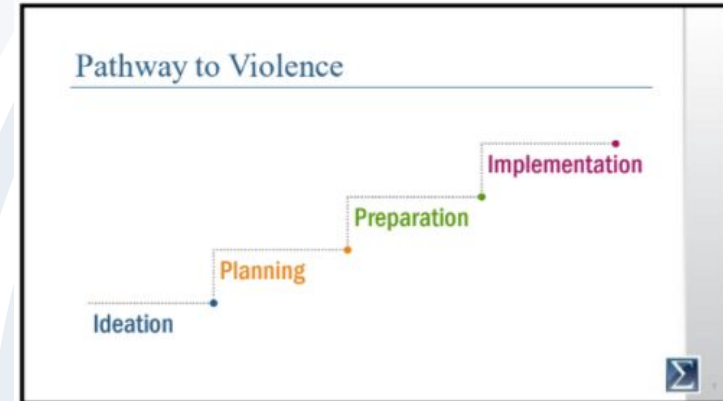
FOR ALL MODERATE/HIGH (Substantive) Threats:		
3. Administration: isolates student and removes phone access, contact law enforcement, contact Superintendent and contacts parent regarding situation.	Principal	ASAP

***If student is potential threat and suspended, email student picture and name to ALL building Principals with dates not allowed on campus.***		
4. Administration meets with relevant staff and assigns: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">teacher interview form - doc 5</a> – do not promise confidentiality</li> <li><a href="#">Parent interview - doc 6</a> – document all parent contact</li> <li><a href="#">witness interview form- doc 7</a> do not promise confidentiality.</li> <li><a href="#">student of concern interview - doc 8</a> do not promise confidentiality</li> <li><a href="#">STAT Referral - for mod/high risk - doc 9</a> (all sections except gray sections, those are for STAT team completion)</li> </ol>	Principal  Print & place in Principal's personal memory notes file, then delete electronic file.	Within 24 hours from determining transient or substantive (action 2)
5. Principal contacts STAT facilitator (Stacie) to get STAT members assembled for referral review.	Principal	Upon determination of substantive threat
6. After referral, the team assembles to review level of threat and determine next steps. <a href="#">Summary of Action Tracking Form</a> after completion of	Principal & Facilitator	Meeting scheduled and held within 72 hours of threat
7. Consider sending a general letter to parents and staff regarding concerns and fears.	Principal	As appropriate
8. Assemble necessary staff to review Summary of Action and check progress.	Principal	Date scheduled at initial STAT meeting

- [bullying flowchart](#)
- [Investigation Details](#)
- [Risk Rubric, form 3](#)
- [Summary of Action, form 4](#)
- [CS Witness Statement, form 1](#)
- [Threat flow chart, form 2](#)
- [Teacher interview, form 5](#)
- [Parent interview, form 6](#)
- [Witness interview, form 7](#)
- [Student of concern interview, form 8](#)
- [STAT referral for moderate/high risk, form 9](#)
- [STAT mission & responsibilities](#)
- [STAT Data Tracking Form, for timeline tracking](#)

# Intent of a STAT

- Catching & responding to threats or threatening behavior quickly
- Full process conducted within 72 hours
- Comprehensive approach – conducted by a multidisciplinary trained team
- Clear system for:
  - preparation of documents, interviews and data collection
  - Analysis of the case as a full STAT
  - Summary of action & communication



## STAT is not

- Disciplinary
- Adversarial or a debate
- Taken lightly
- Completed by untrained staff
- Based on feelings
- Fun
- For those closest to the threat
- Optional when a threat is identified



**Lesson learned:**  
Identify “the why” of who is on your team. Some people may have interest, but lack understanding or the right perspective.

# Preparation & Review

## Full STAT review may include:

- A review and analysis of:
  - Educational records, physical evidence, interviews, journals/doodles, emails, texts, mental health background, attendance, IEP/504, written work, internet histories, law enforcement records, personal belongings, CA SRS log, assignments, social media posts
- Witness interviews: reporting party, witnesses, counselors, support staff, person of contact, law enforcement agencies

**Lesson learned:  
Consider a web-based filter  
to monitor technology.  
Identify who monitors and  
gathers tech information.**

# Essential components of a STAT

## Who?

- Identify & highly train core team members
- Train admin, mental health providers

## When?

- After a screener has been conducted and deemed high risk
- ASAP

## What?

- Thorough full threat assessment based in school safety research
- Clear system, procedures and data collection methods
- Easily accessible

## Communication & Documentation:

- Law Enforcement
- To Superintendent & STAT Facilitator for next steps

# Before every full STAT review, (keep training):

- Make sure the right team are fully present
- Intro slide deck of:
  - Our Mission, Purpose & Responsibilities of the team
  - Role during and after STAT review
  - What STAT IS and IS NOT
  - FERPA review

**End with:** clear & concise next steps, post-action review, message of hope, gratitude to the team and motivational send-off message



# During a FULL STAT PROCESS

14 category analysis of potential indicators  
of planning or intent of violence

Threat background	Behavioral history	Motives & Goals	Ideation	Interest in violence
Attack related behaviors	Capacity to act	Hopelessness, desperation or despair	Trusting relationships	Experience with
Others concerned	Story & behavior consistency	Additional circumstances		


**Lesson learned:  
Train your team well on  
each category.**

# Summary of Action

- Intervention course of action
- Consideration of child find
- Risk assessment from outside agency
- Monitoring interventions
- Relationship-building interventions
- Skill development & resiliency interventions
- Data collection plan
- Team review and revision plan
- Communication plan

**Lesson learned:  
Make sure that review,  
revision and  
communication of the  
plan is well defined.**



An illustration on a teal background with concentric circular lines. Two hands in dark suits are shown from the bottom, palms up, holding three glowing yellow lightbulbs. The lightbulbs are arranged in a diagonal line from the bottom right towards the top left. Three large, dark grey question marks are scattered in the upper left area. The text 'Questions? Comments? Ideas?' is centered in white, bold font.

**Questions?  
Comments?  
Ideas?**

**Multi-  
disciplinary  
team is  
essential**



**HAVING A THREAT ASSESSMENT**

**A THREAT**

**IS KIND OF A BIG DEAL**

# Who should be included in STAT?

## Required/Minimum:

- Highly trained facilitator
- Active Administrator
- Active Mental Health provider
- SRO

**Training is crucial for a robust and comprehensive process.**

## Recommended members:

- CMH
- School counselor
- SSW
- Psychologists
- SRO
- IT
- Nurse
- +
- +
- pr
- Pro

**Lesson learned:  
The right team is crucial. Monitor the team's mental health.**

# CSPS' Multi-disciplinary, fully trained STAT

- Lead facilitator - District Administrator
- Alternate facilitator - Behavior Specialist
- School counselor(s)
- Social worker(s)
- Psychologist(s)
- School resource officer (SRO)
- Instructional technology personnel
- Administrator(s)
- Outside agency personnel

Lesson learned:  
Special Education staff  
need additional training  
on baseline and  
disability related need

# Choose & train the right team:

- Interested and invested in school safety
- Has a unique necessary role-specific perspective
- Mentally healthy
- Has a network of support
- Open communicator
- Daily workload that can be flexible for urgent STATs

Train them well and often.

**Lesson learned:  
Meet with the team  
often for STAT review &  
training.  
Non-urgent meetings  
builds the process &  
the team.**


# Levels of training





# Suggested resources for training:

- Local law enforcement
  - Active Shooter drills & debrief
- NTAC
- MI-BTAM
- NASP
- Secret Service
- I love you guys
- & more...

An illustration on a teal background with concentric circular lines. Two hands in dark suits are shown from the bottom, palms up, holding three glowing yellow lightbulbs. The lightbulbs are arranged in a diagonal line from the bottom right towards the top left. Three large, dark grey question marks are scattered in the upper left area. The text 'Questions? Comments? Ideas?' is centered in white, bold font.

**Questions?  
Comments?  
Ideas?**

An aerial, grayscale photograph of a school bus stop. Several school buses are parked in a line, with "SCHOOL BUS" visible on their front signs. A large group of students is gathered on the sidewalk and crossing the street. The scene is captured from a high angle, showing the layout of the bus stop and the flow of traffic and pedestrians.

**A prepared school  
is a safe school.**

**Safety doesn't  
happen by  
accident.**

# Key Takeaways

- Districts need a **clear and concise system** to address threats of harm
- Screeners can provide **fast and thoughtful decision making**
- Full threat assessments should be based on **research & systematized**
- A **multi-disciplinary team** is essential for positive student outcomes



# Thank you



Stacie Voskuil, Assistant Superintendent  
[stacie.voskuil@csredhawks.org](mailto:stacie.voskuil@csredhawks.org)



# Resources & Development of STAT:

- STAT was developed by: Stacie Voskuil including resources from the following:
- Full year of development, interdisciplinary approach including Network 180
- "Guidelines for Responding to Student Threats of Violence," by Dewey Cornell and Peter Sheras. (Sopris Learning, 2006)
- Threat Assessment in Action, by Anna Miller (American Psychological Association, 2014)
- The Virginia Model for Student Threat Assessment, Dewey G. Cornell (Confronting Violence in Our Schools: Planning, Response, and Recovery)
- Making Schools Safer, by U.S. Secret Service – National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC) 2018
- Threat Assessment in Schools: A guide to managing threatening situations and to creating safe school climates, by U.S. Secret Service and US DOE 2002
- Threat Assessment: An Approach To Prevent Targeted Violence, by Fein, Vossekuil and Holden 1995
- Violence Prevention in Schools, FBI Academy 2017
- Generation Death: How America Creates Teen Killers and Mass Murders, Phil Chalmers 2018
- Northview School District's Threat Assessment & Kent ISD's Human Threat Response Team System
- Kentwood Public School's Threat & Violence Assessment Protocol
- When Students Make Threats, Linda M. Kanan (National Association of Secondary School Principals, 2010)
- Threat Assessment at School: A Primer for Educators, JJimerson & D. Cornell (National Association of School Psychologists, 2005)
- Risk Assessment Guideline Elements for Violence: Considerations for Assessing the Risk of Future Violent Behavior, Association of Threat Assessment Professionals, 2006
- Student Threats Continue to Roll in, Thrun Law Firm Newsletter, April 26, 2018
- Threat Assessment in Virginia Public Schools: Model Policies, Procedures and Guidelines, 10/12/16
- Thrun Newsletter March 28, 2019 "Violent Student Behavior May Create Ongoing Health and Safety Emergency"
- Risk Assessment Guideline Elements for Violence: Considerations for Assessing the Risk of Future Violent Behavior, Association of Threat Assessment Professionals, 2006
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- Threat Assessment in Virginia Public Schools: Model Policies, Procedures and Guidelines, 10/12/16
- Thrun Newsletter March 28, 2019 "Violent Student Behavior May Create Ongoing Health and Safety Emergency"
- Behavior Threat Assessment & Management in Schools: Identifying Risk and Preventing School Violence - Sigma Threat Management Association (2022)
- MI-BTAM Training, Michigan Behavioral and Threat Assessment Management Training (December 2022) [www.nasponline.org/btam](http://www.nasponline.org/btam)
- Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans - FEMA (2013)
- Protecting America's Schools: A U.S. Secret Service Analysis of Targeted School Violence - Department of Homeland Security (November 2019)  
<https://www.schoolsafety.gov/resource/protecting-americas-schoolsus-secret-service-analysis-targeted-school-violence>
- Enhancing School safety Using a Threat Assessment Model: An Operational Guide For Preventing Targeted School Violence - Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency, CISA.gov (July 2018) <https://www.cisa.gov/publication/enhancing-school-safety-using-threat-assessment-model-operational-guide-preventing>
- Making Prevention a Reality: Identifying, Assessing, and Managing the Threat of Targeted Attacks - Behavioral Analysis Unit - National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime, FBI (February 2017) [www.fbi.gov/file-repository/making-prevention-a-reality.pdf](http://www.fbi.gov/file-repository/making-prevention-a-reality.pdf)
- The Final Report and Findings of The Safe School Initiative: Implications for the prevention of school attacks in the U.S. - US Secret Services and USDOE (July 2004)  
<https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/preventingattacksreport.pdf>
- Protecting Student Rights in B-TAM - NASP (2021) <https://www.nasponline.org/btam-sped>