

What is Threat Assessment?

What is it NOT?

The first step in creating and implementing the Threat Assessment process in your school is to have a clear idea of the purpose, capabilities, and limitations of threat assessment. In other words, knowing what it IS, and what it IS NOT.

Threat Assessment IS:	Threat Assessment IS NOT:
A fact-based, investigative approach to determine how likely a person is to carry out a threat of violence. (Safe School Initiative Study, 2002)	A simple checklist of warning signs or red flags used to remove a student from school.
A means to identify, assess, and manage individuals who are at risk for violence against themselves or others.	A means to label a student as a troublemaker and enact consequences.
A way to identify someone who has the potential for violence in many forms - self-harm, assault, risk taking behaviors, suicide, substance abuse, and other aggressive or dangerous behaviors.	A means to find "the next school shooter".

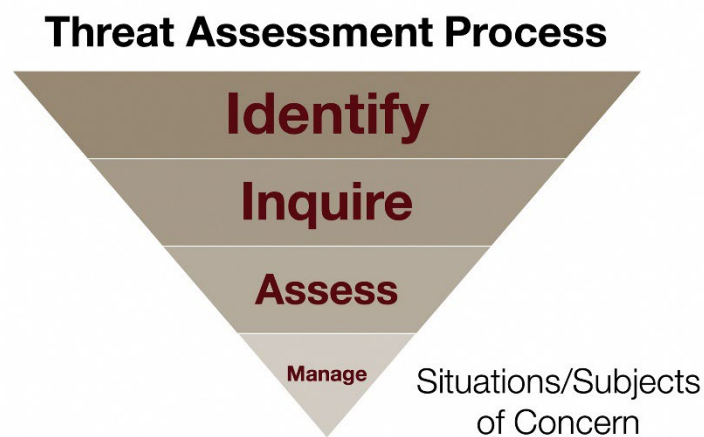
Threat Assessment is a fact-based, systematic process designed to IDENTIFY, INQUIRE, ASSESS, and MANAGE potentially dangerous or violent situations. A key goal is to distinguish between an individual who MAKES a threat versus one who POSES a threat.

- **Identify** the person or situation whose behavior has raised concern about potential violence.
- **Inquire**, ask questions, and gather additional relevant information about the person and situation.

Note: The focus of threat assessment is to understand the situation and how best to

mitigate safety concerns. It is not the same as a criminal or disciplinary investigative process.

- **Assess** the person and situation based on the totality of the information that is reasonably available, to determine whether the person or situation poses a threat of violence or harm to others and/or self.
- **Manage** the threat by implementing an intervention, supervision, and/or monitoring plan to prevent harm where possible, and to reduce and mitigate the impact of the situation.



Threatening and other disturbing behavior can come in a variety of forms. A threat may be:

- Expressed or communicated verbally, behaviorally, visually, in writing, electronically, or through other means.
- Expressed directly or indirectly.
- Issued by someone known or unknown to the target.

Threat Assessment teams and programs are designed to address any behavior or communication that raises concern that a person or situation may pose a danger to the safety of the school, campus, or workplace.