

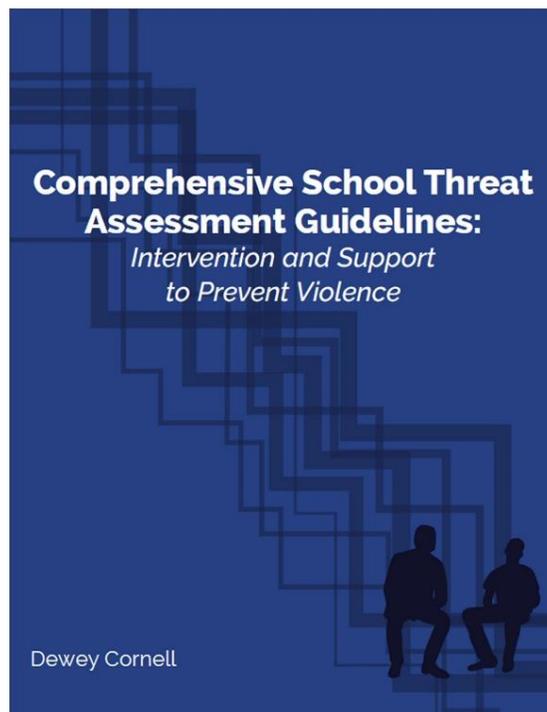
Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines

Dewey Cornell, Ph.D.

New Violence Prevention Manual

Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines (CSTAG) is the sequel to *Guidelines for Responding to Student Threats of Violence*, updated with more than a decade of new research and practical experience.

- ❖ CSTAG retains the original Virginia Student Threat Assessment Guidelines (VSTAG), but introduces a streamlined decision tree, more comprehensive forms, and guidance on threats by adults.
- ❖ Intended for K-12 school-based multidisciplinary teams including administration, law enforcement, and mental health.
- ❖ Incorporates guidance from the FBI and U.S. Secret Service reports on school shootings.
- ❖ Allows teams to evaluate student and adult threats of violence, quickly resolve less serious transient threats and take appropriate action in response to more serious, substantive threats.
- ❖ Manual includes forms that can be freely copied and customized. See www.schoolta.com
- ❖ Developed in 2001, widely implemented across U.S. and Canada
- ❖ Recognized as an evidence-based practice in 2013 by the federal government's National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices (NREPP).



Our published studies found that schools using this model were able to resolve threats safely and effectively, allowing almost all students to return to school. Fewer than 1% of threats resulted in a physical act of violence (all fights with no serious injuries). Studies also found that schools had lower suspension rates and fewer alternative school transfers, with no racial/ethnic disparities for Black and Hispanic students. Students in special education programs received similar outcomes to other students. On school climate surveys, students and teachers reported less bullying and more positive perceptions of school climate than students and teachers in control group schools.

\$50 per manual. 10% discount for purchases of 20+.

Available from Amazon.com or by purchase order from School Threat Assessment Consultants LLC at www.schoolta.com. ISBN 978-0-692-19210-8 Email dcornell@schoolta.com for information on workshops.



Dewey Cornell, Ph.D. is a forensic clinical psychologist who holds the Bunker Chair as Professor of Education at the University of Virginia. Dr. Cornell directs the Virginia Youth Violence Project and has studied youth violence and school safety for more than 30 years. Based on his clinical evaluations of young homicide offenders and school shootings, and his work assisting the FBI's National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime in its study of school shootings, he led the development of the Virginia Student Threat Assessment Guidelines. Since the first field-testing in 2001, he has directed a series of published studies demonstrating the value of this model and has trained thousands of threat assessment teams. In 2015, he was recognized as a Promise Champion by the Sandy Hook Promise Foundation.

THREAT ASSESSMENT AND RESPONSE PROTOCOL®

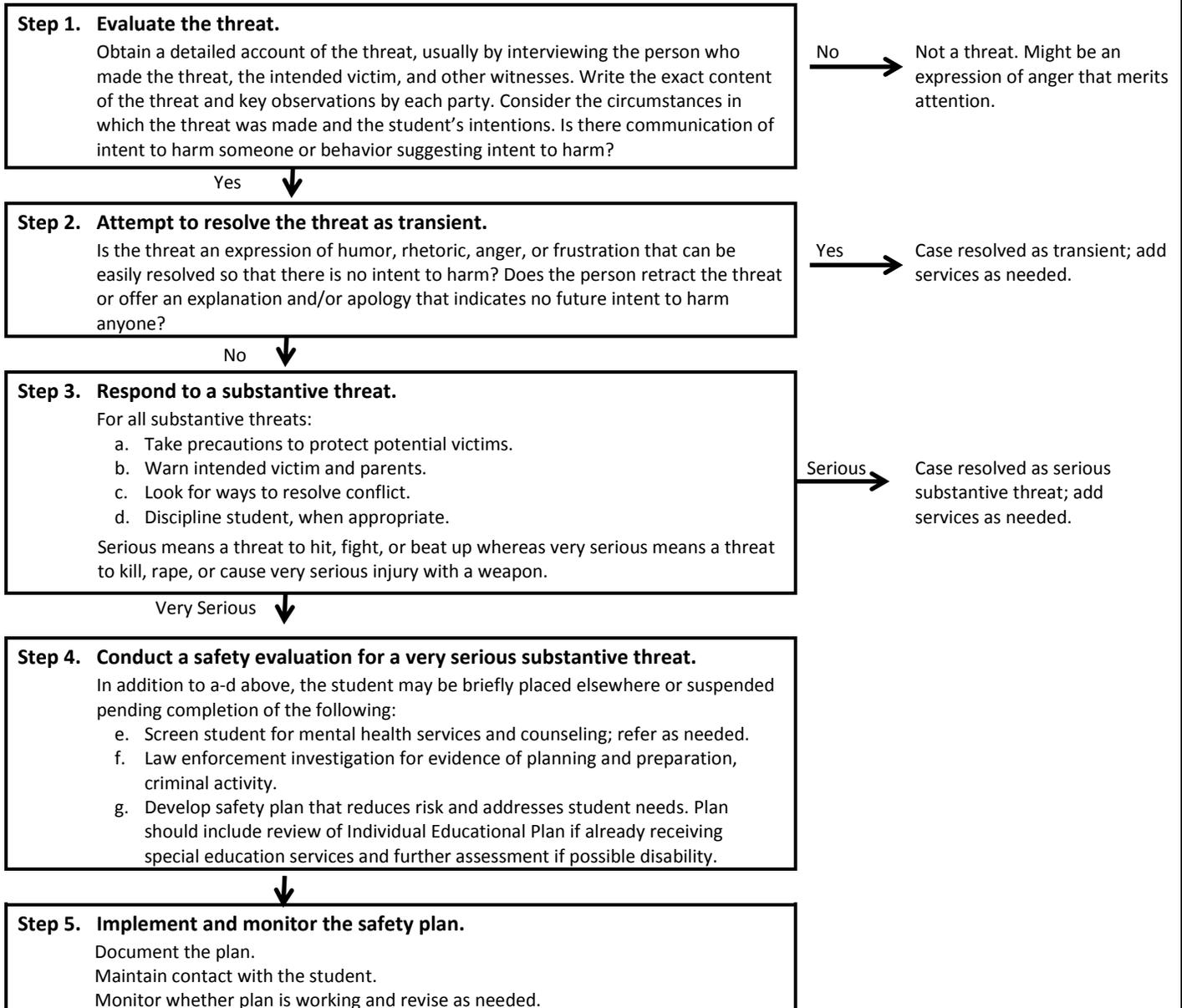
Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines

OVERVIEW

A threat is a communication of intent to harm someone that may be spoken, written, gestured, or expressed in some other form, such as via text messaging, email, or other digital means. An expression of intent to harm someone is considered a threat regardless of whether it is communicated to the intended target(s) and regardless of whether the intended target is aware of the threat. Threats may be implied by behavior that an observer would reasonably regard as threatening, planning, or preparing to commit a violent act. When in doubt, treat the communication or behavior as a threat and conduct a threat assessment. Threats that are not easily recognized as harmless (e.g., an obvious joke that worries no one) should be reported to the school administrator or other team members. The administrator or another team member makes a preliminary determination of the seriousness of the threat. The student, targets of the threat, and other witnesses should be interviewed to obtain information using this protocol. A *transient* threat means there is no sustained intent to harm and a *substantive* threat means the intent is present (or not clear) and therefore requires protective action. This form is a guide for conducting a threat assessment, but each case may have unique features that require some modification.

A threat assessment is not a crisis response. If there is indication that violence is imminent (e.g., a person has a firearm at school or is on the way to school to attack someone), a crisis response is appropriate. Take immediate action such as calling 911 and follow the school crisis response plan.

School Threat Assessment Decision Tree*



*This 5-step decision tree is a revision of the original 7-step decision tree for the Virginia Student Threat Assessment Guidelines that retains the same information and procedures in a more condensed format.