
School-Based Threat Assessment: Salem-Keizer Cascade Model Approach to Preventing and Responding to School Violence

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Objectives

- School-Based Threat Assessment
- House Bill 1216
- Risk Factors
- When to do a threat assessment
- Threat Assessment Flow Chart
- Scenarios

Common Misconception

The Threat Assessment process is not intended to be the first step in permanently removing a student from school. Such a scenario is rare and is not the goal of the process. Instead, you and your Level 1 Team should view the Threat Assessment as an inclusive process. Focus on clearly understanding the nature and extent of the threat, as well as determining what support is needed to ensure the student can safely attend school.

Washington ESDs served

1 million+ students

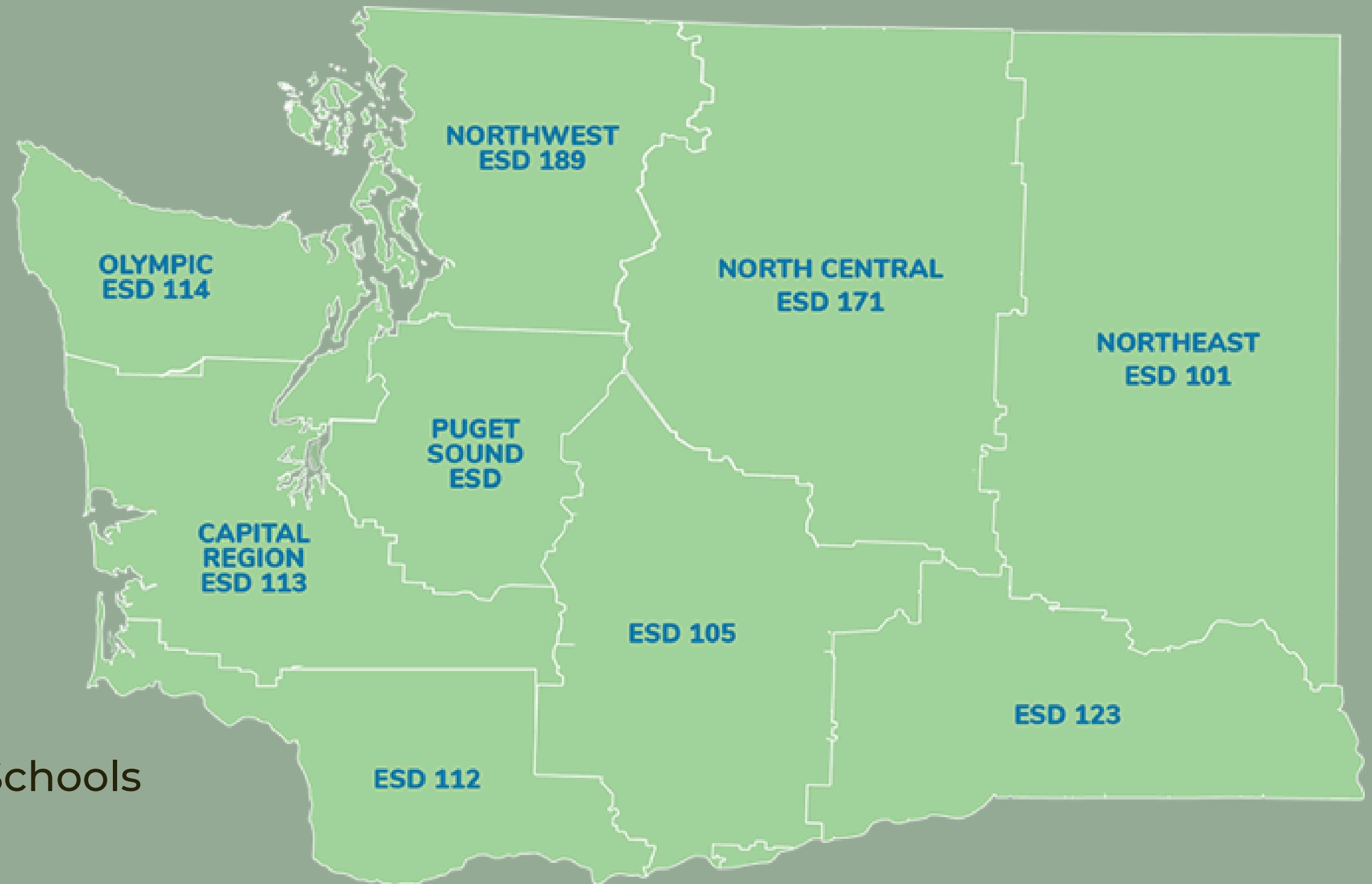
295 School Districts

700+ Private Schools

16 Public Charter Schools

7 State Tribal Education Compact Schools

2 State Schools



HB 1216

SCHOOL SAFETY & THREAT ASSESSMENT

RCW 28A.320.123



Prompted by the behavior of a student



Convene a multidisciplinary, multiagency team



Develop and implement intervention strategies



Timely & methodical



Identify, gather, and assess the (potentially) threatening **behavior** of a student



Prohibit suspension or expulsion based exclusively on a pending Threat Assessment



Align with other policies and procedures addressing a safe and supportive environment

Districts > ESDs > OSPI Collect, report, & review statewide quantitative data



What is threat assessment?

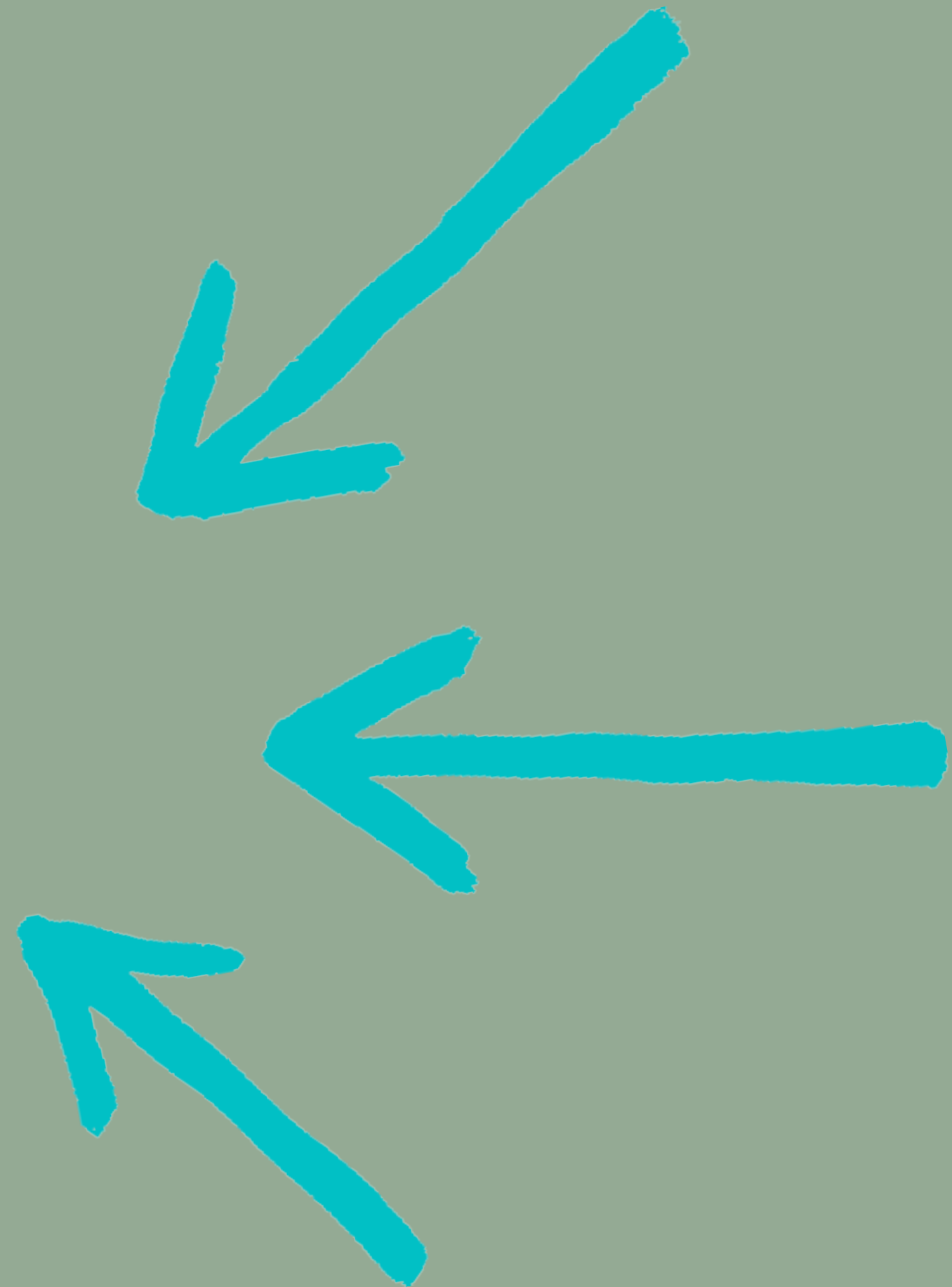
As defined by the Secret Service

The primary purpose of a threat assessment is to prevent targeted violence. The threat assessment process is centered upon analysis of the facts and evidence of behavior in a given situation. The appraisal of risk in a threat assessment focuses on actions, communications, and specific circumstances that might suggest that an individual intends to mount an attack and is engaged in planning or preparing for that event.



What is a threat?

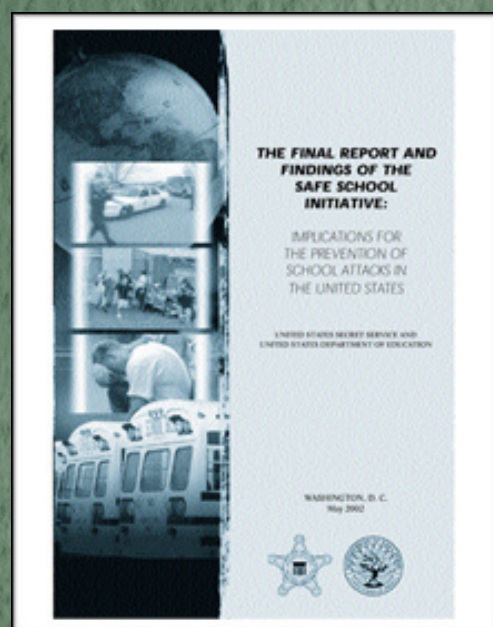
Any spoken, written, electronic or behavioral communication of intent to physically injure or harm someone else. A threat may be communicated directly to the intended victim or communicated to a third party.



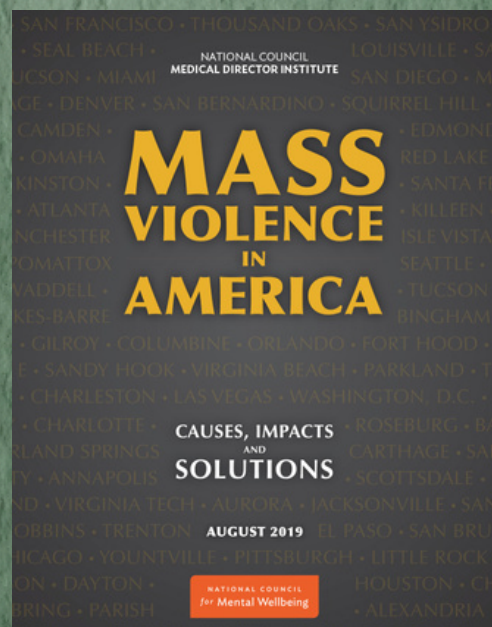
Ten Things We Know About School Violence

Reports from Federal Agencies based on interviews with students who attempted or completed mass violence at school

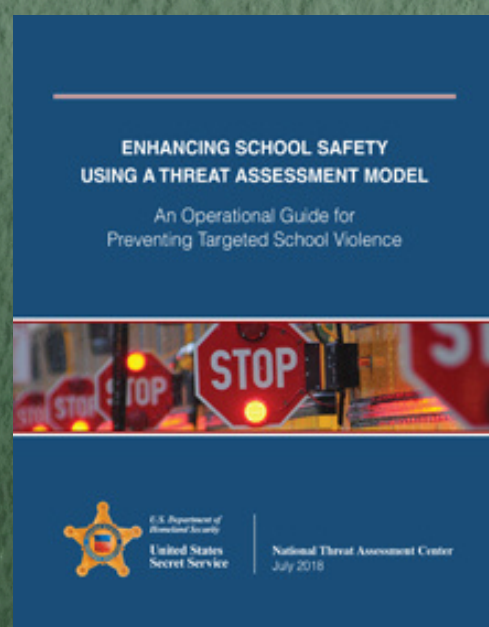
Secret Service and Department of Education



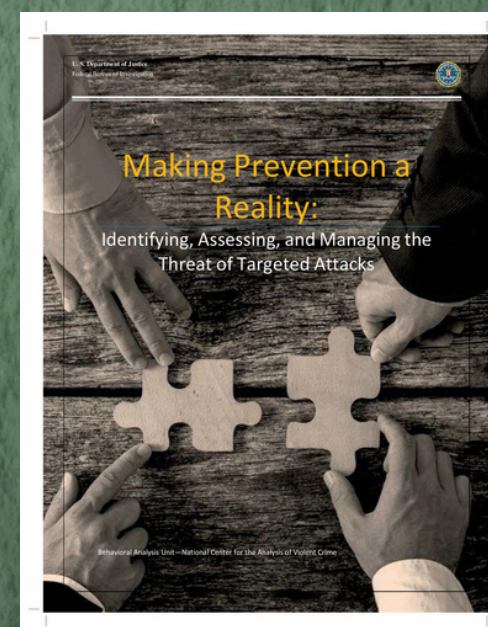
National Council for Behavioral Health



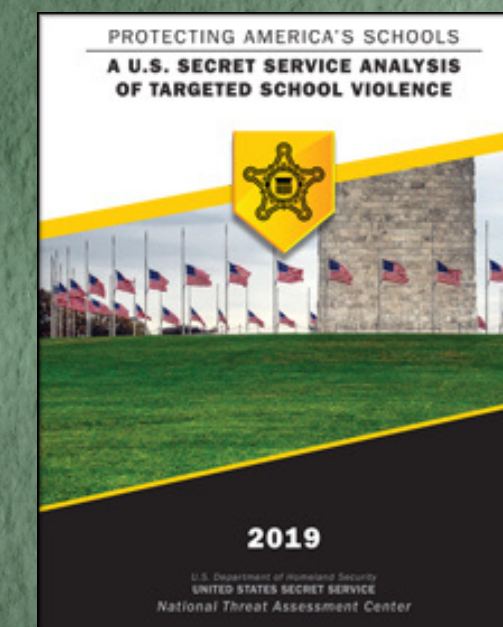
Secret Service



FBI and Department of Justice



Secret Service



10 Things We Know About School Violence

1. There is no profile of a student offender.

2. Students usually have multiple motives.

-Revenge for a grievance

-Quest for justice

-Desire for notoriety or recognition

-Desire to solve a problem perceived to be unbearable

-Desire to kill or be killed

3. Most students used firearms, and firearms were most often acquired from the home.

10 Things We Know About School Violence

4. Most students had experienced psychological, behavioral, or developmental symptoms. Depression, suicidal ideation, ADD/ADHD, Defiance or Misconduct disorders, developmental delays/cognitive deficits.

Half of the students had received one or more mental health services prior to their attack.

5. The student has an interest in current or historical violent topics, events, or groups.

Fixation/preoccupation

10 Things We Know About School Violence

6. The student has experienced stressors in various areas of their lives. Half the students experienced at least one significant stressor within two days of the attack.

- Social stressors with peers and/or romantic partners**
- Family and home conflicts**
- Academic or disciplinary actions**

7. The student has experienced negative home life factors.

10 Things We Know About School Violence

8. Most students were victims of bullying, often observed by others. Over half of the students were bullied in a persistent pattern that lasted for weeks, months, or years.

9. Students had a history of school disciplinary actions and prior contact with law enforcement. Punitive measures are not preventative. If a student elicits concerns or poses a risk of harm to self or others, removing the student from the school may not always be the safest option.

10. Students exhibited concerning behaviors prior to an incident.

- Most students elicited concern from others
- Most communicated their intent to attack



Why relationships matter

Risk Factors

- **Has there been a shift toward a threat of extreme aggression or violence?**
- **Have there been threatening communications suggesting a potentially violent attack?**
- **Are actions and behaviors consistent with communications?**
- **Is there peer collaboration?**
- **Are there indications of a motive, goal, or justification for a serious or lethal attack?**

Risk Factors

- **Are alternatives and emotional coping reserves decreasing?**
- **Are there indications of a specific target or targets?**
- **Are there indications of suicidal thoughts?**
- **Are there personality or behavioral traits, family dynamics, school system issues, or social dynamics that lead to a more vulnerable and potentially dangerous situation?**

Code of Silence

- **Loyalty**
- **Seriousness**
- **Fear of reprisal**
- **Mistrust of System**

Leakage

- **Most Reveal Information**
- **Verbal Cues**
- **Social Media**
- **Drawings**
- **Written**
- **Change in Behavior**



THE CULTURE OF A SCHOOL
HAS FAR-REACHING IMPACTS
ON EVERY ASPECT OF THE
ORGANIZATION.

Making A Threat

Any spoken, written, electronic or behavioral communication of intent to physically, injure or harm someone else.

A threat may be communicated directly or indirectly to the victim

People who make threats may or may not also pose a threat

Posing A Threat

Person's behavior indicates an intent, plan, or preparation to harm someone else.

Warning behaviors and signs of Pathway to Violence

People who pose a threat may not also make a threat

Reactive Violence

- Student is in crisis
- Emotion-driven
- Overstimulated: too much to deal with
- Impulsive
- Lack of planning
- Unable to manage emotions
- Lack of coping skills
- Feels threatened

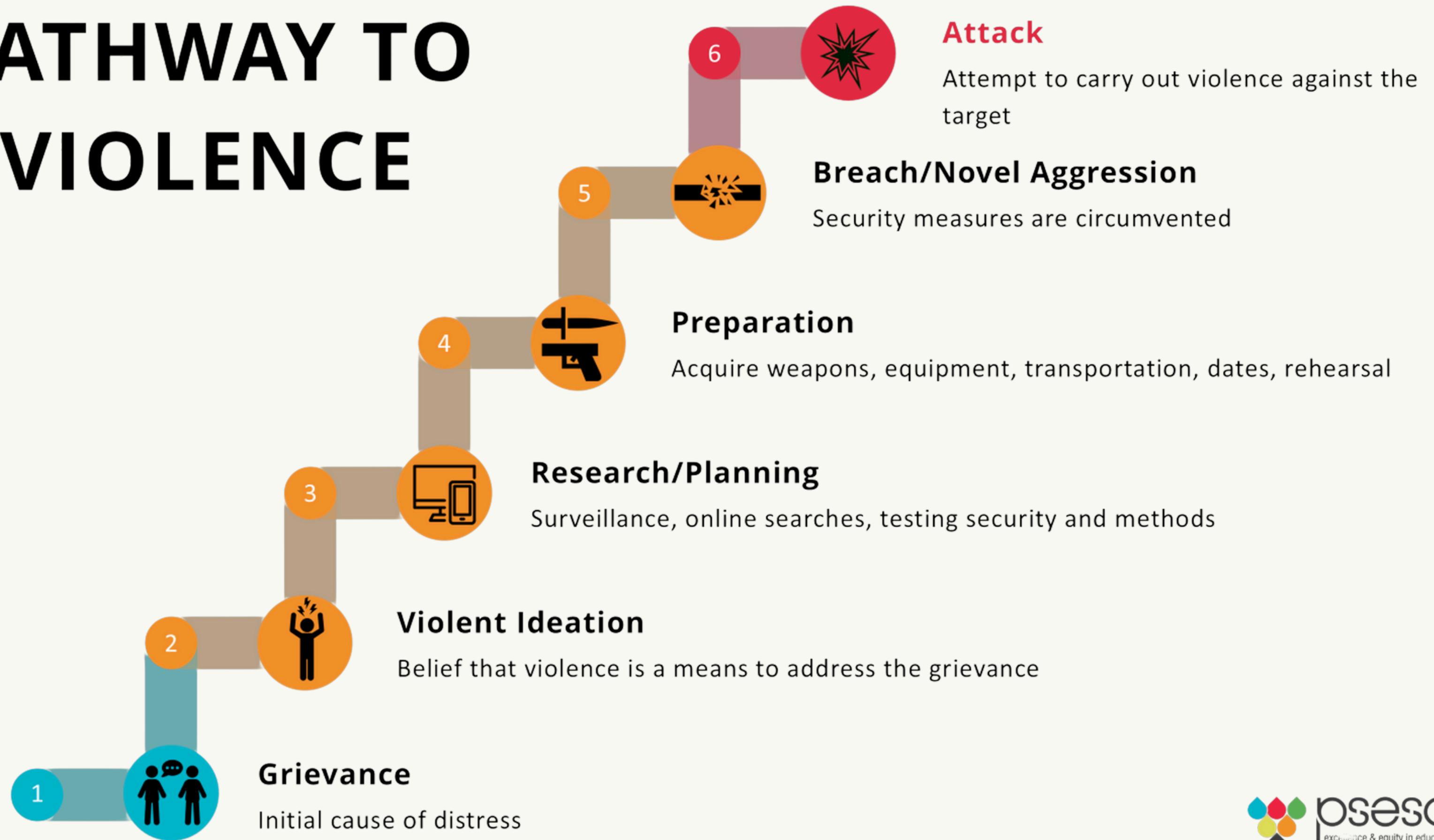


Targeted Violence

- Premeditated/Planned
- Based on a belief system
- Predatory
- Intends to Harm
- Looking for control
- Escalating behaviors



PATHWAY TO VIOLENCE



Continuum of Aggression



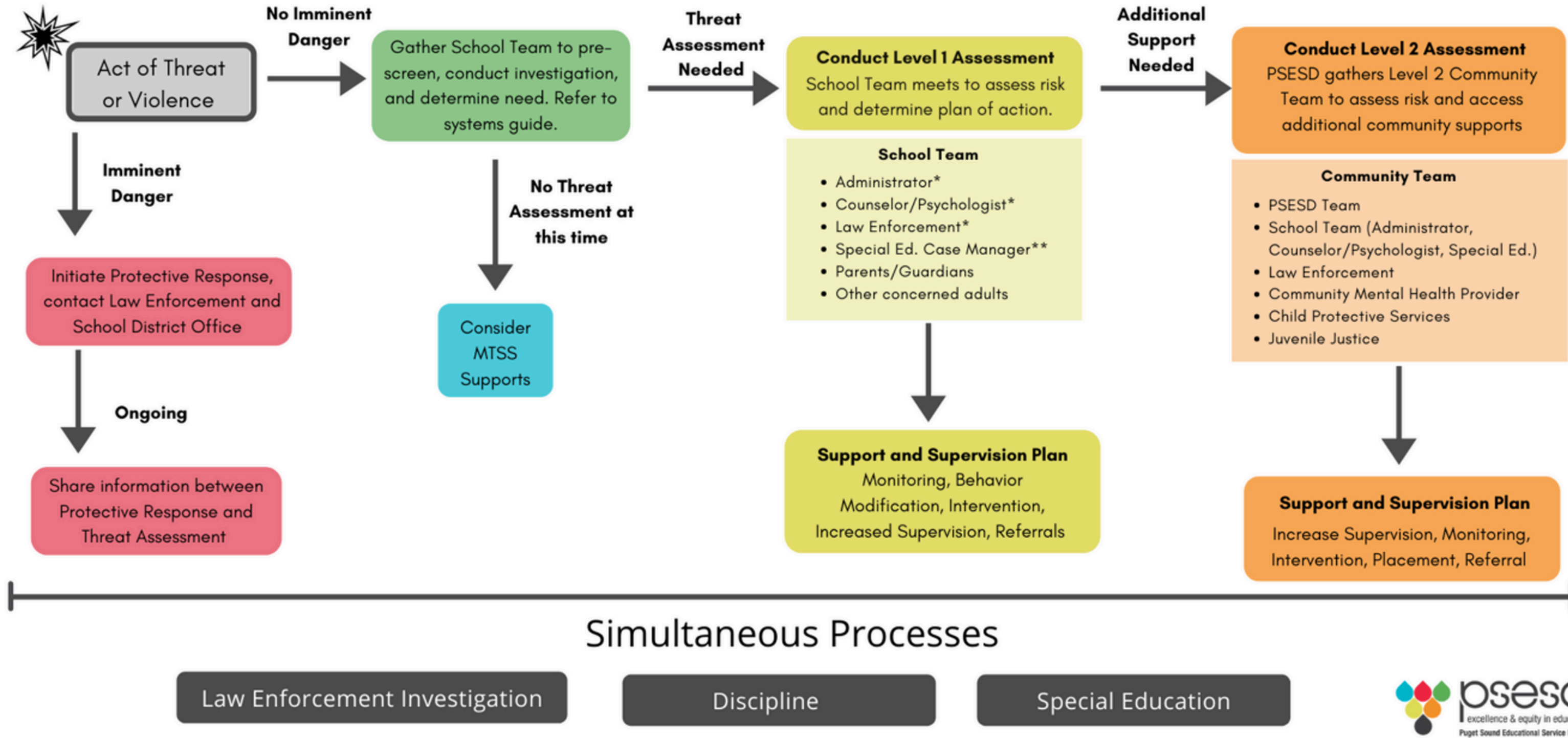
Sexual Language or Threat: SIRC

The SIRC model provides a multi-disciplinary, multi-stage system for:

- **Assessing problematic behavior:** A team of school administrators, counselors, and community members assesses the risk level of the sexual behavior.
- **Developing a safety plan:** Depending on the risk, the committee creates a safety and supervision plan to protect students. Referrals to community agencies.
- **Distinguishing behavior:** The process helps distinguish between normal, problematic, and predatory sexual behavior based on the student's development and context.

**Not done by PSESD, only done by NWESD
Not required by HB 1216**

Student Threat Assessment System Flow Chart



Salem-Keizer Cascade Threat Assessment Objectives

-John Van Dreal



Identify and assess threats of potentially harmful or lethal behavior



Organize strategies to manage situations involving students that pose a threat.



Utilize resources to avoid exclusion and keep students in school.



Maintain a sense of psychological safety in school community, allowing for teaching and learning free of distractions caused by fear.

Salem-Keizer Cascade Model

Level 1

School-based response



Attendees

- Administrators*
- Counselor/ School Psychologist*
- Law Enforcement/SRO*
- Special Education**
- School Safety
- Parent/Legal Guardian
- PSESD Facilitator

Level 2

Community-based resources



Attendees

- School Representatives
- PSESD Facilitator
- Special Ed/ School Psychologist
- Juvenile Justice
- Child Protective Services
- Law Enforcement
- Mental Health
- Race/Equity Consultant

When to do a Level One

ALWAYS complete a threat assessment when a student:



- A weapon was brought to school or there was an attempt to bring one.
- The threat or aggression is specific to an identified target, with a motive, and plan.
- Threat, aggression, or violence is causing considerable fear or disruption to activity.
- A continued intent to carry out threat is present.
- There is a history of threats, aggression, or violence.
- Staff, parent, or student perceives threatening circumstances.
- Administrator is unable to determine if a situation poses risk to school personnel or the community.

Level 1 Processes

1

Initial Investigation

1. Meet with student, gather information, records review
2. Share findings with School Team and PSESD Team
3. Determine need for Threat Assessment
4. Schedule or Dismiss and follow up with MTSS Supports

2

Interviews

1. Student interview
2. Parent/Guardian interview
3. Teacher witness questionnaire
4. Student witness interview

3

During Meeting

Salem-Keizer Cascade
Threat Assessment Protocol
Packet

No other notes!

Support & Supervision Plan

Prevention Strategies

- Maintaining or build trusting relationships
- Build on strengths and supports
- Maintain student agency and participation

Intervention Strategies

- Increase or improve emotional and physical safety of school community
- Individual strategies for student, including supervision, changes at school and home
- Restorative practice as you address consequences and discipline

SUPPORT & SUPERVISION PLAN

INDIVIDUAL

How can the student self-manage their support?



FAMILY

How can the family improve or increase safety, supervision, and support?

SCHOOL

What safety plans, interventions, adaptations and preventative steps can the school provide?



COMMUNITY

What community-based services would help the student and/or the family?

LEVEL 1 FOLLOW UP

Immediately After the Level 1

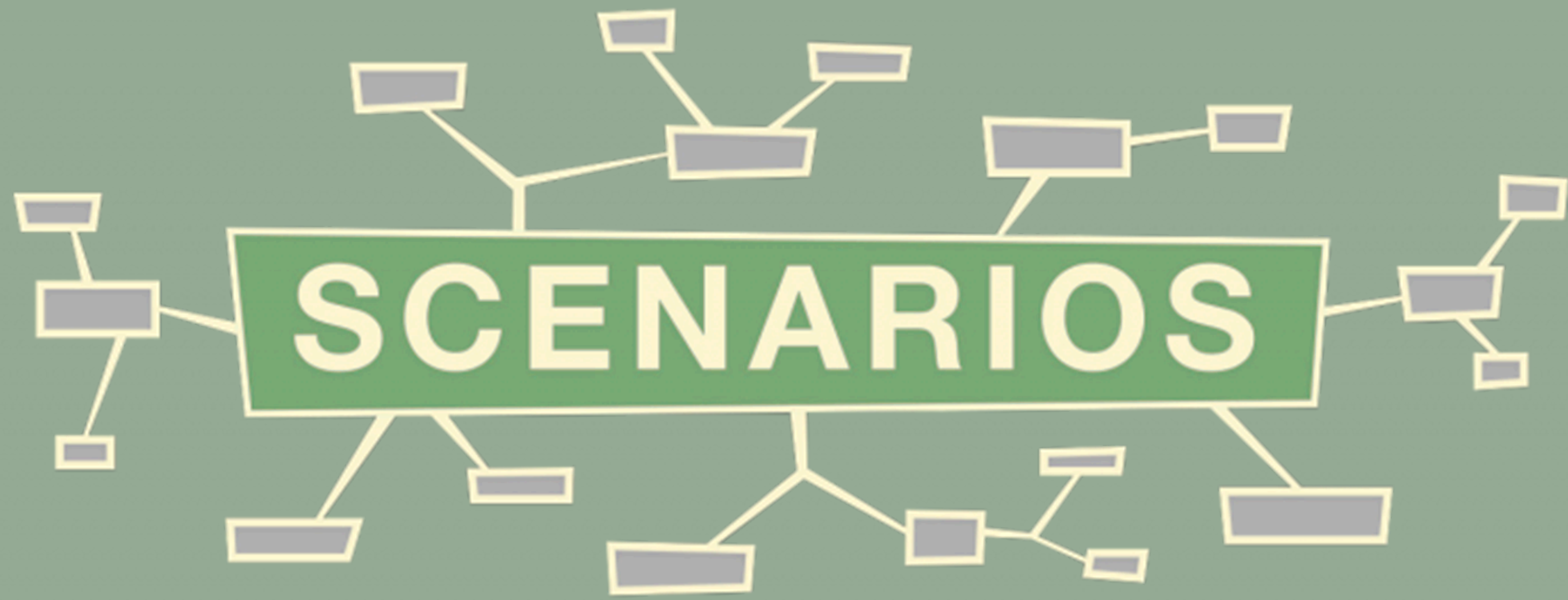
Send Level 1 Data
Form to PSESD

In the Weeks Following a Level 1

The Support and
Supervision Plan is
active and managed
by the Administrator
for the month
following the Level 1.

One Month After a Level 1

The Administrator
reviews the Safety
and Support Plan 30
days after the Level 1.



Is a Level 1 threat assessment appropriate?

A student brings a large knife in his/her backpack; says they used it hunting with their father the previous weekend and forgot it was there.



Is a Level 1 threat assessment appropriate?

Two students in a self-contained classroom are in constant conflict and very close to fighting. One is very aggressive, engaging in combative talk, threatening teachers and students if he doesn't get his way, is extremely irritable and has a very short fuse. The other is a follower who can become extremely explosive and aggressive when pushed.



Is a Level 1 threat assessment appropriate?

A student brings a knife to school to protect himself from other students that have been bullying and harassing him.



Interested in joining our Community Team?

- Comprised of community members from various agencies; DCYF, Harborview Abuse and Trauma Center, probation and juvenile justice, law enforcement, clinicians in private practice, etc.
- What would you do?
- Time commitment--training: 60 minutes, threat assessment: approx. 2 hours
- If interested, email **smenard@pseud.org**

Any
Questions?
