

Only those with experience or training in conducting threat assessment should use these materials.

Interviews

When a concerning behavior is reported, obtain a specific account of the behavior by interviewing the person who elicited concern if appropriate to the circumstances. Interview the potential target(s), and other witnesses. Write the exact content of the concern by each party. Consider the context of the behavior or communications. **Interviews are opportunities for individuals to provide their perspective or additional context to observed behavior or communications. Interviews should focus on rapport building and should not be interrogative. Consider completing the interview in pairs, with two threat assessment team members in each interview. It is beneficial if one person takes notes during the interview.**

Person of Concern

Name:

Location:

Interviewer(s) Name and Title:

Date and Time:

Use these questions as a guide to interview relevant teachers and staff. These questions are a starting point and should not be read verbatim; additional questions may be appropriate and helpful in understanding a student's behavior. Use open-ended questions and focus on rapport-building. Let the interviewee know that you are trying to gather clear and accurate information about the incident and other relevant behaviors, and that you want to give them an opportunity to provide their version of the events.

Prior to asking the questions outlined below, initiate a role clarification to establish shared expectations and an understanding of the threat assessment process. Initiating role clarification can help build rapport; the steps outlined below should be followed in order.

- *Step 1: Provide an overview of the mission and goals of the behavioral threat assessment program.*
- *Step 2: Provide an overview of your role on the behavioral threat assessment team, and what you hope to accomplish during the interview.*
- *Step 3: Provide an overview of the interview process and behavioral threat assessment process:*
 - *Explain that we are trying to keep all students, and the school, safe.*
 - *Discuss the behavioral threat assessment and interview process,*
 - *Explain what is required of the teacher, and*
 - *Identify the roles of other individuals involved in the behavioral threat assessment process.*
- *Step 4: Discuss expectations of confidentiality:*
 - *Explain what information can be shared in accordance with FERPA; and*
 - *Who has access to the responses from this interview?*

1. What happened today when you were [place of incident]? (Record person's exact words with quotation marks for key statements if possible.)

2. Describe what you said and did during this incident.

3. Describe what you meant by those words or actions.

4. What were you hoping to accomplish by [making that statement/engaging in that behavior]?

5. How are you feeling now?

6. What are you planning to do now?

7. What are some alternative ways we could work together to resolve this issue?

8. Do you ever think about hurting yourself or others? Note: thoughts of causing harm to self or others should result in an immediate suicide screening and follow up.

If the student answered yes to the question above, ask additional open-ended questions to understand the circumstances surrounding these ideations and whether they have taken any steps toward advancing their intentions.

9. Do you have access to any weapons? Have you ever researched or practiced using weapons? (Reminder for interviewer: weapons are not limited to firearms and can include knives, chemicals, or explosives.)

If the student has access to firearms, ask how and where they are stored. Is the subject able to access the firearms using a key or passcode?

10. Has anyone ever told you they were worried because of something you said or did? If yes, ask the student to describe that situation to provide context.

11. Have you ever been interested in violent topics? (This could include serial killers, school shooters, hate groups, mass attacks or other violence). If yes, ask the student to describe the interest to provide context.

12. When you encounter a problem, how do you typically solve it? When you become angry or frustrated, what do you typically do?

13. Are you experiencing any difficulties in your home environment? If so, please describe.

14. Who do you spend your free time with? What do you like to do together?

15. Do you have any hobbies or interests?

16. What are your goals for the future, what interests are you trying to pursue?

17. Have you ever used, or do you currently use any illegal/prescription drugs or alcohol?

18. What else would be important for me to know about what is going on?

19. Who are the people that you think know you the best?

20. Will you show me your social media accounts/cell phone?