Student Threat Assessment as a
Safe and Supportive Prevention Strategy

Final Technical Report

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Model Clarification. The CSTAG model was developed initially in 2001 through research carried out by Dr. Cornell's research team at the University of Virginia. The first CSTAG manual, *Guidelines for Responding to Student Threats of Violence*, was published by Cornell and Sheras in 2006. The revised manual, *Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines*, was published by Cornell in 2018. The CSTAG/VSTAG model should be distinguished from the guidance presented by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services in 2013, "Threat Assessment in Virginia Public Schools: Model Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines."

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The three main goals of this project were to: 1) examine the statewide implementation of student threat assessment in Virginia; 2) determine what student and school outcomes are associated with student threat assessment; and 3) assess how training/technical assistance can improve student threat assessment.

To achieve Goal 1, we examined data across four years from the state's annual School Safety Audit Surveys completed by all schools, the school climate surveys completed by students and staff in secondary schools, and selected interviews with school authorities. We found that all K-12 public schools reported having threat assessment teams and documented more than 12,000 cases during the 2017-18 school year. Although the extent of data collection varied across four years, it appears that all of the cases had been resolved without a serious injury. In approximately 97% of cases, the threat was resolved without the threat-maker attempting to carry out the threat. In the remaining 3% of cases, the threat was averted by school authorities or, in fewer than 1% of cases, involved a fight or assault that did not result in serious injury.

Most students who received a threat assessment received a combination of disciplinary consequences and some form of counseling or support services. The majority (84%) of students were able to continue at their school, with the others transferred to a different school, placed on homebound instruction, or given some other disposition, such as hospitalization or incarceration.

Although the outcomes indicate that the statewide implementation of threat assessment in Virginia has been highly successful, there are areas for improvement. Implementation of threat assessment has been uneven across schools, with approximately 24% of schools reporting that they conducted no formal threat assessments in the 2017-18 school year. In many schools, threat assessment teams met infrequently, with 13.4% reporting no meetings and 10.3% reporting only one meeting during the school year. School authorities expressed a need for more training, consistent with the safety audit report that only 77% of team members had received formal threat assessment training in the past three years. In addition to team training, there is a need to disseminate information about threat assessment procedures to students, parents, and school staff. Notably, the most recent school climate surveys found that only 61% of middle school and 53% of high school staff members were aware that their school had a formal threat assessment process.

Threat assessment was originally developed as a process for preventing violence toward public figures (Fein & Vossekuil, 1999), and later extended to include prevention of school shootings (Borum, Cornell, Modzeleski, & Jimerson, 2010); however, Virginia law broadened threat assessment to include students who threatened to harm themselves, too. This extension of threat assessment beyond its original domain generated concern among school staff. Suicide assessment is a well-established field with an extensive body of research. Suicide assessment is generally recognized as a qualitatively different process that primarily concerns students in need of mental health services who do not pose a threat to others (Erbacher, Singer, & Poland, 2015).

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In this report, we distinguish threat assessments conducted for students who threatened to harm others from those conducted for students who threatened to harm themselves. The overlap between these two categories is relatively small. Threat assessment teams reported that 60% of their cases involved students threatening to harm themselves, 35% involved harm to others, and only 5% threats to both self and others.

To achieve Goal 2 (determine what student and school outcomes are associated with student threat assessment), we correlated threat case data with student and school outcomes. We found that teams made decisions about the seriousness of a threat that were consistent with threat assessment guidelines and that cases seldom resulted in legal actions. Law enforcement officers served on all threat assessment teams, but the cases rarely resulted in criminal charges (5%), arrest (1%), or placement in juvenile detention (< 1%). We also found that Black students were referred for threat assessments at a higher rate than White students; however, there were no disparities between Black, Hispanic, and White students in disciplinary outcomes such as suspension of expulsion, or in law enforcement actions. The equity in outcomes observed for threat assessment cases contrasts markedly with the large racial and ethnic disparities generally observed in American schools.

We compared schools using the Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines (CSTAG) developed at the University of Virginia with schools using general guidelines promulgated by the Department of Criminal Justice Services. The CSTAG model produced lower rates of school suspension, expulsion, and law enforcement action, controlling for differences in school demographics and student characteristics.

To achieve Goal 3 (assess how training/technical assistance can improve student threat assessment), we developed, tested, and updated four online educational programs (for students, parents, staff, and threat assessment teams). All participant groups demonstrated increased knowledge of threat assessment and students in particular endorsed greater willingness to report threats. These online programs were made readily accessible at no cost to schools nationwide. In the past three years, they have been adopted for use by schools by schools in Virginia, 28 other states, and Canada.

The key recommendations from this project are:

1. There should be a state training requirement for members of a school threat assessment team. All team members should obtain a specified level of training before or soon after joining a threat assessment team. Advanced training should be available. The effectiveness of all training programs should be formally evaluated.

2. The state should consider improvements to its training model. Training should place greater emphasis on the negative consequences of exclusionary discipline and recognize that threat assessment presents an alternative to zero tolerance practices. Training should emphasize the use of evidence-based practices in threat assessment and intervention.

3. Schools should be required to provide students, parents, and staff an orientation to their threat assessment practices and the need for threat reporting. Orientation efforts should be evaluated for effectiveness.

4. School teams should provide evidence that they have an active threat assessment team by reporting de-identified information on their cases each year. They should report regular meetings as needed for assessment, management, and training purposes. The state should inquire when schools have an unusually low number of cases and should provide guidance on the frequency and purpose of team meetings.

5. School divisions should conduct an annual evaluation of the quality of each school's threat assessment practices. This evaluation should examine whether school teams are conducting threat assessments consistent with their own guidelines and whether they use evidence-based practices. The evaluation should consider the impact of threat assessment on student adjustment and academic progress, and whether there are disparities in impact on students across demographic groups, including racial/ethnic groups and special education status.

6. Virginia law should clarify that threat assessments should be conducted for threats against others, and that suicide or self-harm assessments should be conducted for threats against self.

7. We recommend that the state school safety audit return to the practice of collecting sufficient case-level information on all threat assessment cases so that quality of implementation and equity of impact on student demographic groups can be examined.

These recommendations are generally consistent with current Virginia law and practices, and some of aspects of them are already in place to a limited degree. The existing school safety audit survey is a source of data to guide an evaluation of each school's threat assessment program, but the current survey does not collect adequate data to evaluate threat assessment functioning or outcomes. Moreover, there must be a process of using the data to identify schools in need of improvement and a mechanism for assisting them.

PROJECT PURPOSE AND GOALS

The overarching purpose of this project was to advance the practice of student threat assessment as an innovative school safety strategy. Threat assessment is a systematic approach to violence prevention designed to distinguish serious threats, defined as behaviors or communications in which a person poses a threat of violence, from cases in which the threat is not serious (Vossekuil et al., 2002). The term "threat assessment" encompasses assessment, intervention, and management of threatening situations (Borum, Cornell, Modzeleski, & Jimerson, 2010). Student threat assessment is intended to maintain school safety by resolving student conflicts or problems before they escalate into violence.

A secondary benefit of threat assessment is to reduce the reliance on school safety practices that have deleterious consequences, such as the use of zero tolerance discipline. As detailed in a national report on school discipline (Morgan, Salomen, Plotkin, & Cohen, 2014), the practice of zero tolerance has supported high rates of exclusionary discipline such as suspension or expulsion from school. Research has found that exclusionary discipline does not improve school safety and has adverse effects on the academic success of students. Exclusionary discipline has been widely criticized for its disproportionate impact on minority students and contribution to the school-to-prison pipeline.

In 2001, researchers at the University of Virginia led by Dewey Cornell (PI of the current project) began research and development on a student threat assessment model known as the Virginia Student Threat Assessment Guidelines (VSTAG). This model was widely disseminated in Virginia schools and was recognized as an evidence-based program by the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP) in 2013. Also in 2013, Virginia legislation mandated that threat assessment teams be established in all K-12 public schools by July 1, 2014. The current project was designed to examine the statewide implementation of threat assessment in Virginia schools, identify implementation needs and practice concerns, and add to the body of research on school safety. Ultimately, the results of this project contribute knowledge in student threat assessment that can be used by schools throughout the United States.

The major goals of the project were to: 1) examine the statewide implementation of student threat assessment in Virginia;; 2) determine what student and school outcomes are associated with student threat assessment; and 3) assess how training/technical assistance can improve student threat assessment. To achieve Goal 1, we examined data across four years from the state's annual school safety audit survey that included information on how often threat assessments occur, characteristics of the threat cases, such as student demographics, team judgements about the threats, and threat outcomes. We collected data from the school climate surveys administered to students and staff in secondary schools and we also conducted interviews with school authorities to obtain qualitative data on threat assessment training needs.

To achieve Goal 2, we correlated threat assessment data collected under Goal 1with data on student and school outcomes obtained from the state's secondary school climate surveys and

statewide disciplinary records for school suspensions. To achieve Goal 3, we developed, tested, and updated four online educational programs (for students, parents, staff, and threat assessment teams). These online programs were made readily accessible at no cost to the schools. In the past three years, they have been adopted for use by schools in Virginia, 28 other states, and Canada.

Results associated with each of these three goals have been published in peer-reviewed journals including the *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*, *Journal of School Violence, School Psychology Quarterly*, and *Teaching and Teacher Education.* Project findings have been widely disseminated at state and national conferences, such as the American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, American Society of Criminology, and Association of Threat Assessment Professionals.

GOAL 1: DETERMINE HOW STUDENT THREAT ASSESSMENT IS IMPLEMENTED IN STATEWIDE PRACTICE

The statewide implementation of threat assessment was examined by analyzing school administrator responses to the state's legally mandated school safety audit survey. Approximately 1,900 public schools completed the survey each year, including information on their threat assessment team and cases they conducted that year. See the 2014-15 Technical Report (i.e., Cornell et al., 2016) for information on initial survey questions and analyses.

In the spring of 2016, the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services decided to curtail its collection of threat assessment case-level data in its annual safety audit survey in order to lessen the reporting burden on schools and agency staff. Case level data included information for each threat assessment case (up to five cases) on the nature of the threat, student demographics, school response to the threat, and outcome of the threat. This change prevented us from examining case-level trends and implementation fidelity over time with the original measures and required a substantial modification in our research plan. This modification was reviewed and approved through the Grant Adjustment Notice process. To a limited degree, we were able to examine some threat assessment trends at the school level.

Implementation Fidelity

Threat assessments cannot be readily observed by researchers because they occur infrequently and unexpectedly in a school, and there are immense difficulties with including researchers in a sensitive and confidential process. Therefore, to examine some aspects of fidelity, we relied on information from the state safety audit system. However, the questions on the safety audit survey were curtailed after the first year, and then repeatedly modified. The repeated modifications in the survey limited our ability to measure changes over time. Without the case-level questions originally agreed upon and collected in the first year of the study, we could not measure whether teams were seeing different kinds of threat cases, making different decisions, or taking different actions over the years of the study. Consequently, we made use of the available information on general characteristics of each school's team. There were seven items that offered some indication of the school's commitment to using threat assessment.

Training

First, we considered how many members of the school's threat assessment team had received formal training in threat assessment. Team training could be obtained at no charge from regional workshops conducted by the Department of Criminal Justice Services. Other sources of training were federal agencies (such as the U.S. Secret Service and Federal Bureau of Investigation), the University of Virginia, and private companies. Teams could vary somewhat in size, but according to state law, must include *"persons with expertise in counseling, instruction, school administration, and law enforcement"* (Virginia Code § 22.1-79.4). The mean percentage of team members in a school who had received formal training in threat assessment in the past

three years was 77% with a range of 0% to 100%. The amount of training was not measured, but most workshops are in the range of one-half to one full day.

Frequency of Meetings

The second indicator of fidelity was the number of times that the threat assessment team met during the year. Meetings are determined largely by the number of threats reported to school authorities for assessment, but teams can also meet for training purposes and to consider general school safety matters. Teams can be expected to meet at least once when a threat is reported, but could also meet more than once when a case requires extensive assessment, the development of an intervention plan, or ongoing monitoring. In many schools, it appears that teams only met when there was a case and only held a single meeting. During the 2017-18 year, 13.4% of teams indicated they did not meet at all, 10.3% of teams met only one time, 14.7% of schools met twice, 12.8% of schools met three times, and 10.3% met four times and 38.5% met five or more times. In 2017-2018, the median number of threat assessment meetings in schools was 3 with a range of 0 to 130 meetings.

Reporting

A third indicator of the school's investment in using threat assessment was the total number of reporting methods (both anonymous and not anonymous) available for students/parents/staff to report threats or concerning behavior. Threat reporting is critical to success of a threat assessment program and schools are encouraged to facilitate student reporting of threats (as well as reporting by others). Reporting methods included comment box/written note, email/tip-line, online application/website, telephone hotline/text message, and face-to-face. In 2017, the number of reporting methods ranged from 0 to 5, with the largest number of schools (1,406, 76.2%) reporting one method and 87 (4.7%) schools reporting no anonymous methods.

Stakeholder Education

In order for threat assessment to be effective, students and staff must be made aware of the threat assessment program and encouraged to report threats or concerning behavior. The 2016 safety audit survey included separate questions asking the types of informational methods used to provide students and staff with awareness of threat assessment policies and processes. Information might be disseminated by any number of methods, such as brochures, websites/email/social media, verbal presentation such as an assembly or faculty meeting, and the school code of conduct/policy. The number of dissemination methods for students ranged from 0 to 5, with the largest number of schools (805, 44%) reporting no dissemination method and 462 (25%) schools reporting one method. The number of dissemination methods for staff ranged from 0 to 5, with the largest number of schools (805, 44%) reporting no dissemination method and 347 (18.8%) schools reporting one method.

The school climate survey administered biannually to secondary school staff inquired whether teachers (and other staff) were aware that their school uses a "formal threat assessment process to respond to student threats of violence." By 2018, only 53% of high school staff were aware that their school uses threat assessment, 2% did not think their school did so, and 45%

responded "I don't know." By 2019, only 61% of middle school staff were aware that their school uses threat assessment, 2% did not think their school did so, and 37% responded "I don't know."

Record-keeping Policy

In 2017, schools were asked whether their division had a policy or procedure for maintaining threat assessment case records. The majority of schools (1,507, 85.7%) reported having a formal policy while 251 (14.3% reported not having a policy or not knowing whether they had a policy. Schools reported maintaining threat assessment case records in a variety of locations including: student's general education files (23%), discipline files (18%), special education files (4%), health files (1.5%), with the threat assessment team (13.5%), with school administration (46%), with the school counselor (30.5%), with law enforcement records (2.5%), or in central division offices (17.5%).

Team Rating

The 2018 survey asked schools for their team's rating of "how closely your team followed your school's threat assessment procedures in conducting threat assessments this year." The scale ranged from 1 = not very closely to 10 = very closely. The range reported by schools was from 1 to 10 with a median of 9 and the largest number of schools (757, 49.7%) giving themselves a 10. Team rating was significantly positively correlated with number of meetings (r = .090, p <.01), number of ways information was disseminated to students and staff (r = .068, p < .01), the percent of team trained in the past 3 years (r = .135, p < .01), and if the division had a policy/procedure for maintaining case records (r = .168, p < .01). Ideally, an independent evaluator would rate each team based on a detailed assessment of how well they conducted their threat assessment program.

Fidelity Index

We constructed an index of threat assessment practice fidelity based on the seven available items (training, frequency of meetings, threat reporting, stakeholder education for students and for staff, record-keeping, and team rating) . These questions were not asked in the same year, so we used the most recent year available for each individual question. This index was not intended to be a psychometric scale because it covers a heterogenous set of items. To create the index, each variable was converted to a 0 or 1, with a 1 representing a value at or above the median for all schools for that variable and a 0 representing a value below the median of all schools for that variable. We then summed these values for each school to get a fidelity index score for that school (range = 0 to 7).

Across all schools (n = 1,758), the mean fidelity of threat assessment implementation index score was 4.8 (SD = 1.6). Fidelity was similar across school types; M = 4.9, SD = 1.5 for high schools, M = 4.9, SD = 1.5 for middle schools, and M = 4.7, SD = 1.6 for elementary schools. There was a small but statistically significant positive correlation between school size and fidelity index score (r = .132, p = .01).

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The fidelity index score was correlated with school-level discipline and school climate survey measures (Table 1). There were statistically significant correlations between fidelity and the number of threat assessment cases ($r = .225$, $p < .001$), and school records of short-term suspensions ($r = -.049$, $p = .047$). Middle schools and high schools completed school climate surveys in different years. These analyses used the middle school climate surveys from 2017 and high school climate surveys from 2018. There were statistically significant correlations between fidelity and several school climate survey items in middle schools but not high schools. For middle schools, fidelity was correlated with the school climate survey item asking staff whether they knew that their school had a threat assessment team ($r = .201$, $p < .001$). Fidelity was also correlated with student willingness to report a classmate threatening to kill someone ($r = .173$, $p = .001$), student willingness to report a classmate bringing a gun to school ($r = .143$, $p = .009$), and student perceptions of feeling safe at school ($r = .109$, $p = .046$) in middle schools. There were no statistically significant correlations between fidelity and high school climate indicators. A more discerning fidelity index might be constructed with additional data from schools on their threat assessment cases.

Table 1
Correlations Between Fidelity Index Score and Selected Discipline and School Climate Measures

	Correlation with Fidelity Index r	p	Number of schools N
Number of threat assessments	**.225**	<.001	1743
Short-term suspension rate (2015-16)	**-.049**	.047	1625
Long-term suspension rate (2015-16)	.010	.637	1625
% of MS staff that know there is a TAT	**.201**	<.001	322
% of HS staff that know there is a TAT	.057	.331	298
Student willingness to report threat to kill (MS students)	**.173**	.001	337
Student willingness to report threat to kill (HS students)	.046	.428	303
Student willingness to report another student bringing a gun to school (MS students)	**.143**	.009	337
Student willingness to report another student bringing a gun to school (HS students)	.019	.746	298
I feel safe (MS students)	**.109**	.046	337
I feel safe (HS students)	-.053	.362	303

Note. Correlations in bold are statistically significant at p < .05.

Longitudinal Trends in Threat Assessment

Virginia has approximately 1,098 elementary, 337 middle, and 311 high schools as well as 212 other schools (e.g., preschools, special education centers, combined schools). In the first year after the state mandate (2014-15), all 1,958 Virginia public schools affirmed that they had a threat assessment team as required by state law.

In 2016, the state law requiring threat assessments of students was broadened to include all individuals making threats. In 2016-17, schools reported that approximately 2% of their threat assessment cases involved non-students (e.g., former students, parents, staff, students from another school). For purposes of this project, analyses were conducted on threats made by students and compared elementary, middle, and high schools, omitting other schools.

School safety audit data indicated only 971 schools (57%) reported that they had conducted at least one student threat assessment during the 2014-15 school year. However, four years after the mandate was in place 76% of schools reported at least one student threat assessment (Figure 1). The average number of threat assessments conducted in each school increased from $M = 2.9$ threat assessments ($SD = 6.1$) in 2014-15 to $M = 7.3$ cases per school ($SD = 13.5$) in 2017-18. Elementary schools were less likely to report a threat assessment than middle or high schools. In 2017-18, the percentage of schools with at least one case was 70% for elementary schools, 88% for middle schools, and 83% for high schools.

Figure 1
Percentage of Virginia Elementary, Middle, and High Schools Conducting at Least One Threat Assessment
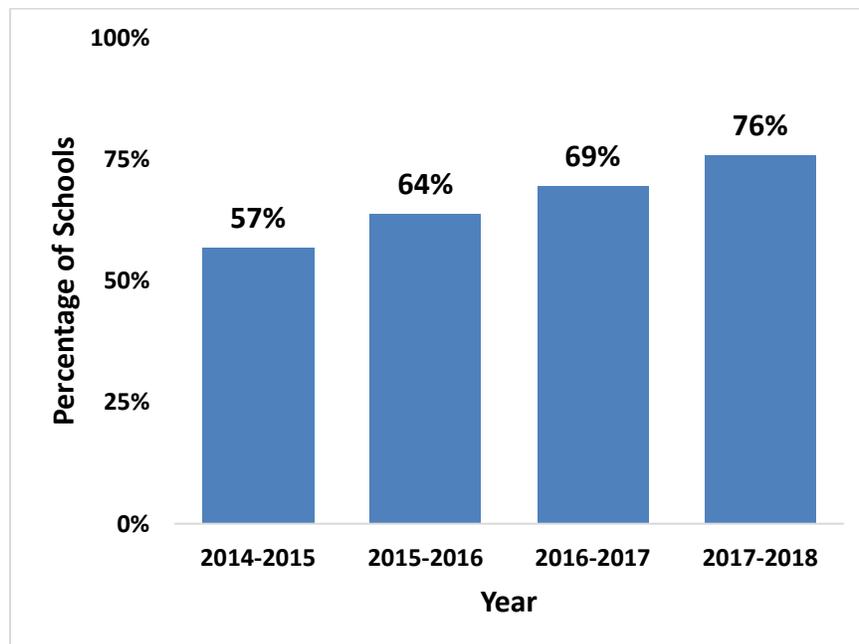
Table 2

Total[1] Student Threat Assessment Cases by School Type

	Elem		Middle		High		All Schools	
	Total Threats	M (SD)	Total Threats	M (SD)	Total Threats	M (SD)	Total Threats	M (SD)
2014-15	1,991	1.8 (3.8)	1,712	5.1 (8.6)	1,431	4.6 (8.1)	5,134	2.9 (6.1)
2015-16	2,790	2.5 (4.9)	2,094	6.3 (10.0)	1,749	5.6 (9.0)	6,633	3.7 (7.1)
2016-17	3,431	3.1 (5.9)	2,969	8.8 (14.0)	2,251	7.1 (11.3)	8,651	4.9 (9.4)
2017-18	5,364	4.9 (7.6)	4,085	12.0 (20.3)	3,439	11.0 (17.5)	12,888	7.3 (13.5)

Note. This includes all targets (other, self, or both other and self). This is not the number of threats that occurred in a school, which is unknown, but rather the number of threat assessment cases.

Between 2014 and 2018, the number of schools with threat cases increased by approximately 20% (Figure 1) and the total number of cases of threats directed toward others statewide increased from 2,693 to 5,274 (Table 2). Despite the increase in the number of schools reporting at least one threat case, the mean number of threat assessment cases involving student threats directed only toward others remained relatively stable between 2014 and 2018, ranging between $M = 2.8$ ($SD = 4.2$) cases per school in 2014-15 and $M = 3.1$ ($SD = 4.7$) cases per school in 2016-17 (Figure 2). Threats involving both self-harm and another person also remained stable, ranging between $M = .20$ ($SD = .58$) cases per school in 2014-15 and $M = .43$ ($SD = 1.3$) cases per school in 2017-18.

Between 2014 and 2018, the total number of cases of threats directed toward self statewide increased from 2,274 to 7,832 (Figure 2). The mean number of cases of student threats of self-harm only per school increased from approximately $M = 2.5$ ($SD = 6.1$) cases per school in 2014-15 and $M = 4.5$ ($SD = 10.7$) cases per school in 2017-18. The increase in threats to harm self could be attributable to multiple factors, including a population increase in the number of students at risk for self-harm and increased awareness by school authorities that these kinds of cases should be referred to the school's threat assessment team.

Figure 2

Total Student Threat Assessment Cases by Target Type
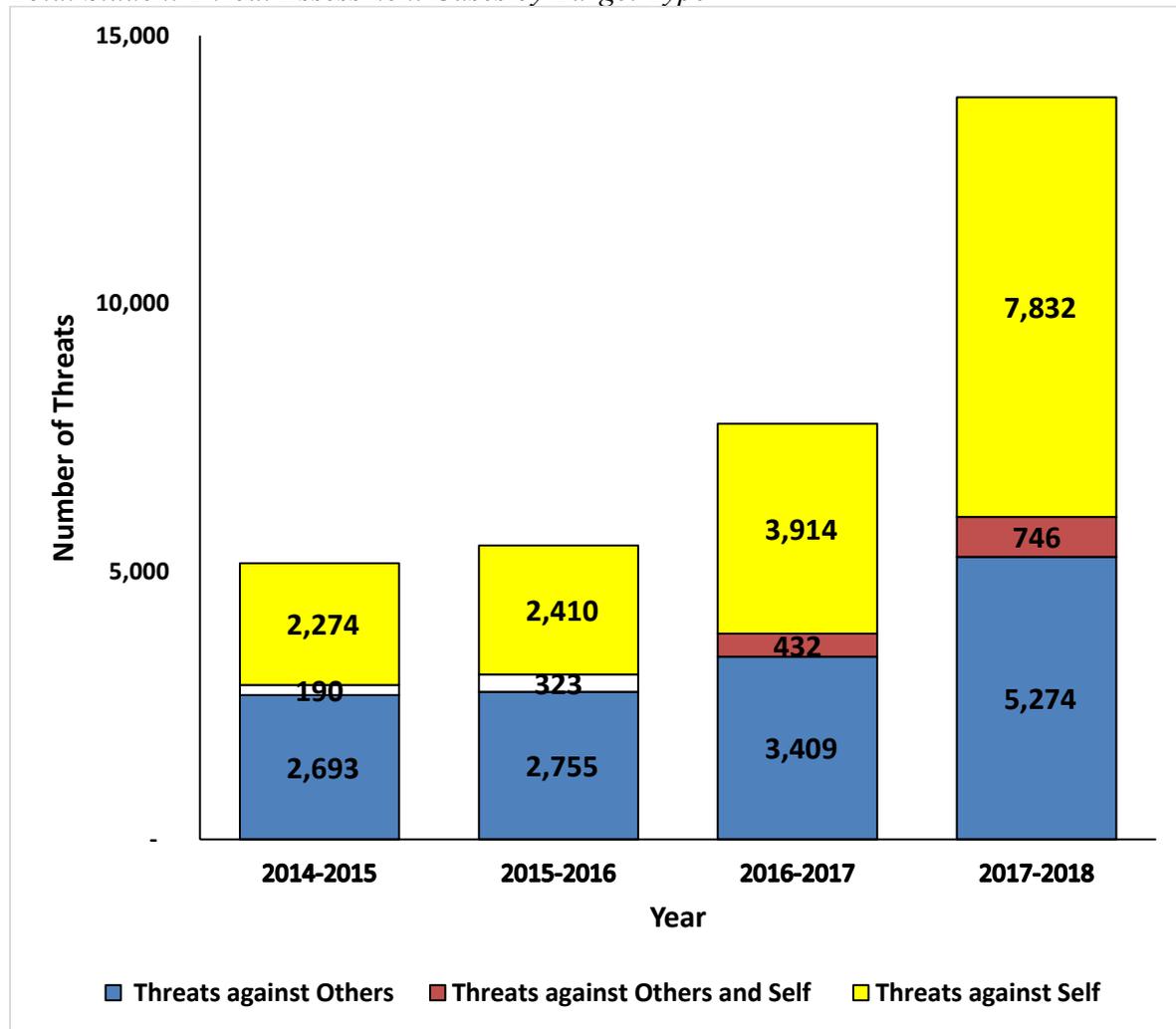
Case Level Outcomes

Threat Assessment versus Suicide Assessment

Threat assessment was developed to respond to threats to harm others and was not intended to replace suicide assessment procedures. However, the Virginia law directed schools to use threat assessment for students who threatened to harm themselves as well as for students who threatened to harm others. Our needs assessment, described below, indicated that school stakeholders were concerned about the inclusion of self-harm cases under the umbrella of threat assessment. Many stakeholders observed that schools already had procedures in place for suicidal students. Furthermore, there was concern that sharing information about students who had thoughts of harming themselves with threat assessment team members was not an appropriate professional practice. School staff such as school counselors who would ordinarily work in confidence with a student expressed concern that they would be required to disclose

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their work with other teams members, such as school resource officers and administrators, who would not ordinarily be given such information.

To shed some light on the concerns about threat assessments for students who threatened to harm themselves, we conducted a study that compared threats to harm others with threats to harm self (Burnette, Huang, Maeng, & Cornell, 2019). The sample consisted of 2,702 cases from 926 Virginia schools in 2014-15. This study identified a number of important differences between threats to harm others versus threats to harm self. Overall, 60% of the cases involved a threat only to harm others, 35% involved a threat only to harm self, and just 5% involved a threat to harm both self and others. This finding is important because it contradicts the perception that students who threaten others are often suicidal, and that students who are suicidal often pose a risk to harm others (Erbacher, Singer, & Poland, 2015).

This study found that threats to self were more likely to be made by females (Odds Ratio, $OR = 3.38$) and students with fewer prior disciplinary actions ($OR = 0.48$). Threats to self were much less likely to involve a weapon ($OR = 0.07$), but more likely to be attempted ($OR = 1.50$) and result in mental health services ($OR = 2.96$). They were much less likely to result in out-of-school suspensions ($OR = 0.07$), legal action ($OR = 0.17$), and/or changes in placement ($OR = 0.53$). All of these Odds Ratios indicate group differences that are large enough to be of practical significance. Overall, these findings support a clear distinction between suicide and threat assessment both in case characteristics and school responses (Burnette et al., 2019).

These results were used to make recommendations to a legislative school safety task force (Cornell, 2018). Legal recommendations included that the state should revise the law to allow schools to address threats to self separately. At the time of this report, the law has not been changed. In terms of practice, we recommended that schools follow the law, but that their internal procedures allow schools to address suicide cases with evidence-based suicide assessment and response protocols, and only bring the details of the case to the attention of the full team if there is a threat to others, too.

Case Characteristics for Student Threats to Harm Others

During the 2014-15 school year, comprehensive case level data were collected for 1,865 students across 824 schools. Schools reported cases involving threats to harm self as well as threats to harm others; however, because of the qualitative differences between threats to harm others and threats to harm self (Burnette et al., 2019), these analyses focused on threats to harm others. Key results are presented below and complete case level results are available in the 2014-15 Technical Report (Cornell et al., 2016).

Prevalence and Characteristics of Threat Cases

The highest frequencies of threats were in grades 4-9 and most (75%) were made by boys. Students in special education were approximately 3 times more likely to make threats than students in regular education. Most threats were verbal (86%), and the most common target was another student (68%). The most common threats were unspecified threats of harm (33%),

followed by threats to kill (23%) or hit/fight (18%). Less common were threats involving use of a weapon (14%) or possession of a weapon (7%). In 5% of cases, a weapon was found in a student's possession or on school property.

Threat Classification and School Responses to Threats

Schools used different methods of classifying threats based on their threat assessment model. However, it was feasible to look across schools for a broad distinction between threats that were regarded as serious or not serious. Approximately two-thirds of threats were classified by the school teams as either Low Risk or Transient, which indicate that the threat did not pose a serious risk of violence.

School responses to student threats varied widely. In most cases, the team notified the student's parents (82%), cautioned the student about the consequences of carrying out the threat (70%), and increased monitoring of the student (55%). In approximately 61% of cases, the threat was resolved with the student giving an explanation or apology. In more serious cases, safety precautions were undertaken. Across all cases, there was consultation with the school resource officer or other school safety specialist (47%), notifying the intended target's parents (35%), protecting and notifying intended targets (38%), developing a behavior intervention or safety plan (23%), and providing direct supervision of the students until removed from campus by law enforcement or a parent (20%).

A guiding principle of threat assessment is that the most effective way to prevent violence is to address the problem or conflict that underlies the threat. Accordingly, students were referred for school-based counseling (32%), mental health assessment (19%), mental health services inside (7%) or outside (14%) of the school system, review of an existing Individualized Education Program (21%) or 504 Plan (2%), special education evaluation (5%), or hospitalization (5%).

Schools reported following disciplinary procedures in 71% of cases. This included out-of-school suspension (43%), reprimand (53%), in-school suspension (16%), or detention (3%). Less frequently, students were recommended for an expulsion that was reduced to an out-of-school suspension (5%) or were expelled (1%). Law enforcement responses included charging the student with an offense (5%), arrest (1%), and placement in juvenile detention (<1%). The majority of students (84%) were able to return to their original school. Placement changes included transfer to an alternative school (8%), placement on homebound instruction (5%), hospitalization (5%), or transfer to a different regular school (1%). These results indicate that schools were not using a zero tolerance approach of applying uniformly harsh discipline for all cases and instead were making differentiated judgements about individual cases.

Prevalence of Attempted Threats

In almost all cases (97%) there was no known attempt to carry out the threat. Although it is reassuring that so few threats were carried out, it cannot be concluded that the threat assessment process prevented the threats from being carried out. Many threats were not serious

and might not have been carried out even in the absence of a threat assessment. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that Virginia has enjoyed many years without a student fatality or a serious violent event in its K-12 public schools.

It is important to study any threats that were attempted in order to learn from them and identify any areas for improvement. There were 49 threats (3%) judged by schools to have been averted when a student attempted to carry them out. All of these cases involved an attempted battery or attempted stabbing. There was no report of a shooting that was attempted and averted in this sample. There were 13 threats (<1%) judged by the schools to have been carried out by the student. These cases primarily involved an assault or fight. One student was stabbed with a pen, but no serious injuries were reported.

High-Level Attempted Threats by Students

For the 2016-17 and 2017-18 school years, schools provided detailed case information only on threat cases meeting two criteria: (1) the threat was classified at the highest threat level (imminent/high risk, very serious substantive) at any point during the threat assessment process and (2) the student attempted to carry out the threat[1]. (See surveys in Appendix A). The survey asked respondents to narratively describe: (1) the type of act threatened, (2) the actual act that took place, (3) the steps taken, if any to prevent the act, (4) and any other information about the event that would help explain the event to us.

During these two years, 52 schools reported at least one high-level attempted threat. With some schools reporting more than one case, there were a total of 82 high level attempted threats from the 21,539 total threats reported. In other words, only 0.4% of the total threats reported in Virginia in the two years 2016-2018 were reported to be high-level attempted threats. Of these 82 threats, 51 involved students who threatened only self-harm and were excluded from subsequent analysis. Another 6 cases were excluded because there was no evidence that a threat assessment was conducted to prevent the act before it was attempted. (It appears that the school reported a violent act that occurred prior to a threat assessment.) Five cases were excluded because they involved threats by parents toward staff or their children and two threats were excluded because they did not take place on school property (or at a school event or traveling to or from school).

Ultimately, there were 18 attempted high-level threats (0.2%; out of 8,683 total threats to harm others, $M = 2$, $SD = 2$, range = 1 to 7) reported in 9 schools between 2016 and 2018. This low percentage of high-level attempted threats is consistent with a prior sample reported by Cornell et al. (2016) in which 16 of 1,865 (0.9%) threats during the 2014-15 school year were classified as high level and attempted.

Two members of the research team qualitatively coded the narratives for these 18 high-level attempted threats made by a student and directed toward another person for three

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[1] It might be preferable to include all threats that were attempted regardless of how the school team classified them, since there might be threats that were judged to be lower level but posed a more serious threat than was recognized.

characteristics: (1) the person threatened, (2) nature of the threat, and (3) prevention procedures used by the school. The survey also asked after what period of time the student was able to continue attending the school (10 days, 11-45 days, more than 45 days, after alternative placement, other (fill in the blank). If a student was assigned to an alternative placement, the school was asked to indicate the duration of that placement. The results of this analysis are detailed below.

Characteristics of High-Level Attempted Threats

Of the 18 threats, 12 were made in elementary schools, 3 in middle schools, and 3 in high schools. The high-level threats were most frequently directed against other students (11 out of 18); however, 4 were directed against staff, and the record did not identify the intended target in 3 cases (Table 3).

Table 3

Threats by Persons Threatened and Grade Level

	Elem	Middle	High	Total (n = 18)
Student	8	3	0	11
Administrator	0	0	0	0
Other Staff	3	0	1	4
Unknown	1	0	2	3
Total	12	3	3	18

These high-level attempted threats included bringing weapons to school (7 out of 18 threats), unspecified verbal threats (6 threats), assaulting another student or staff member (3 threats), and inappropriate touching of another student (2 threats). We were unable to determine the nature of one threat from the narrative as it merely stated, "threatening to harm a student" (Table 4).

Table 4

Nature of Threat and Grade Level

	Elem	Middle	High	Total (n = 18)
Weapon use	7	0	1	8
Unspecified verbal threat	2	3	1	6
Assault (no weapon)	2	0	1	3

Inappropriate touching/indecent exposure	2	0	0	2
Unable to be determined by narrative	1	0	0	1
Total	14	3	3	20

Note. Column totals may exceed n = 18 because in some instances, multiple threats were made in the same case.

Ultimately, of the 18 high-level attempted threats, 9 were carried out and 9 were thwarted by school authorities. Of the 9 threats carried out, 5 involved bringing a weapon to school (2 were identified as knives, the other weapons were not identified in the narratives); however, in no case was the weapon used to assault someone. One case involved inappropriate touching of another student, 2 involved assaults resulting in no injuries, and 1 involved indecent exposure and bringing a weapon to school. Importantly, in the high-level threats that were carried out, no injuries occurred.

School Responses to High-level Attempted Threats

Schools indicated that they prevented threats using several different approaches. In most cases, teams used multiple strategies to prevent the threat from being carried out. For example, in the cases of threats of weapon use, schools responded with a combination of prevention approaches including law enforcement involvement, classroom guidance, small group instruction, mentorship, parent meetings, therapeutic day treatment, and/or individual counseling. In the threats of assault against staff, parent conferences took place.

In 9 of the 18 cases, the student was able to continue attending their school at some point after making the threat (Table 5). The student was able to return to school immediately in 4 cases (verbal threats); in 2 cases, the student returned after a 5-day suspension (one weapon use threat, one assault threat); in 1 case, the student returned after a 10-day suspension (nature of threat unidentified); and in 1 case, the student returned after 45 days (verbal threat). In one case, a student was removed from school and placed in an alternative placement for 95 days and then returned to their home school (indecent exposure and weapon use). In 9 cases, the student did not return to their school (1 verbal threat, 6 weapon use, 1 assault threat, 1 inappropriate touching threat) and no information was given regarding where the student ended up.

Table 5

Threats by Time Out of School and Grade Level

	Elem	Middle	High	Total (n = 18)
Student returned to school immediately	2	2	0	4
Student returned to school after 5 days	1	0	1	2
Student returned to school after 10 days	1	0	0	1
Student returned to school after more than 45 days	0	1	0	1
Student returned to school after alternative placement	1	0	0	1
Student did not return to school	7	0	2	9
Total	12	3	3	18

Training Needs

In-depth information on training needs was obtained from a combination of qualitative and quantitative sources (Cornell et al., 2015, Cornell et al., 2016). Qualitative input on training needs was collected through telephone surveys with a sample of stakeholders (i.e., school administrators and threat assessment team members). Researchers used a semi-structured protocol that asked threat assessment team members to identify implementation challenges and training needs. In two school safety conferences, the speaker asked the audience to identify threat assessment training needs. The researchers also reviewed training materials developed by several Virginia school divisions. This qualitative information was triangulated with quantitative data from the annual school safety audit and climate surveys to inform the development of the online programs described under Goal 3.

Schools reported that, on average, 77% (*SD* = 32%) of their team members had some threat assessment training between 2014-2017. On the 2014-15 school safety audit survey, 70% of respondents (typically school administrators) reported specific training needs that included: training on different types of threats with case scenarios, retraining or advanced training for team members, training on how to interact with students, training on social media threats, teacher education about threat assessment, and case management (Table 6). Principals wanted more time reviewing case examples with their teams that would help them with ongoing case management, intervention plans, and protocols for monitoring students. Some principals indicated that they would like to have annual or biannual training to prevent drift in implementation. They suggested certification for retraining.

Virginia law (in § 22.1-79.4) directs teams to provide guidance to students and staff on how to recognize and report threats at their schools. Results of the statewide school climate surveys indicated an increase middle school staff awareness that threat assessment was used in

their schools, from 44% in 2015 to 61% in 2019 (Cornell et al., 2015, Cornell et al., 2017, Cornell et al., 2019). In 2015, the middle school teacher survey inquired whether teachers were aware that their school uses a "formal threat assessment process to respond to student threats of violence." Less than half, 44% of staff, were aware that their school uses threat assessment, 3% did not think their school did so, and 53% responded "I don't know." In 2017, only 50% of middle school staff were aware that their school uses threat assessment, 3% did not think their school did so, and 47% responded "I don't know." By 2019, only 61% of middle school staff were aware that their school uses threat assessment, 2% did not think their school did so, and 37% responded "I don't know."

These trends for high school staff are more concerning. In 2016, high school teachers were asked the same question. Only 51% of high school teachers and staff were aware that their school uses threat assessment, 3% did not think their school did so, and 47% responded "I don't know." By 2018, only 53% of high school staff were aware that their school uses threat assessment, 2% did not think their school did so, and 45% responded "I don't know." These results indicate a need to continue to educate staff that threat assessment is used in their school so they can appropriately respond to a student who comes to them to report a threat as well as better communication between threat assessment teams and other staff at the school.

Table 6

Training Needs Reported on 2014-15 School Safety Audit Survey

Training Need	Number of Schools (n = 1,958)	Percent of Schools
Training on different types of threats/TA/levels/team makeup	295	15.1%
General "more training"	290	14.8%
Retrain/follow-up training due to staff turnover or lag in training time	241	12.3%
Dealing with social media threats	53	2.7%
Training with scenarios/case studies	51	2.6%
Teacher training	42	2.1%
Training on documentation/recordkeeping	40	2.0%
Case management following a threat/assessment	34	1.7%
Online/video training	28	1.4%
Condensed "fact sheet"/updated review document	16	0.8%
Division-wide training	10	0.5%
Local/regional training	9	0.5%
Mental health/counselor training	7	0.4%
Info from DCJS	4	0.2%
Connect DCJS and UVa models	4	0.2%
Bomb threats	3	0.2%
Safety training not related to threat assessment (e.g., active shooter/intruder drills, managing student behavior, addressing student mental health concerns)	292	14.9%
No need for further training	313	15.9%
Did not respond to this question	307	15.7%

Note. A total of 1,958 elementary, middle, and high schools responded to the survey. The number of recommendations exceeds the number of schools because respondents could mention more than one need.

GOAL 2: DETERMINE WHAT STUDENT AND SCHOOL OUTCOMES ARE ASSOCIATED WITH STUDENT THREAT ASSESSMENT

In order to investigate student and school outcomes associated with student threat assessment, we conducted a series of studies using case data from the 2014-15 school safety audit completed by schools. Case level data were obtained by asking each school to provide non-identifiable data on up to five student cases referred for a threat assessment evaluation (most serious, least serious, and three most recent cases). We merged this data set with publicly available discipline and demographic data. Several manuscripts based on analysis of these data were published or are currently in progress. The primary results of each are described below.

Characteristics of Threats

Threat assessment has been widely endorsed as a school safety practice, but there is little research on its implementation. Thus, the purpose of our first study of threat assessment was to examine the statewide implementation of threat assessment including the characteristics of students who threatened violence and to identify how threat assessment teams distinguish serious from non-serious threats (Cornell et al., 2017). Although threatening remarks or behaviors by students can raise strong concern, educators want to avoid over-reacting to threats that are not serious (Cornell & Sheras, 2006; O'Toole, 2000).

In this study, the sample consisted of 1,865 threat assessment cases reported by 785 elementary, middle, and high schools. Students ranged from pre-K to grade 12, including 74.4% male, 34.6% receiving special education services, 51.2% White, 30.2% Black, 6.8% Hispanic, and 2.7% Asian. Results indicated the greatest number of threats (11.0%) were made by 4th graders, followed by 5th graders (11%). Male students were 3.7 times more likely to receive a threat assessment than female students and students receiving special education services were 3.9 times more likely to be referred for threat assessment than those not receiving special education services. The proportion of Black students referred for threat assessment was 1.3 times higher than the proportion of White students, the Hispanic-White risk ratio was 0.45, and the Asian-White risk ratio was 0.41. These findings suggest that referrals for threat assessment could be subject to the same influences that lead to the higher rates of disciplinary referrals for Black students. A critical issue, however, is whether Black students referred for a threat assessment would receive disproportionately severe disciplinary consequences. We conducted a separate study (described below; see Cornell, Maeng, Huang, Shukla, & Konold, 2018) to investigate this concern and found no disparities in disciplinary outcomes between Black, Hispanic, and White students receiving a threat assessment. It is important to distinguish between racial/ethnic differences in student referrals for threat assessment and disciplinary consequences for those students after they have undergone the threat assessment process.

Threat assessment teams were more likely to identify a threat as serious if it involved possession of a weapon ($OR = 4.41$, $p < .001$), targeted an administrator ($OR = 3.55$, $p < .01$),

was a threat of battery ($OR = 1.61$, $p < .01$) or homicide ($OR = 1.40$, $p < .05$), or involved a student identified as receiving special education services ($OR = 1.27$, $p < .05$; Cornell et al., 2017). Serious threats were less likely to involve elementary ($OR = 0.57$, $p < .001$) than middle school students. Student race and gender were not significantly associated with a serious threat determination. Schools reported that students attempted to carry out their threat in only 3.3% of cases. There was a strong relationship between the team's classification of a threat as serious and the student attempting to carry out the threat ($OR = 12.5$). These results suggested that teams were making appropriate distinction between serious and non-serious threats based on criteria that were logically associated with the seriousness of a threat and were not making distinctions based on irrelevant criteria.

Classification of Threat Seriousness

One of the most critical issues in threat assessment is the ability of school teams to distinguish serious from non-serious threats. Thus, our second study focused on a sample of 844 threat cases from 339 schools using the CSTAG model of threat assessment (Burnette, Datta, & Cornell, 2018). The CSTAG model emphasizes the distinction between transient and substantive threats. This retrospective study investigated the interrater reliability and criterion-related validity of this distinction.

To assess interrater reliability for the transient versus substantive distinction, researchers independently coded a subsample of 148 narratives as transient or substantive, achieving classification agreement with schools of 70% ($\kappa = .53$, $p < .001$). After examining the 32 cases with discrepancies between the research team and school classifications, 28 were classified as substantive by schools and transient by the research team.

Logistic regression analyses examined transient and substantive threat differences in threat characteristics and outcomes. Threats were more likely to be classified as substantive when they included a greater number of warning behaviors (e.g., history of violence, weapon use, leakage, etc.; $OR = 2.1$, $p < .001$), were made by older students ($OR = 1.2$, $p < .001$), mentioned the use of a bomb or a knife ($OR = 6.9$, $p < .001$), or involved threats to harm self as well as others ($OR = 10.0$, $p < .001$). Although only 2.5% of the threats were attempted, those classified as substantive were 36 times more likely to be attempted than transient threats. Substantive threats were more likely to result in out-of-school suspension ($OR = 4.8$, $p < .001$), change in school placement ($OR = 9.7$, $p < .001$), and/or legal action (($OR = 15.0$, $p < .001$). Importantly, few threats result in violent acts (Burnette et al., 2018).

These results demonstrated that threat assessment teams were able to distinguish serious from non-serious threats and make reasonable responses to those threats. The results also indicated some areas for improvement in threat assessment training. Burnette et al. (2018) recommend that teams keeps in mind that threats may be serious disciplinary violations without being a serious threat of violence and that the transient/substantive distinction should be applied to the potential for the threat to be attempted and result in serious harm rather than the seriousness of the disciplinary infraction. In addition, suspensions should be used in only the

most serious cases and schools using suspension in transient cases should review their discipline policies.

Disciplinary Actions Associated with Threat Assessments

One of the biggest concerns in American education today is the disproportionate use of exclusionary school discipline for minority students (Morgan et al., 2014). At the same time, our previous research has found that schools using threat assessment showed a general decrease in the use of out of school suspension as a disciplinary consequence for the general student population, including Black students, across all disciplinary infractions (not limited to threats; JustChildren & Cornell, 2013). In addition, our previous studies have found a low rate of suspension and expulsion for students receiving a threat assessment using the CSTAG model (Cornell et al., 2004). Therefore, as part of this grant we conducted an analysis of the disciplinary consequences for students receiving a threat assessment with a specific focus on differences between Black, Hispanic, and White students. This racial parity study used a statewide sample regardless of threat assessment model used by the school (Cornell et al., 2018). The sample consisted of 1,836 students who received a threat assessment in 779 elementary, middle, and high schools.

The racial parity study found no statistically significant differences among Black, Hispanic, and White students in rates of school suspensions, expulsions, school transfers, or legal consequences (arrest, incarceration, or court charges) as a result of a threat assessment. Although disciplinary and legal consequences were not associated with race/ethnicity, there were differences associated with threat characteristics. Weapon possession and threat classification that a threat was serious were associated with a greater likelihood of the student receiving a suspension, being placed in an alternative setting, or receiving a legal consequence. In addition, threats by elementary school students were less likely to receive a disciplinary consequence compared to middle school students (the reference group). These findings suggest that there was racial parity in the outcomes of student threat assessment for Virginia schools.

The parity in suspension and expulsion rates for the Black and White students receiving threat assessments contrasted markedly with the general disparities observed in these schools (Cornell et al., 2018). The overall suspension rates in those schools are based on students being suspended for a wide range of possible infractions (almost all suspensions were for students not receiving a threat assessment). School-level risk ratios showed that Black students were suspended at 3.1 times the rate of White students and Hispanic students were 1.8 times more likely to be suspended compared to White students. However, this general, schoolwide disparity for Black and Hispanic students was not present for the Black and Hispanic students receiving a threat assessment (Cornell et al., 2018). These findings are especially important because of the concern by critics of threat assessment that the adoption of threat assessment could foster an increase in a school's use of exclusionary discipline and reinforce racial/ethnic disparities.

Threats Against Teachers

Student aggression toward teachers is a national problem contributing to teacher burnout and attrition from the field. The consequences of these negative outcomes for teachers have been linked to low student achievement and adjustment (e.g., Espelage, et al., 2013; Gray, Wilcox, & Nordstokke, 2017; Khoury-Kassabri et al., 2009). Thus, we conducted a study specifically concerned with threats made against teachers with the goal of better understanding how these threats differ from threats against peers (Maeng, Malone, & Cornell, 2020).

The teacher threat study examined use of threat assessment for a statewide sample of student threats against teachers (n = 226) compared to threats against other students (n = 1,228). Threats against teachers were less prevalent (15.5%) than threats against peers (84.5%). Of threats against teachers, 30% were classified as serious by the school's threat assessment team and 5.8% were attempted. After controlling for student and threat characteristics, no difference existed in the odds that a threat against a teacher would be classified as more serious by school teams than a threat against a peer ($OR = .98$, $p = .93$). After controlling for student and threat characteristics, seriousness, and outcome, threats against teachers were relatively more likely to result in out-of-school suspension ($OR = 1.56$, $p < .05$) and placement changes ($OR = 2.20$, $p < .001$) than threats against peers. However, no difference existed in the odds that a threat against a teacher would result in mental health services ($OR = 0.91$, $p = .55$) or law enforcement action ($OR = 0.87$, $p = .75$) than a threat against a student (Maeng et al., 2020).

Threat assessment seems to function similarly for both student and teacher threats; most threats are determined to be not serious and are infrequently attempted. These findings extend our understanding of teacher victimization by identifying the characteristics that distinguish threats against teachers from the more common occurrence of threats made against peers, and they show the value of threat assessment in responding to student aggression toward teachers.

Threat Assessment Model Comparison

Finally, we conducted a study comparing the two most commonly used threat assessment models in Virginia schools (Maeng, Cornell, & Huang, 2019). These models differed in how they classified threats and in their orientation toward the use of exclusionary discipline. Both the CSTAG model and the state guidelines train multidisciplinary threat assessment teams to use basic principles of threat assessment articulated in federal reports (e.g., Vossekuil et al., 2002). However, the state guidelines focus primarily on assessing the dangerousness of a student and use a classification system of low, moderate, high, and imminent risk to assess the likelihood that a student will carry out a violent act. The CSTAG threat assessment process is more structured and uses a decision tree to distinguish serious, substantive threats from transient threats in which the student does not pose a serious threat of violence. The CSTAG training and manual place emphasis on resolving threats without the use of exclusionary discipline, whereas the state guidelines have a more neutral position on school discipline. This study was especially important because critics have raised concern that threat assessment will increase the use of exclusionary

discipline and law enforcement consequences for students, even for misbehavior that does not pose a serious threat.

This study compared disciplinary consequences for 657 students in 260 schools using the Comprehensive Student Threat Assessment Guidelines (CSTAG) with 661 students in 267 schools using the more general threat assessment approach described in the state guidelines (Maeng et al., 2019). In order to make a more precise comparison between the two groups, the analyses controlled for differences in the characteristics of the students from the two groups of schools, such as the grade level, race, and gender of the students, whether the student was receiving SPED services, whether the student possessed a weapon, had a disciplinary history, and had a history of violence prior to the threat incidence. The analyses also controlled for differences in school characteristics of enrollment size, percentage of nonwhite students, and percentage of low-income students. The study found that the odds ratio for students receiving a threat assessment in CSTAG schools to receive a suspension ($OR = .59$) or law enforcement action ($OR = .47$) were much lower than those in schools using the more general approach. Students in CSTAG schools were expelled at significantly lower rates (0% versus 1.7%) than students in comparison schools, too. These results indicate that schools using the CSTAG model are less likely to respond to student threats with exclusionary discipline (Maeng et al., 2019).

The primary findings in the study were based on a group comparison using multi-level logistic regression. One possible limitation of this approach is that schools in the two groups might differ in ways other than the use of one or the other model of threat assessment. At the suggestion of our research advisory group, we conducted a propensity score matched analysis to verify these results. Propensity score analyses take a different approach to comparing groups that is intended to provide a more rigorous test that removes potential sources of bias between groups. This analysis makes a more precise comparison of schools that are closely matched on background characteristics (e.g., school enrollment size, percentage of nonwhite students, and percentage of low-income students; see Table 7 and Figure 3). The analyses also controlled for differences in the characteristics of the students from the two groups of schools, such as the grade level, race, and gender of the students, whether the student was receiving SPED services, whether the student possessed a weapon, had a disciplinary history, and had a history of violence prior to the threat incidence. A small number of cases (3%) had missing data and were removed using listwise deletion (n = 1,276). Out of 527 schools, 256 schools used the CSTAG model and 263 used some other model. Using logistic regression, propensity scores (Austin, 2011) were estimated using several school and student level covariates (listed in Figure 3). Observations with nonoverlapping regions of common of support were removed and matching was done using nearest neighbor matching without replacement, with a caliper width of .20. The matchit (Ho, Imai, King, & Stuart, 2006) package in R (R Core Team, 2018) was used for propensity score matching.

The matched dataset consisted of 467 schools (treatment = 233, control = 234) and 1,010 observations (505 in both treatment and control). Comparison of the unmatched treatment and control groups showed standardized mean differences (smd) were larger than 0.20 for several

covariates (Figure 3). After matching, all covariates were balanced with no statistically significant differences (all *p*s > .05) and all smds < .15 suggesting effective matching (Lanza, Moore, & Butera, 2013).

Figure 3

Comparison of Standardized Mean Differences (smd) between CSTAG and Control Schools on Covariates Before and After Matching.
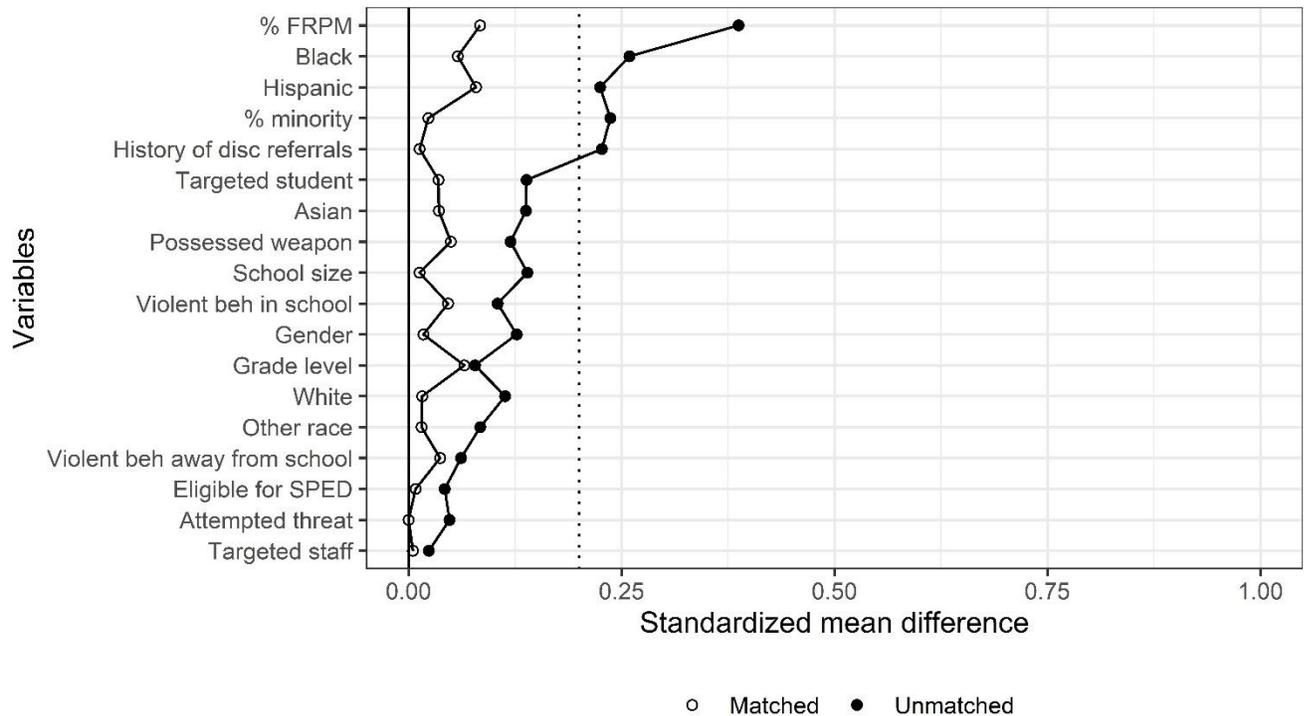
Note. Dashed line represents an smd = 0.20. beh = behavior.

Differences between CSTAG and control schools were investigated using logistic regression modeling using cluster adjusted standard errors (Cameron & Miller, 2015) to account for the nesting of students within schools (Huang, 2016). Three outcomes were whether the student had been suspended, arrested, or experienced a placement change

Using the matched sample, students in CSTAG schools receiving a threat assessment had lower odds of getting suspended (*OR* = 0.54, *p* < .001) or arrested (*OR* = 0.46, *p* < .01) compared to students in nonCSTAG schools (Table 7) while controlling for all other variables in the model. Converted to a more readily understood risk ratio, students in nonCSTAG schools receiving a threat assessment had a 32% higher probability of being suspended and an 83% higher probability of being arrested. No meaningful differences, regardless of condition, were detected with placement change as the outcome (*p* = .79).

A consistent and strong predictor of being suspended, arrested, or experiencing a placement change was that a student had attempted (averted or carried out) the threat. In addition, elementary school students had the lowest odds of receiving any of the sanctions. The results using propensity score matched data were consistent with the results found when using the whole sample with complete data.

A fourth outcome—whether the student had been expelled—was also investigated, although regression models were not possible due a condition referred to as complete separation, i.e., no student in the CSTAG schools were expelled. In the control schools, 6 out of 505 students were expelled (1.2%). Because of the complete separation between groups, to investigate whether the expulsion rate in control schools was different from zero, cluster bootstrapping (Huang, 2018) was performed with 5,000 replications. Students in nonCSTAG schools had a low 1.2% probability of being expelled. Cluster bootstrapping indicated that, although low, this probability was different from zero (99% CI; 0.000, 0.008, $p < .01$). In conclusion, students receiving a threat assessment in CSTAG schools were less likely to be expelled than students in nonCSTAG schools.

Table 7

Logistic regression results with cluster adjusted standard errors using propensity score matched sample ($n = 1,010$).

Variable	Suspension		Arrests		Placement change	
	OR	95% CI	OR	95% CI	OR	95% CI
School size	1.00	(1.00, 1.00)	1.00	(1.00, 1.00)	1.00	(1.00, 1.00)
% minority	0.44	(0.16, 1.21)	0.71	(0.11, 4.60)	0.49	(0.15, 1.61)
% FRPM	2.26	(0.78, 6.58)	0.46	(0.04, 4.74)	4.67 *	(1.35, 16.21)
Gender: Male	1.03	(0.71, 1.50)	1.19	(0.41, 3.51)	1.05	(0.62, 1.80)
Gender: Unknown	0.39 *	(0.17, 0.88)	0.49	(0.06, 3.86)	0.62	(0.20, 1.93)
Eligible for special education	1.02	(0.75, 1.40)	0.52	(0.25, 1.07)	0.82	(0.53, 1.27)
Race: Asian[1]	0.38	(0.13, 1.19)	--	--	1.49	(0.45, 4.98)
Race: Black[1]	1.05	(0.73, 1.51)	1.36	(0.53, 3.47)	1.21	(0.73, 1.99)
Race: Hispanic[1]	0.78	(0.40, 1.52)	2.63	(0.82, 8.51)	1.33	(0.63, 2.79)
Race: Other[1]	1.18	(0.71, 1.97)	1.71	(0.67, 4.35)	1.91 *	(1.03, 3.53)
Grade: elementary school[2]	0.37 ***	(0.24, 0.58)	0.06 ***	(0.01, 0.30)	0.38 ***	(0.23, 0.61)
Grade: high school[2]	0.99	(0.53, 1.85)	1.73	(0.75, 3.96)	1.95 *	(1.06, 3.58)
History of disc referrals: Yes	2.03 ***	(1.41, 2.91)	2.08	(0.95, 4.53)	1.60 *	(1.03, 2.47)
History of disc referrals: Unknown	0.37	(0.14, 1.02)	1.14	(0.17, 7.53)	0.64	(0.14, 2.86)
Violent beh away from school: Yes	2.24 **	(1.29, 3.89)	1.32	(0.49, 3.57)	2.88 ***	(1.60, 5.18)
Violent beh away from school: Unknown	1.48	(0.99, 2.21)	4.01 ***	(1.80, 8.97)	2.31 ***	(1.44, 3.71)
Violent beh at school: Yes	0.93	(0.59, 1.45)	0.56	(0.23, 1.38)	0.76	(0.46, 1.28)
Violent beh at school: Unknown	1.99	(0.65, 6.11)	0.41	(0.06, 2.86)	0.90	(0.30, 2.71)
Weapon involved: Yes	4.69 **	(1.46, 15.07)	5.72	(0.70, 46.91)	3.43	(0.87, 13.57)
Weapon involved: Unknown	0.62	(0.25, 1.53)	1.55	(0.26, 9.39)	1.25	(0.43, 3.62)
Target staff	2.44 ***	(1.48, 4.00)	0.93	(0.40, 2.17)	2.39 **	(1.39, 4.09)
Targeted student	1.50	(1.00, 2.26)	0.62	(0.31, 1.28)	0.90	(0.54, 1.52)
Attempted threat	6.72 ***	(2.48, 18.20)	13.52 ***	(4.07, 44.93)	4.67 ***	(2.09, 10.42)
CSTAG (1 = yes)	0.54 ***	(0.38, 0.76)	0.46 *	(0.23, 0.88)	0.95	(0.64, 1.41)

Notes. Shown in odds ratios (OR) with 95% confidence intervals. FRPM = free or reduced price meals. Beh = behavior. [1]Reference group is White. [2]Reference group is middle school. – Could not be estimated as no Asians were arrested in the CSTAG condition. *** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$.

Associations Between Threat Assessment and School Climate

Threat assessment relies on a positive school climate where students feel they can ask adults for help if they learn of a threat. Students often have knowledge of a classmate's threatening statements or plans, and shootings have been prevented because a student reported a classmate's threat (National Threat Assessment Center, 2018). However, students are often reluctant to tell staff about threats of violence or aggression. Previous studies have shown that there are racial, gender, and age-related differences associated with student willingness to report threats of violence (Millspaugh, Cornell, Huang, & Datta, 2015; Syvertsen, Flanagan, & Stout, 2009; Williams & Cornell, 2006). We conducted a study to investigate the association between school climate and student willingness to report peer threats as well as differences in reporting associated with race, gender, and age.

The sample consisted of school climate surveys completed by 85,750 students and 16,525 staff in 322 Virginia high schools who participated in the 2018 School Climate Survey (Crichlow-Ball & Cornell, 2019; Crichlow-Ball & Cornell, in preparation). School climate was measured by staff perceptions of supportive environment (10 items, $\alpha = .90$) and fair discipline structure (9 items, $\alpha = .78$). Student willingness to report threats was measured by two self-reported items: willingness to report a classmate threatening to kill someone and willingness to report a classmate bringing a gun to school.

Results of hierarchical regression indicated that staff perceptions of support and structure contributed to the variance for both willingness to report a threat to kill and for willingness to report someone bringing a gun to school after controlling for student perceptions of school climate. Male, younger, and non-white students were less willing to report threats. Overall, students in schools with high levels of support and fair discipline structure were more willing to report threats.

After controlling for school size, percentage of students receiving free and reduced price meals, percentage of White students in the school, and student perceptions of school climate, there was still a small, unique effect of staff perceptions on student willingness to report threats. This unique effect suggests that the relationship between school climate and student willingness to report threats is not an artifact of shared method variance. Female students were more willing to report threats than male students and White students were more willing to report threats than Black/African-American or Hispanic/Latino students. While previous studies have found that older students are less likely to seek help from adults at school, the current study found that 12th graders were more willing to report threats than students in the 9th-11th grades. These results are important because they reinforce the importance of the role a positive school climate has in encouraging students to report threats of violence.

GOAL 3: DETERMINE WHETHER TRAINING/TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CAN IMPROVE STUDENT THREAT ASSESSMENT

A recurrent concern in the needs assessment phase of the project was the need to educate stakeholders about threat assessment. It is essential that students, parents, and staff know that their school has a threat assessment team and are willing to report threats. We also found that many threat assessment team members had not received training or wanted additional training in threat assessment. In order address this concern, we collaborated with 3C Institute to develop online educational programs for students, parents, school staff, and threat assessment team members. The use of asynchronous online programs was intended to make them accessible to all schools at any time, and to give them maximum flexibility in how and when to make use of them.

The programs were developed to cover key topics identified in the needs assessment. Specifically, all of the programs cover fundamental threat assessment topics including the relative safety of schools, the purpose of school threat assessment, how a threat assessment team functions, and when and how to report threats. (See Appendix B for program scripts). The staff and threat assessment team programs also included information about research supporting threat assessment and the distinction between threat assessment and other school safety measures.

There are three programs for threat assessment teams. The first program covers the introductory material also found on the programs for the other groups. The second program covers how threat assessment differs from school discipline and the third program covers the role of case management in the most serious threat assessment cases.

The content of the programs was drafted by the research team and sent to the practice and research advisory groups for review. The programs were revised and sent to 3C Institute for development as online media. Dr. Cornell assisted 3C Institute in the recording of the narrators and actors. The student and parent programs are available in English and Spanish and all programs are available with subtitles to increase accessibility.

The educational programs are narrated by male and female speakers who are seen on screen or speak over a series of slides. Each program includes one or more threat assessment skits performed by actors. There are a series of pre and post questions embedded within the programs to assess what the participants learned and obtain their evaluation of the learning experience. (See Appendix C for the pre/post program assessments.) We tested the online programs with samples of students, parents, staff, and threat assessment team members in project year 2 and then revised the programs based on stakeholder feedback.

We were unable to recruit enough schools to conduct a randomized controlled trial as originally proposed. School authorities were willing to use one or more of the programs but were

not interested in participating in a controlled trial. After more than a year of recruiting efforts, we obtained approval through a GAN to modify the study design. We switched to a quasi-experimental pre-/post trial that used all available schools that completed the online training programs. This gave us sufficient statistical power to measure the immediate effects of the educational programs with the questions imbedded in the program.

The programs are freely available to anyone who logs onto the website and enters a generic password. Because users are anonymous and do not report identifying information, it is not possible to identify them or their school system if they use the generic password. However, schools interested in obtaining the results from the program for their students, parents, or staff can identify them by giving them a unique password for their school system. In other words, all of the students in a school system X are given a password that is only used by school system X, and thus we can download and send them data from all participants using that password.

At present, we have assigned unique passwords to 116 school systems in 29 states and Canada. We currently have data from 4,065 users of the student program, 1,639 users of the parent program, 6,970 users of the staff program, and 2,942 users of the three threat assessment team programs.[2] Many school systems have signed up to use the program in recent months, making it likely that use will continue to grow.

Student Program Outcomes

The student educational program is approximately 12 minutes in length and consists of slides and narration by female and male adolescents about the threat assessment process. The program begins by explaining that schools are safe and emphasizing the importance of violence prevention. Then, the narrators discuss the purpose of threat assessment including how and when to report threats.

The program features with a video vignette to illustrate the point that reporting a threat is not "snitching". A student learns of a classmate's plan to commit a shooting in the school and discusses with a friend whether or not to report the threat to school authorities. The friend convinces him to speak with a trusted adult at school.

Students complete 13 questions prior to beginning the program and 15 questions after completing the program. Questions (n = 9) measure knowledge of threat assessment with statements such as, "Threat assessment teams only investigate threats to kill someone," and "Most threats are not serious." Possible responses to these questions were "yes", "no", and "I don't know". Another four questions relate to student willingness to report threats with statements including, "If my friend brought a gun to school, I would tell one of the teachers or staff at school." Possible responses to these statements are measured on a Likert scale (1 =

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[2] Because users are anonymous, these numbers include some users such as school administrators who were reviewing or testing the program. Some users showed the program to groups (such as faculty meetings or training groups). Analyses reported in our research are conducted on smaller groups of users who completed the program using a unique password for their school system and gave answers indicating they were members of the target group (i.e., students viewing the student program).

strongly disagree, 3 = I don't know, 5 = strongly agree). (See Appendix B for the pre/post program assessments.)

We conducted a study of the student educational program (Stohlman & Cornell, 2019) demonstrating gains in student knowledge of school safety and willingness to report threats. The sample consisted of 2,338 students from six middle schools and three high schools who completed the student program.

In this study, we assessed how student characteristics of gender, grade level, and ethnicity/race were associated with student knowledge of threat assessment and willingness to report threats. We then assessed whether the responses to pre-program and post-program questions indicated an increase in knowledge of threat assessment and willingness to report threats. Prior to program completion, boys were less willing than girls, and older students were less willing than younger students, to report threats. Post-program questions revealed that the program significantly increased knowledge and willingness to report threats across student groups, with effect sizes (Cohen's d) ranging from small (.30) to large (1.43) (Stohlman & Cornell, 2019).

Staff Program Outcomes

The staff or teacher program is approximately 25 minutes in length and covers many of the same topics as the student program. One difference is that the two narrators are male and female adults rather than adolescents. Another difference is that, in addition to discussing the role of a threat assessment team, the threat assessment process, and threat reporting, the staff program addresses how threat assessment (1) differs from security measures and crisis prevention, (2) serves as alternative to zero tolerance, and (3) has a strong research foundation supporting its effectiveness.

Similar to the student program, staff complete 13 questions prior to beginning the program and 20 questions after completing the program. Ten questions measure knowledge of threat assessment with statements such as, "Threat assessment teams investigate threatening statements or behaviors by students" and "All students who make threats of violence are referred for a mental health evaluation." Possible responses to these questions are "disagree", "agree", and "I don't know". Three questions measure on a Likert scale (1 = not familiar/concerned/likely, 5 = I don't know, 9 = very familiar/concerned/likely) include, "How familiar are you with the concept of threat assessment?" "How concerned are you that a shooting might occur at your school?" and "How likely are you to talk with students about threats of violence at school?" On the post-program assessment, teachers are also asked seven additional questions about their perceptions of the applicability and clarity of the program as well as whether the program increased their motivation to talk to students about threat reporting, violence prevention, and the difference between snitching and seeking help. (See Appendix C for the pre/post program assessments.)

A total of 4,908 staff completed the staff online program. Of these, most participants (4,371 or 89%) were from 11 different Virginia school divisions. Another 537 staff from 16 school systems in 7 other states (California, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Ohio, Texas, Wisconsin) and Canada have also completed the program. The staff included 3,175 teachers (64.7%), 197 administrators (4%), 124 counselors (2.5%), 46 school psychologists (.9%), and 1,321 other staff (26.9%; e.g., SROs, nurses, instructional assistants, social workers). The majority of the staff reported working in a school setting for more than 10 years (57.6%) and many (45%) reported less than 1 hour of professional development in threat assessment prior to completing the online program.

Results of paired samples t-tests indicated staff knowledge of threat assessment improved from pre ($M = 5.7$, $SD = 2.5$) to post-program completion ($M = 8.3$, $SD = 1.7$), $t(4622) = 68.8$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 1.2$. Staff familiarity with threat assessment also improved significantly from pre ($M = 4.3$, $SD = 2.1$) to post ($M = 6.8$, $SD = 1.6$), $t(4905) = 84.9$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 1.3$. The majority of staff (96%) agreed that the program increased their knowledge of the role of the school threat assessment team. Similarly, staff willingness to talk with students about threats of violence also increased, from $M = 4.8$ ($SD = 2.5$) to $M = 5.8$ ($SD = 2.4$) after completing the online program, $t(4905) = 40.2$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = .41$. Staff concern that a school shooting would occur at their school decreased significantly from $M = 4.1$ ($SD = 2.1$) to $M = 3.5$ ($SD = 2.0$) after completion, $t(4905) = 28.9$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = .29$.

After completing the program, most staff indicated the program increased their motivation to speak with students about threats (83%), teach students about the difference between snitching and seeking help (93%), and encourage students to report threats (95%).

Threat Assessment Team Program Outcomes
Program 1: Threat Assessment Basics
A total of 1,763 staff completed the Threat Assessment Team Basics online program. The content of the first program is very similar to that of the staff program described above. Of these, 129 staff (7%) were from 8 different Virginia school divisions. Another 1,611 staff (91%) were from 10 school divisions in Florida. Staff from 7 other states (California, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, North Carolina) and Canada have also completed the program.

Staff completing the program were 40% administrators, 19% counselors, 17% teachers, 10% law enforcement (e.g., school resource officers/school safety officers), 4% social workers, 3.5% psychologists, 2.7% behavior specialists, and 5% other (e.g., paraprofessionals, nurses). The majority of completers reported more than 10 years of experience in a school setting (66%) and had been on a threat assessment team for a year or less (52.5%).

Results of paired samples t-tests indicated knowledge of threat assessment basics improved from pre ($M = 6.0$, $SD = 2.0$) to post program completion ($M = 7.6$, $SD = 1.4$), $t(865) = 22.9$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = .92$. Staff familiarity with threat assessment also improved significantly from pre ($M = 5.3$, $SD = 2.0$) to post ($M = 7.1$, $SD = 1.5$), $t(1763) = 42.2$, $p < .001$,

Cohen's $d = 1.1$ as did their understanding of their role in threat assessment, from pre ($M = 5.3$, $SD = 2.2$) to post ($M = 7.0$, $SD = 1.6$), $t(1763) = 39.1$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = .88$. Staff confidence that threat assessment is a safe and effective practice increased from $M = 6.2$ ($SD = 1.9$) to post $M = 7.2$ ($SD = 1.6$), $t(1763) = 29.9$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = .57$. Similarly, staff willingness to talk with students about threats of violence also increased, from $M = 4.8$ ($SD = 2.5$) to $M = 5.8$ ($SD = 2.4$) after completing the online program, $t(1763) = 40.2$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = .41$. Staff concern that a school shooting would occur at their school decreased significantly from $M = 4.2$ ($SD = 2.1$) to $M = 3.9$ ($SD = 1.9$) after completing the online program, $t(1763) = 9.4$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = .15$.

After completing the program, the majority of staff (95%) agreed that the program increased their knowledge of the role of the school threat assessment team. Most staff indicated the program increased their motivation to speak with students about threats (93%), teach students about the difference between snitching and seeking help (95%), and encourage students to report threats (95%). In summary, the Threat Assessment Team Basics program is similar in content to the staff program and produced similar positive results.

Program 2: Discipline and Research

The Threat Assessment Discipline and Research program is approximately 25 minutes in length and is the second in the 3-part sequence for threat assessment team members. Using a combination of slides and narrated videos, this program begins by addressing the distinction between threat assessment and discipline processes. Next, the program uses a series of video vignettes to illustrate the differences between a serious threat and a serious disciplinary infraction. The program then describes the difficulties and negative outcomes associated with zero tolerance practices and the use of out-of-school suspension, and recommends Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and restorative justice as alternative disciplinary practices. Finally, the program ends by describing research related to threat prevalence, characteristics, and school responses using data collected under goal 1 of this project and prior studies of threat assessment.

The program includes 12 questions for participants to complete at the outset of the program and 15 questions to answer after completing the program. Seven questions measure knowledge of threat assessment and discipline with statements such as, "Zero tolerance practices are consistent with a threat assessment approach" and "Out-of-school suspension is an effective way to improve student behavior." Possible responses to these questions were "true", "false", and "I don't know". Another 4 questions use Likert scales (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = I don't know, 9 = strongly agree) and form a scale of attitudes toward suspension and zero tolerance. These statements included, "We need zero tolerance for student threats of violence in my school," "Zero tolerance makes a significant contribution to maintaining order at my school," "If a student threatens an act of violence, immediate suspension is necessary," and "Suspension is a necessary tool for maintaining school order." Two more questions related to perceptions of discipline, more generally. On the post-program assessment, teachers were asked two additional

questions about their perceptions of the applicability and clarity of the program. (See Appendix C for the pre/post program assessments.)

A total of 1,485 staff completed the Threat Assessment Team Discipline and Research online program. Of these, 101 staff (7%) were from 7 different Virginia school divisions. Another 1,367 staff (92%) were from 10 school divisions in Florida. Staff from 5 other states (California, Georgia, Kentucky, Ohio, North Carolina) and Canada have also completed the program.

Results of paired samples t-tests indicated knowledge of Threat Assessment Discipline and Research improved from pre ($M = 4.3$, $SD = 2.1$) to post program completion ($M = 5.7$, $SD = 1.4$), $t(1481) = 27.1$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = .78$. Staff endorsement of the effectiveness of the discipline practices at their school increased from pre ($M = 6.4$, $SD = 1.7$) to post program completion ($M = 6.5$, $SD = 1.8$), $t(1481) = 2.65$, $p = .008$, Cohen's $d = .06$.

A scale to measure attitudes toward zero tolerance and exclusionary discipline was created from 4 items (Cronbach's a $= .77$ at pre and $.84$ at post). Staff endorsement of zero tolerance/exclusionary discipline decreased significantly from pre ($M = 5.7$, $SD = 1.8$) to post program completion ($M = 3.9$, $SD = 2.1$), $t(1481) = 38.9$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = .92$.

Program 3: Case Management

The Threat Assessment Case Management program is approximately 30 minutes in length and is the final in the 3-part sequence for threat assessment team members. Using a combination of slides and narrated videos, this program begins by reviewing the key ideas from the basics and discipline programs. Next, the program uses a series of video vignettes to illustrate the difference between a student who makes a threat and a student who poses a threat with the goal of helping team members understand appropriate intervention and case management for the situation. The program then illustrates the use of a threat assessment to prevent further violence after a violent incident (a fight between two students) has already occurred. The program explains the concept of leakage and the idea that teams should look for evidence that a student is on a pathway to violence rather than attempt to match the student to a profile. Finally, the program presents vignettes illustrating the appropriate use of protective actions, extended monitoring, and mental health assessments.

The program includes six questions for participants to answer at the outset of the program, 13 questions about the video vignette scenarios embedded within the program, and 10 questions after completing the program. Four questions measure knowledge of case management with statements such as, "If a student has already gotten into a fight, it is too late to conduct a threat assessment" and "Prospective profiling is a useful way to assess a students' risk of violence." Possible responses to these questions are "true", "false", and "I don't know". Two questions with Likert scales (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = I don't know, 9 = strongly agree) ask, "How well do you understand case management in threat assessment," and "How well do you understand your role in threat assessment?" Two of the embedded questions related to

perceptions of how well their team works together. On the post-program assessment, participants were also asked four additional questions about their perceptions of the applicability and clarity of the program as well as suggestions for improvement. (See Appendix C for the pre/post program assessments.)

A total of 1,384 staff completed the Threat Assessment Team Case Management online program. Of these, 88 staff (6%) were from 7 different Virginia school divisions. Another 1,284 staff (93%) were from 10 school divisions in Florida. Staff from 5 other states (California, Georgia, Kentucky, Ohio, North Carolina) and Canada have also completed the program. Approximately 44% of staff completing the Threat Assessment Case Management program had no experience working on a threat assessment team when they completed the program.

Results of paired samples t-tests indicated knowledge of Threat Assessment Case Management improved from pre ($M = 1.5$, $SD = .88$) to post program completion ($M = 2.6$, $SD = 1.1$), $t(1383) = 32.6$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 1.1$. Staff understanding of case management also improved significantly from pre ($M = 4.5$, $SD = 2.3$) to post ($M = 7.3$, $SD = 1.4$), $t(1266) = 45.8$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 1.5$ as did their understanding of their role in threat assessment, from pre ($M = 6.3$, $SD = 1.9$) to post ($M = 7.4$, $SD = 1.4$), $t(1324) = 25.4$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = .66$.

Of the staff currently on a threat assessment team, 89% indicated that their team worked more than moderately well together, 85% indicated their team is more than moderately effective at identifying cases for mental health assessment, and 80% thought their team was more than moderately effective at planning follow-up efforts after a threat assessment.

Parent Program Outcomes

The parent program is approximately 20 minutes in length and covers many of the same topics as the staff program and team basics program. One difference is that the narrators speak to parents and explicitly encourage parents and students to report threats to school authorities.

Parents complete 11 questions at the outset of the program and 19 questions after completing the program. Eight questions measure knowledge of threat assessment with statements such as, "Threat assessment teams investigate threatening statements or behaviors by students" and "Schools have a relatively high rate of shootings compared to other locations in the U.S." Possible responses to these questions were "true", "false", and "I don't know". Another four questions use Likert scales (1 = not familiar/concerned/likely, 5 = I don't know, 9 = very familiar/concerned/likely) to ask, "How familiar are you with the concept of threat assessment?" "How concerned are you that a shooting might occur at your child's school?" and "How likely are you to talk with your child about threats of violence at school?" On the post-program assessment, parents are also asked eight additional questions about their perceptions of the clarity and utility of the program, whether the program increased their motivation to talk to their child about violence prevention and the difference between snitching and seeking help, whether the program increased their willingness to report a threat, and whether they trusted the school to

respond appropriately to threats of violence. (See Appendix C for the pre/post program assessments.)

Since 2016, a total of 472 parents completed the parent online program. Of these, 399 parents (85%) were from 6 different Virginia school divisions. Another 73 parents from 6 school divisions in 4 other states (Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Ohio, South Carolina) also completed the program.

Results of paired samples t-tests indicated parent knowledge of threat assessment improved from pre ($M = 2.69$, $SD = 1.9$) to post program ($M = 5.1$, $SD = 1.4$), $t(387) = 27.7$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 1.4$. Parent familiarity with threat assessment also improved significantly from pre ($M = 4.2$, $SD = 2.4$) to post ($M = 7.0$, $SD = 1.6$), $t(468) = 26.5$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 1.4$. Similarly, parent willingness to talk with their child about threats of violence also increased, from $M = 7.4$ ($SD = 2.1$) to $M = 7.8$ ($SD = 1.8$), $t(468) = 7.1$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = .20$. Parent concern that a school shooting would occur at their child's school decreased significantly from $M = 5.1$ ($SD = 2.3$) to $M = 4.4$ ($SD = 2.3$) after completing the online program, $t(468) = 8.7$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = .30$.

After completing the program, the majority of parents (95%) agreed that the program increased their knowledge of the role of the school threat assessment team. Most parents indicated the program increased their motivation to speak with students about threats (87%), teach students about the difference between snitching and seeking help (91%), and encourage students to report threats (94%).

IMPLICATIONS FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE POLICY AND PRACTICE

This project has valuable implications for school safety policy and practice in Virginia and nationwide. Although behavioral threat assessment has been recommended as a school safety practice by experts in law enforcement and education for nearly two decades, it has become widely used only in recent years. A review of the nationally representative 2016 School Survey on Crime and Safety (Jackson et al., 2016) found that 42% of schools in the U.S. reported using some form of threat assessment. A 2017 report found that nearly every state department of education is encouraging or actively supporting the use of school threat assessment (Woitaszwewski, Crepeau-Hobson, Conolly, & Cruz, 2017). Since the 2018 Parkland shooting, an increasing number of states (notably Florida, Illinois, Kentucky, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and others) have passed legislation to implement threat assessment in their schools. Despite its widespread adoption, there has been relatively little empirical research on its implementation or outcomes. This project is the first to examine statewide use of threat assessment and identify some of the challenges faced by Virginia schools. These findings can help inform other states as they move down the same path.

Over the five years since the 2013 state mandate, the percentage of Virginia public schools reporting at least one threat assessment case has grown from 57% in 2014-15 to 76%% in 2017-18 and the corresponding numbers of student threat assessment cases[3] have increased from 2,693 to 5,274. These cases included numerous threats of homicide, suicide, and other acts of violence. Notably, the available data indicate that none of these cases resulted in a fatality or serious injury, and only a handful of minor assaults took place. The overwhelming majority of students making a threat did not attempt to carry it out. Fewer than 1% of the threats were carried out by the student in the form of physical attacks, with none resulting in a serious injury. Although not based on a controlled study, these findings provide some reassurance that threat assessment can be carried out safely.[4] Large-scale controlled studies involving national samples of schools may be helpful in further demonstrating the effectiveness of threat assessment in preventing violence.

Another valuable effect of threat assessment is in identifying students in need of support services. Although schools did not report details of their intervention plans, the available survey

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[3] Cases in which a student threatened to harm someone else, not including cases in which a student threatened only to harm self.

[4] These findings apply to students who received a threat assessment and do not tell us about threats that did not come to the attention of authorities. However, Virginia schools have not experienced the school homicide of a student since 1998. The fact that school teams have conducted thousands of threat assessments with no serious injuries is a reassuring observation, but from a scientific perspective, it is not rigorous evidence that threat assessment reduced or prevented violence because there is no control group to examine the incidence of violence in schools not using threat assessment. School homicides are statistically so rare that a quasi-experimental controlled study would require a huge sample studied over a number of years, and a randomized controlled trial does not seem feasible.

data indicate that approximately 72% of cases resulted in students referred for services that included counseling (32%), mental health treatment (21%), psychological assessments (19%), and other services (< 1%). These services are consistent with an underlying philosophy of threat assessment that emphasizes helping troubled or distressed students before their problems escalate into violence. Future studies should examine the impact these services on student adjustment and academic outcomes.

Disciplinary Outcomes

One especially important outcome is that threat assessments can be conducted with minimal use of exclusionary discipline. Critics have raised concerns that threat assessment will lead to excessive use of school exclusion and legal actions, such as arrest and incarceration, of students for misbehavior that does not pose a serious risk of violence. On the contrary, our study found that the great majority of students (84%) were able to return to their home school without expulsion or transfer to another school or educational program. Only a small percentage of threat assessments resulted in an expulsion (1%), placement in an alternative school (8%), hospitalization (5%), transfer to another school (1%), or placement in juvenile detention (< 1%). Out-of-school suspensions were reported in 805 cases (43%); however, most suspensions (520, 64.5%) were short-term (defined as less than 10 days) and usually fewer than 5 days.

Furthermore, threat assessments were conducted without racial/ethnic disparities in disciplinary outcomes. Disparities in school discipline are a serious problem observed nationwide (Morgan et al., 2014). In contrast, our study of 1,836 students who received a threat assessment in 779 schools found no statistically significant disparities among Black, Hispanic, and White students in out-of-school suspensions, school transfers, or legal actions such as arrests or court charges (Cornell et al., 2018). The most consistent predictors of disciplinary consequences were the student's possession of a weapon and the team classification of the threat as serious. Although further study is needed, these predictors suggest that disciplinary consequences were based on the seriousness of the threat and were not influenced by the student's racial/ethnic background.

The CSTAG model of threat assessment places strong emphasis on discouraging the use of school exclusion and moving away from a zero tolerance philosophy of school discipline that fails to consider the circumstances and seriousness of the student's misbehavior (Cornell, 2018b). Previous studies have found that staff trained in CSTAG show a decrease in support for zero tolerance and the use of school suspension (Allen, Cornell, Lorek, & Sheras, 2008; Cornell, Allen & Fan, 2012). Other studies have found that schools using CSTAG show a reduction in the use of out-of-school suspension (Cornell et al., 2012; Cornell, Gregory, & Fan, 2011; Cornell, Sheras, Gregory, & Fan, 2009; JustChildren & Cornell, 2013; Nekvasil & Cornell, 2015). These findings are consistent with a general movement in education and in Virginia for schools to reduce the use of exclusionary discipline. Schools in Virginia and nationwide are adopting multi-tiered systems of support, restorative discipline practices, social-emotional learning programs, and trauma-informed care programs in an effort to improve school climate and reduce

disciplinary problems. These efforts should also reduce the use of exclusionary discipline. A valuable next step in research would be to examine how the use of CSTAG threat assessment dovetails with other school climate improvement efforts. The CSTAG training specifically encourages the use of evidence-based programs as part of a multi-tiered system of student support.

One question is whether other models of threat assessment are associated with reductions in school suspension similar to those observed with CSTAG. Consequently, the current project included a study comparing disciplinary outcomes for 260 schools using CSTAG with 267 schools using the generic state guidelines (Maeng et al., 2019). This comparison found some substantial and statistically significant differences (Maeng et al., 2019). Although fewer than 50% of students in the total sample received some form of exclusionary discipline (typically a short-term suspension), the odds that students receiving a threat assessment in CSTAG schools would receive a suspension ($OR = .59$) or law enforcement action ($OR = .47$) were much less than those in schools using a general approach. Students in CSTAG schools were expelled at significantly lower rates (0% versus 1.7%) than students in comparison schools. These findings suggest that it would be useful to modify the state guidelines to place greater emphasis on the avoidance of exclusionary discipline and to incorporate information on the negative consequences of exclusionary discipline in state training programs. More generally, school training in threat assessment should contrast the problem-solving and preventive emphasis of this approach as an alternative to a zero tolerance approach that relies on exclusionary discipline. There should be explicit attention to fairness and equity in threat assessment across demographic groups.

Training and Educational Needs

Our project identified a statewide need for additional training and education on school threat assessment. Although the state provided regional threat assessment workshops for schools at no charge to the schools, the state safety audit surveys indicated that many team members had not received training. In addition, there is a need for advanced training beyond the initial training.

Our needs assessment also indicated that many schools desired a means of educating their students, parents, and staff about the practice of threat assessment. This need was expressed by many school authorities and was reflected in results from the state school climate survey of secondary schools, which found that substantial numbers of school staff members did not know that their school had a formal threat assessment process. We have the following recommendations for threat assessment training:

1. There should be a state training requirement for members of a school threat assessment team. All team members should obtain a minimal level of training before or soon after joining a threat assessment team. Advanced training should be available. The effectiveness of the training program should be formally evaluated.

2. The state should consider improvements to its training model. Training should place greater emphasis on the negative consequences of exclusionary discipline and recognize that threat assessment presents an alternative to zero tolerance practices. Training should emphasize the use of evidence-based practices in threat assessment and intervention.

3. Schools should be required to provide students, parents, and staff an orientation to their threat assessment practices and the need for threat reporting. The orientation should be evaluated for effectiveness. This recommendation is consistent with Virginia Code 22.1-79.4 section C.

In response to the need to educate students, parents, and staff about threat assessment, we developed a series of online educational programs. Our analyses of these programs revealed that participants gave highly favorable endorsements of the programs and demonstrated increased knowledge of school safety and support for the use of threat assessment. Notably, students demonstrated an increased willingness to report threats and staff reported greater willingness to talk about threats to their students. However, we note that many school systems in Virginia have not used the online programs and we recommend that the state encourage their use as an efficient and effective way to raise stakeholder awareness of threat assessment. Use of the programs outside of Virginia is surging.

Practice and Fidelity Needs

We examined the practice of threat assessment in several domains. An immediate concern is that many schools reported no threat assessment cases in an entire year. This suggests that threats are not being reported in the school or that the team is not being made aware of them. The School Safety Audit provides information that can be used for oversight purposes, and with additional questions on the survey about threat assessment case practices, it would be possible to identify schools that warrant further inquiry about their compliance with state law or fidelity of threat assessment practices. In the event that a violent event occurs, there will be criticism that the school did not follow its threat assessment procedures. Investigations of school shootings in Colorado (Goodrum & Woodward, 2016) and Florida (Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission Report, 2019) raised strong criticisms of the failure of the school's threat assessment team.

In addition to the concern that some teams report no threat cases, many teams meet infrequently, sometimes only once or twice during the school year. This suggests that teams are not regularly monitoring students of concern and reviewing their support services. It also suggests that the school might not have a school climate that is conducive to threat reporting.

There is concern that Virginia state law has muddied the distinction between threat assessment and suicide assessment (Burnette et al., 2019). Our study found that few cases require both threat assessment and suicide assessment, and it is not necessary to burden threat assessment teams with responsibility for cases of self-harm that require qualitatively different procedures and have been handled by school mental health professionals for many years.

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Based on these observations, we have the following recommendations to improve threat assessment practice.

4. School teams should provide evidence that they have an active threat assessment team by reporting deidentified information on their cases each year. They should report regular meetings as needed for assessment, management, and training purposes. The state should inquire when schools have an unusually low number of cases and should provide guidance on the frequency of team meetings.
5. School divisions should conduct an annual evaluation of the quality (fidelity) of each school's threat assessment practices. This evaluation should examine whether school teams are conducting threat assessments consistent with their own guidelines and whether they use evidence-based practices. The evaluation should consider the impact of threat assessment on student adjustment and academic progress, and whether there are disparities in impact on students across demographic groups, including racial/ethnic groups and special education status.
6. Virginia law should clarify that threat assessments should be conducted for threats against others, and that suicide or self-harm assessments should be conducted for threats against self.
7. We recommend that the state school safety audit return to the practice of collecting sufficient case-level information on all threat assessment cases so that quality of implementation and equity of impact on student demographic groups can be examined.

Dissemination of Project Findings

We have actively disseminated project findings since the first year to both research and practitioner groups (see Appendices D, E, F). The project has generated 9 articles published or in press in peer-reviewed journals (Appendix D). These include articles in *Criminology & Public Policy*, *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*, *Journal of School Health*, *Journal of School Violence, School Psychology Quarterly*, and *Teaching and Teacher Education.* Additional articles are in progress.

Dr. Cornell and research team members have contributed information on threat assessment to 13 book chapters for books on school safety and violence prevention, such as *Handbook of interpersonal violence across the lifespan*, *International handbook of threat assessment and management (2nd edition)*, and *School safety and violence prevention: Science, practice, and policy driving change.*

Finally, Dr. Cornell has authored or co-authored op-eds on school threat assessment published by *Atlanta Constitution, Disaster News Network, Education Post, Fortune, NBC News, The Conversation, The Hill, Richmond Times Dispatch*, and *Washington Post.*

Project findings have been presented at 14 state level conferences for Virginia educators and practitioners. In addition, we have made presentations at 16 national conferences, including

meetings of the American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, American Society of Criminology, National Association of School Psychologists, and Association of Threat Assessment Professionals (Appendix E). Every member of our research team has made one or more conference presentations and co-authored journal publications and reports.

Our team has shared reports and findings in response to requests from numerous professional organizations including the American Bar Association, American Psychological Association, Council of State Governments Justice Center, Education Civil Rights Alliance, National Association of School Psychologists, National Association of School Safety and Law Enforcement Officials, National Center for Youth Law, National Governors Association, Sandy Hook Promise Foundation, the School Social Worker Association of America, and others.

Several congressional offices and state legislators have consulted with Dr. Cornell on proposed legislation and he testified at two congressional briefings following the Parkland shooting. He made an invited presentation for the Congressional Research Office. Dr. Cornell also served on the expert panel on violence prevention convened by the National Council for Behavioral Health and contributed to their national report, *Mass Violence in America*. He served on the expert panel for the development of the Teen Mental Health First Aide curriculum newly designed for students in the U.S and participated on the Panel on Mass Violence conducted by the Center for Evidence-based Crime Prevention and sponsored by the National Science Foundation.

The news media have frequently cited our project work in stories about school safety and threat assessment. In 2018 and 2019 there have been at least 64 news media reports citing our work (Appendix F). References to our work are found in CNN, Houston Chronicle, Mother Jones, NBC News, New York Times, PBS, USA Today, Washington Post, and others.

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APPENDIX A: THREAT ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS ON SCHOOL SAFETY AUDIT SURVEY

2016-2017

In addition to requiring the establishment of threat assessment teams, Virginia Code § 22.1-79.4 also instructs that "Each threat assessment team established pursuant to this section shall report quantitative data on its activities according to guidance developed by the Department of Criminal Justice Services."
The questions in this section should be answered in consultation with a knowledgeable member of your threat assessment team.

For each of the listed "types of team member" categories, provide the number of team members who served on your school's threat assessment team during 2016-2017, and of those, the number that received threat assessment training in the last 3 years.
(There is no requirement that all positions are included on the team. If there are no team members of a specific category, enter 0.)

Types of Team Members	Number of Team Members	Number of Team Members Trained in Threat Assessment
Assistant principal		
Principal		
School counselor		
School psychologist		
School resource officer (SRO)		
School security officer (SSO)		
School social worker		
Teacher		
Other law enforcement officer (not SRO)		
Other administrator from school/division		
Other		

Does your school division have a policy or procedure for the maintenance of threat assessment case records?
Yes
No
Don't know

Where was the *Student Threat Assessment and Response Report* (threat assessment records) stored during 2016-2017? *(select all that apply)*
In the student's general education file
In the student's discipline file
In the student's special education file
In the student's health file
With the threat assessment team
With the school administration
With the school counselor
With law enforcement records
In the school division's central office
Other (describe) _____
Not applicable (no cases in 2016-2017)

Which of the following anonymous report methods are available for students/parents/staff to report threats or concerning behavior? *(For your school and division, indicate which report methods are available for each, or if none are available.)*

	Comment box	Telephone hotline	Anonymous app	Email tip-line	Other	None of these
In our school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Division-wide	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

(if "other" is checked)
You indicated that your school and/or division uses another type of anonymous report method that wasn't listed. Please describe and note whether it is used at your school and/or if it used division-wide.

Threat Assessments Conducted in 2016-2017
For the next series of questions, we want to know about the threat assessments conducted by your school's threat assessment team. For questions 22 - 24, please report the number of cases regardless of their risk classification.

22. Based on the threat assessment cases conducted at your school in 2016-2017, how many cases involved threats made by persons from each of the following groups?
Enter the number of threat assessment cases that involved persons from each of the listed groups below. If no threat assessment cases involved persons from a listed group, enter 0 for number of cases conducted.

Type of Group	Number of Threat Assessment Cases Conducted
1. Student from your school	
2. Student not from your school	
3. Student formerly from your school	
4. Faculty/staff currently employed by your school	
5. Faculty/staff formerly employed by your school	
6. Parent/guardian of a student	
7. Someone else	
ENTER TOTAL (sum of items 1 – 7)	

   (If 22 "someone else" > 0)
   22a. You indicated that your school had a threat assessment case(s) that involved "someone else."
   Please describe this/these person(s)'s relationship(s) to the school. _____

Use the following definitions to answer questions 23 and/or 24:
Threatened others only: *threatened to harm someone other than self BUT DID NOT threaten suicide or self-harm.*
Threatened other(s) and self: *threatened to harm someone other than self AND threatened suicide or self-harm.*
Threatened self only: *threatened to commit suicide or self-harm.*

(if Q22 group 1 "student from your school" > 0)
23. In the previous question, you indicated that your school conducted ___ threat assessment cases involving students form your school
For each type of threat listed below, indicate the number of threat assessment cases in which a *student from your school* threatened to act in the manner described.

The sum of the number of cases reported in Q23 should equal your response to group 1 reported in Q22 (the number of threat assessment cases involving "students from your school"). If there were no cases for a given type of threat, enter 0.

Type of threat	Number of cases
Threatened other (s) only	
Threatened other(s) and self	
Threatened self only	

(if sum of groups 2 – 7 in Q22 > 0)
24. In the previous question, you indicated that your school conducted ___ threat assessment cases that did not involve students form your school
For each type of threat listed below, indicate the number of threat assessment cases in which a person who was NOT a student enrolled in your school in 2016-2017 threatened to act in the manner described.
*The sum of the number of cases reported in Q24 should equal the sum of groups 2 - 7 reported in Q22 (the sum of the threat assessment cases involving persons who were **not** students from your school). If there were no cases for a given type of threat, enter 0.*

Type of threat	Number of cases
Threatened other (s) only	
Threatened other(s) and self	
Threatened self only	

(if 22 >0)
25. Of the ___ threat assessment cases you reported in question 22, how many were classified at the highest threat level *(imminent/high risk, very serious substantive)* at any point in the threat assessment process? _____
(if none, enter 0)
- *The number entered in response to Q25 should not be higher than the total reported in Q22.*

  25a. In the high threat level case you reported in question 25, did the threat ultimately occur (was carried out)?
  Yes
  No
- *The number entered in response to Q25a should not be higher than the number reported in Q25.*

(if 25>1)
  25b. Of the ____ cases you reported at the highest threat level in question 25, in how many cases did the threat ultimately occur? _____ *(if none, enter 0)*
- *The number entered in response to Q25a should not be higher than the number reported in Q25.*

If 25b = 1, go to Q25a-1.
(if 25a = Y or if 25b = 1)
25a-1. You indicated that in the high threat level case reported in question 25, a serious event ultimately occurred. Please describe:
  The type of act that was threatened: ___
  The actual act that took place: ___
  The steps taken, if any, to try to prevent the act: ___
  Was a student from your school the primary initiator of the event?   Yes/No
  Any other information about the event(s) that you think would help explain the event to us: ___

(if 25a-1 item 4 "was a student from your school the primary initiator of the event" = yes)
25a-2. Was this student able to continue attending your school at some time after the event?
Yes
No
There was more than one student considered primary in the event.

(if 25a-2 = yes)
25a-2.1. After what period of time was the student able to continue attending your school? *(select one)*
    10 school days
    11-45 school days
    More than 45 school days
    After alternative school placement
    Other (describe) ___

(if 25a-.1 item 4 "after alternative school placement" was selected)
25a-2.2. For what period of time was the student assigned to alternative school placement? _____

Any other information about the event that you think would help explain the event to us: _____
(if 25b > 1 repeat 25a1-25a-2.1as above for all cases)

2017-2018

In addition to requiring the establishment of threat assessment teams, *Virginia Code § 22.1-79.4* also instructs that *"Each threat assessment team established pursuant to this section shall report quantitative data on its activities according to guidance developed by the Department of Criminal Justice Services."*
https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title22.1/chapter7/section22.1-79.4/

The questions in this section should be answered in consultation with a knowledgeable member of your threat assessment team.
21. For each of the listed "types of team members" categories, provide the number of team members who served on your school's threat assessment team during 2017-2018, and of those, the number that received threat assessment training in the last 3 years. *(21. #team memb_)*

(There is no requirement that all positions are included on the team. If there are no team members of a specific category, or if there are no team members that received training for a specific category, enter 0.)

Types of Team Members	Number of Team Members #type	Number of Team Members Trained in Threat Assessment #trained
Assistant principal *asst prin*		
Principal *prin*		
School counselor *sch coun*		
School psychologist *sch psyc*		
School resource officer (SRO) *SRO*		
School security officer (SSO) *SSO*		
School social worker *sch SW*		
Teacher *teach*		
Other law enforcement officer (not SRO) *other LE*		
Other administrator from school/division *other admin*		
Other *other*		

22. Approximately how many times did the threat assessment team meet in 2017-2018? (A meeting includes at least 2 members conferring about a threat assessment matter.) *(22. #team meets)*
(numerical response only) ____

(if 22 = or >1)

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23. On a scale of 1-10, rate how closely your team followed your school's threat assessment procedures in conducting threat assessments this year. (1 = not very closely, 10 = very closely). *(23. team rating)* (numerical response only) _____

24. Where were threat assessment records (such as *Student Threat Assessment and Response Reports)* stored during 2017-2018? *(select all that apply)* *(24. Stu TA rep stor_)*

> In the school division's central office *div offc*
> In the student's discipline file *discp*
> In the student's general education file *gen ed*
> In the student's health file *health*
> In the student's special education file *sp ed*
> With law enforcement records *LE records*
> With the school administration *admin*
> With the school counselor *sch couns*
> With the threat assessment team *TAT*
> Other *(describe)* _____ *other*
> Not applicable (no cases in 2017-2018) *none of the above*

25. Which of the following report methods were available for students/parents/staff to report threats or concerning behavior? *(select all that apply)* *(25. rep meth_)*
> Anonymous comment box/mailbox/form/written note *anon box*
> Anonymous email/tip-line *anon email*
> Anonymous online application/website *anon app*
> Anonymous telephone hotline/text message *anon phone*
> Meet in person/face-to-face *in person*
> Other *(describe)* ___ *other*
> None *none of the above*

For the next series of questions, we want to know about the threat assessments conducted by your school's threat assessment team.
- For all threat assessment questions in this section, **only include cases in which there was time to conduct a threat assessment prior to the threatened act being completed.** *(For example, if a student makes a verbal threat and then attacks that individual before the threat assessment was initiated, do not include that incident as a threat assessment case.)*

For question 26:
- Report the number of cases regardless of their risk classification
- Use the following definitions:
  - **Threatened others only:** *threatened to harm someone other than self BUT DID NOT threaten suicide or self-harm.*
  - **Threatened other(s) and self:** *threatened to harm someone other than self AND threatened suicide or self-harm.*
  - **Threatened self only:** *threatened to commit suicide or self-harm.*

26. Based on the threat assessment cases conducted at your school in 2017-2018, how many cases involved threats made by persons from each of the following groups? *(26. TA count_)*
Enter the number of threat assessments conducted that involved persons from each of the listed groups and the type of threat that was made.
- *If no threat assessment cases involved persons from a listed group or threats of a certain type, enter 0 for number of threat assessment cases conducted.*
- *SUM your responses by type of group (add each row's entries and provide sum), and*
- *SUM your responses by type of threat (add each column's entries and provide sum).*

Type of Group	Threatened other(s) only *others*	Threatened self only *self*	Threatened both self and other(s) *both*	SUM *SUM*
1. Student from your school *stu*				
2. Student not from your school *non stu*				
3. Student formerly from your school *former stu*				
4. Faculty/staff currently employed by your school *cur fac*				
5. Faculty/staff formerly employed by your school *former fac*				
6. Parent/guardian of a student *par*				
7. Someone else *else*				
ENTER TOTAL (**SUM** of items 1 – 7) *ENTER TOTAL*				

If Q26 line 1 total 0, go to Q28; If Q26 = 1 or >, go to Q27

27. Of the __#__ threat assessment cases that you reported which involved students from your school, how many were classified at the *highest* threat level *(imminent/high risk, very serious substantive)* at any point in the threat assessment process? *(27. # high threat)*

    Number of cases _____ *(if none, enter 0)*

The number entered in Q27 should not be greater than the sum of line 1 in Q26.
If Q27 = 0, go to Q28; If Q27 = 1, go to Q27a; If Q 27 = 2 or >, go to Q27b

    (if Q27 = 1)
27a. In the high threat level case you reported in question 27, did the threat ultimately occur (was carried out?) *(27a. one occur)*

      Yes
      No
      If Q27a = no, go to Q28; If Q27a = yes, go to Q27a-1.

    (if Q27 > 1)
27b. Of the __#__ cases you reported at the highest threat level in question 27, in how many cases did the threat ultimately occur? *(27b. # not avert)*
      Number of cases _____ *(if none, enter 0)*
The number entered in response to Q27b should not be greater than the number reported in Q27.
If Q27b = 0, go to Q28; If Q27b = 1, go to Q27a-1; If 27b = 2 or >, go to Q27b-1

(if Q27a = yes, or if Q27b = 1)
For the case that was carried out, please provide a brief description of what occurred
    27a-1. You indicated that in the high threat level case reported in question 27, a serious event ultimately occurred. Please describe: *(27a-1. _)*
      The type of act that was threatened: ____ *thr act*
      The actual act that took place: ____ *act act*
      The steps taken, if any, to try to prevent the act: ____ *prev*
      Was a student from your school the primary initiator of the event? *stu prim*
        Yes/No *(if no, go to Q27a-3)*

    (if 27a-1 item 4 "was a student …" = yes)
    27a-2. Was this student able to continue attending your school at some time after the event? *(27a-2. stu sch)*

Yes
No *(if selected, go to Q27a-3)*
There was more than one student considered primary in the event *(if selected, go to Q27a-3)*

(if 27a-2 = yes)
27a-2.1. After what period of time was the student able to continue attending your school? *(select one) (27a-2.1. stu time)*
    Immediately *immed*
    5 school days *5*
    10 school days *10*
    11-45 school days *11 to 45*
    More than 45 school days *over 45*
    After alternative school placement *after alt*
    After hospitalization *after hops*
    Other *(describe)* ___ *other*
    (if "after alt…" was not selected, go to Q27a-3)

    (if 27a-2.1 item 4 "after alternative …" was selected)
27a-2.2. For what period of time was the student assigned to alternative school placement? _____ *(27a-2.2. alt time)*

27a-3. Is there any other information about this event that you think would help explain the event to us? *(27a-3. other info)*
    Yes *(if selected, a dialogue box (27a-3. other info detail) will appear for their response, then will be directed to Q28)*
    No *(if selected, go to Q28)*

(if 27b > 1, repeat 27a1-27a-2.3as above for all cases)

(if 26 "someone else" SUM > 0)
    27c. In Question 26, where you detailed the types of threats made and by whom, you indicated that your school had a threat assessment case(s) that involved "someone else" (not a student, parent, or faculty). Please describe this/these person's relationship(s) to your school. _____ *(27c. someone else detail)*

Since 2013, and in accordance with *§ 9.1-184*, threat assessment teams are legislatively mandated in Virginia for all public schools and campuses for grades K – college. This process is designed to be preventative, not punitive. It is also mandated that each team:
- Provide guidance to students, faculty, and staff regarding recognition of threatening or aberrant behavior that may represent a threat to the community, school, or self;
- Identify members of the school community to whom threatening behavior should be reported; and
- Implement school board policies for the assessment of and intervention with individuals whose behavior poses a threat to the safety of school staff or students.

28. What mechanisms are in place to make faculty and staff aware of threat assessment protocols and how to recognize aberrant behavior? *(select all that apply) (28. staff recog_)*
    Information provided at back-to-school meetings *BTS meet*
    Information provided at other staff meetings *other meet*
    In-service training *in serv meet*
    Required online training video (such as, *K12 Threat Assessment in Virginia Schools*, an instructional video for school staff, parents, and community members provided by DCJS) *req video*
    Other *(describe)* ___ *other*
    None *none of the above*

APPENDIX B: ONLINE PROGRAM SCRIPTS

Student Program Script

[#1 is live action video/can see the narrators on screen]

1. (N1) Hi, I'm Anna.
(N2) And I'm Joey.
(N1) Today, we're going to talk about school safety and threat assessment, and what you can do to help keep your school safe.
2. (N2) Before we get started, please answer the following questions. [audio for survey]
3. (N1) Now, let's see what you already know about threat assessment. You won't be graded on this, so it's OK to say you don't know the answer rather than guess. [audio for survey]
4. (N1) We want to prevent all forms of violence at school. This includes shootings, as well as fighting and bullying.
5. (N1) Overall, schools are very safe places. The likelihood of a school shooting is low, but we want to make every reasonable effort to prevent violence.
6. (N1) School shootings can be prevented! Almost all students who attacked their school made threats before the attack or told others about their intentions. Many school shootings have been prevented because a student's threat was reported, investigated, and found to be serious. That's one reason why we have threat assessment teams.
7. (N2) Who are the members of the threat assessment team?
8. (N1) Your school's threat assessment team may include the principal or assistant principal, a law enforcement officer such as a school resource officer, and other staff members such as a counselor, psychologist, social worker, and teacher.
9. (N2) What does a threat assessment team *do*?
10. (N1) The threat assessment team investigates threatening statements or actions by students to determine whether the threat is serious. If it is, the team will take action to prevent violence.
11. (N2) But most threats are not serious. Statements like "I'm going to kill you," or, "I want to blow this school up," could be serious or not serious depending on the situation. Schools don't want to overreact to threats that aren't serious.
12. (N1) That's why a careful threat assessment is needed. Most threats aren't serious, but sometimes, they are. So, threat assessment team's job is to decide whether a threat is serious, and, if it is serious, stop it from being carried out.
13. (N2) When a threat assessment team determines a threat is serious, how does the school respond to the threat?
14. (N1) If a threat is serious, the school will look for the best way to solve the problem that led to the threat. Students are NOT automatically suspended or arrested for making a threat.
15. (N1) In a very serious situation, a student might be suspended or transferred to a different school. Students have been arrested in some cases. If you threaten someone in a way that truly frightens them, it could be considered a crime.
16. (N1) A threat that seems like a joke to you might be taken seriously by someone else. Students should avoid making threatening statements, because they might be misunderstood.
17. (N1) Making threats via e-mail, text, or the Internet can also be considered a crime. Some examples of threats that could result in a your arrest and being charged with a felony are: sending a text or e-mail that says something such as, "I'm going to kill you for that," or posting something online such as, "It's time to blow up this school." So, be careful what you text, e-mail, or post!
18. (N2) Now, please answer a few questions about reporting threats. These questions ask what YOU would do, not what others would do.
19. (N1) What should you do if you hear someone make a threat?
20. (N2) If you hear someone make a threat, you should consider whether you need to report it. There is no need to report a threat that is obviously a joke or isn't serious. However, if a threat is serious,

you should report it immediately! How would you feel if someone was injured or killed because of this threat?

21. (N2) Sometimes, it's clear that a threat is not serious, and sometimes, you just don't know. If you're not sure whether a threat is serious, then the best thing to do is report it. The threat assessment team's job is to investigate the threat and decide whether it's serious or not.

22. (N1) How should you report a possible threat?

23. (N2) You can report threats to a teacher, counselor, principal, assistant principal, or the school resource officer. You could also tell your parents and let them contact the school. The most important thing is to let someone know there is a threat.

24. (N2) Next, we'll show you a situation that could happen to you at school. Your job is to decide how you would respond in this situation. Take a minute to watch the following video.

VIDEO SCENE 1

Boy [patting his backpack, shows part of a gun to another student). I'm going to catch him in the cafeteria and take him out.

25. (N1) If a student brings a gun to school, or talks seriously about killing someone, it should be reported immediately. Remember, school shootings have been prevented because a student reported a threat.

26. (N2) If a student is being picked on, bullied, or harassed, you should report that, too. No one should stand by and let another person be abused. A threat assessment team will investigate and stop the situation before it gets worse.

27. **VIDEO SCENE 2**

Boy [to a friend]: Look, I'm worried he really means it, but I don't want to be a snitch.
Friend: A snitch is someone who tells on you to get something for himself. It's not snitching if you're trying to keep somebody from getting hurt.

28. (N2) Sometimes, students don't want to report a threat because they think it's "snitching," but there's a big difference between snitching and seeking help. Snitching is something you do for your own benefit. Like if you're trying to get out of trouble. So, if you report a threat, you're not snitching; you're trying to prevent someone from being hurt. There are students who have prevented a shooting because they reported a threat, and they're not snitches.

29. **VIDEO SCENE 3**

Friend [continues to boy]: How will you feel if he actually does it? What if he kills someone and you could have done something to stop it?

30. (N1) There have been many situations where a shooting was prevented but in schools where shootings did occur, there were often students who decided not to say anything. They kept quiet and let it happen. Don't let that happen in your school.

31. **VIDEO SCENE 4**

Boy [to friend]: I guess you're right. I don't want somebody getting killed if I can prevent it. Who do I talk to about this?

32. (N1) If you hear a threat and believe it could be serious, do the right thing. Talk to someone you trust like a teacher, counselor, coaches, principal, police officer, or your parents.

VIDEO SCENE 5

Boy: Ok, I don't know how to say this, but I'm kinda worried about Connor.
Adult: Well, if you're worried about him, I want to know about it.
Boy: Well, see he said he had a gun, and he was gonna shoot Evan in the cafeteria.
Adult: You did the right thing letting me know. I want to make sure I understand the situation. Tell me more about this… (fades to black).

33. (N2) You're almost finished! Answer the following questions to see how much you've learned about threat assessment. [survey audio]

34. (N1) Thank you for watching this presentation on school safety and threat assessment. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak with your school counselor.

Staff Program Script

[#1 is live action video/can see the narrators on screen]

1. (N1) Hi, I'm [insert name/introduction here].
   (N2) And I'm [insert name/introduction here].
   (N1) Today, we're going to talk about school safety and threat assessment, and what you can do to help keep your school safe.

2. (N2) Let's get started with a few questions so that we'll know the backgrounds of the many different people participating in this program. [audio for survey]

3. (N1) Now, let's see what you already know about threat assessment. If you don't know the answer, please tell us you don't know rather than guess. This will help us measure whether or not this program covers information you already know. [audio for survey]

4. (N2) School safety is a complex topic. Overall, schools are very safe places, but we want to do everything we can to keep them safe. That's why we created this program, which covers all forms of aggression at school, from rare, severe events such as shootings, to more common, less severe incidents such as bullying and fighting.

5. (N1) Although we *are* concerned about school shootings and want to review ways to prevent them, keep in mind that they are rare. Nationwide, there is an average of 21 homicides of students per year in our schools. That means the majority of the nation's 125,000 schools will never have a homicide. Dividing 125,000 schools by 21 homicides per year tells us that student homicides occur in one out of approximately 6,000 schools. Another way to think about this is that the average school will experience a student homicide every 6,000 years.

6. (N2): Violence is more of a community problem than a school problem, and students may be exposed to violence in their community. Shootings are a serious national concern, with approximately 12,000 gun homicides every year in the U.S. FBI crime statistics show that homicides are *10* times more likely to occur in a *restaurant* than in a school. And homicides are *200* times more likely to occur in a *residence* than in a school. While we *should* be concerned about school shootings, we should also keep them in perspective.

7. (N1) Violence at school, even shootings, *can* be prevented. Research on school shootings has found that most attackers made threats of violence before their attack. Many school shootings have been prevented because a student's threat was reported, investigated, and found to be serious. That's one reason law enforcement and education authorities have recommended that threats of violence be investigated using a standard threat assessment process.

8. (N1) The threat assessment team helps students, faculty, and staff recognize and report threats or threatening behavior.

9. (N2) Who are the members of the threat assessment team?

10. (N1) A threat assessment team typically includes the principal or assistant principal, a law enforcement officer such as a school resource officer, and other staff members such as a counselor, psychologist, social worker, and teacher.

11. (N2) What is threat assessment?

12. (N1) Threat assessment is a standard process for investigating threatening statements or behavior. The goal of threat assessment is to prevent violence by first assessing the situation and then intervening to resolve threats before they escalate. Threat assessment can be used to prevent any form of violence, from bullying to shootings.

13. (N2) A threat is defined as *any communication or behavior that conveys an intent to harm someone*. Threats can be made *directly* to the intended target, or *indirectly* to a third party. Threats can be explicit, such as, "I'm going to kill you," or implied, such as, "You better watch out."

14. (N1) All school staff members are expected to report serious threats to school authorities. There is *no* need to report a threat that's *obviously* not serious, but if you're not sure whether a threat is serious, then you should report it. Threats should be reported to a member of the threat assessment team or to a school administrator. It's better to report a threat in person or by telephone so you can explain what you know.

15. (N2) It's important to encourage students and parents to report threats that seem serious. These threats should *also* be reported in person or by telephone. Many schools have hotlines or websites where threats can be reported anonymously. Most threats are not serious. Statements such as, "I'm going to kill you," or, "I want to blow up this school," could be serious or not serious depending on the situation. Students might say something when they're angry, but not really mean it, and schools don't want to overreact to threats that *aren't* serious. Sometimes a threat *is* serious, and someone *really could* get hurt. The threat assessment team's job is to decide whether a threat is serious, and, if it is, stop it from being carried out.

16. (N1) Threats can mean different things depending on the situation and the person's intentions. Let's start with low-level threats. Sometimes threats are just figures of speech or jokes that aren't serious. Other times, threats are expressions of anger that aren't literal. Threats might also be attempts to get attention, cause a disruption, or frighten somebody, even though the person doesn't intend to carry them out. These kinds of threats will receive disciplinary consequences, but they are *not* as serious as threats that indicate impending violence. The threat assessment team focuses on identifying how serious the threat is. The more information you can give the team, the better. Threat assessment teams sometimes classify threats depending on how serious they are. Non-serious threats might be classified as "low risk" or "transient" threats. Threats that are more serious might be called "high risk" or "substantive" threats.

17. (N2) In many cases, a threatening situation involves an argument, conflict, or some other kind of problem between individuals. Threat assessment is often a problem-solving process. A threat indicates that a student is frustrated with a problem he or she cannot solve. The team looks for ways to help the student learn more acceptable ways to solve the problem.

18. (N1) Bullying and harassment are common in schools. Bullying can have serious consequences for students, resulting in anxiety, depression, and poor academic performance. Bullying can also escalate into more serious acts of violence.

19. (N2) Threat assessment teams conduct an evaluation of a threat by interviewing witnesses, the person who made the threat, and other people, such as teachers and parents, who can help the team better understand the situation. A comprehensive threat assessment may include a law enforcement investigation as well as a mental health evaluation of the student, referral for special education evaluation, and other services. The extent of the evaluation depends on the seriousness of the threat, and a comprehensive threat assessment is not needed in every case. Next, we'll show you a situation that could happen at your school. Take a minute to watch the following video. [Note: a video with 5 brief scenes will follow]

VIDEO SCENE 1

Boy [patting his backpack]: I've got it right here. (shows part of a gun to another student). I'm going to catch him in the cafeteria and take him out.

20. (N1) It's important to emphasize to students that if a student talks seriously about killing someone or brings a gun to school, it should be reported immediately. Threat assessment can save lives. School shootings have been prevented because a student reported a threat.

VIDEO SCENE 2

Boy [to a friend]: Look, I'm worried he really means it, but I don't want to be a snitch. Friend: A snitch is someone who tells on you to get something for himself. It's not snitching if you're trying to keep somebody from getting hurt.

21. (N2) Sometimes, students don't want to report a threat because they think it's "snitching," but there's a big difference between snitching and seeking help. Explain to your students that snitching is something people do for their own benefit. For example, some students might snitch to get out of trouble. Emphasize that they aren't snitching if they report a threat; they're trying to prevent someone from being hurt.

VIDEO SCENE 3

Friend [continues to boy]: How are you gonna feel if he really does it? How will you live with yourself if somebody gets killed and you could have stopped it?

22. (N1) School shootings are rare compared to the large number of schools in the U.S., but there have been many situations where a shooting was prevented because a student reported a threat. In schools where shootings occurred, there were often students who decided not to say anything.

VIDEO SCENE 4

Boy [to friend]: OK, I guess you're right. I don't want somebody getting killed if I can prevent it. Who do I talk to about this?

23. (N2) Encourage students to report threats to an adult they trust such as a teacher, counselor, coach, principal, or police officer.

VIDEO SCENE 5

Boy: I don't know how to say this, but I'm kinda worried about Connor.
Adult: If you're worried about him, I want to know about it.
Boy: Well, he says he has a gun, and he's gonna shoot Evan in the cafeteria.
Adult: You did the right thing letting me know. Let me make sure I understand the situation. Tell me more about this… (fades to black).

24. (N1) At the 1999 FBI conference on school shootings, someone in the audience objected that we could never convince all of our students that they should report threats. The reply? We don't need to convince every student to report a threat. We only need to convince one. And in fact, studies have found that one student has made the difference in averting many potential shootings. Even if we can't convince all students, we can increase the likelihood of preventing violence by convincing as many students as possible.

25. (N2) Because threat assessment is a violence prevention strategy, it's different from other kinds of school safety measures. Threat assessment is different from a crisis response plan that's enacted after violence erupts, and from building security measures such as door locks and surveillance cameras. Threat assessment, like other prevention models, can take place on three levels: primary, secondary, and tertiary.

26. (N1) Primary prevention is also called *universal* prevention. It involves programs for all students. Some examples of a threat assessment approach on a primary prevention level are: encouraging students to treat one another with respect and not use threatening language; encouraging students to seek help when a classmate has been threatened, teased, or bullied; and teaching all students that seeking help to prevent violence is *not* snitching.

27. (N2) Secondary prevention is also called *targeted* or *supplemental* prevention. It involves services for students who are identified as at-risk for violence. Some examples of a threat assessment response on a secondary prevention level include short-term counseling for a student with anger problems, conflict resolution for a dispute between peers, and interventions for students who engaged in verbal bullying.

28. (N1) Tertiary prevention is also called *intensive* or *indicated* prevention. It involves individualized services for a small group of students who have *already demonstrated* serious potential for violence. Tertiary prevention efforts may involve special education services, ongoing behavior plans, or placement in an alternative school.

29. (N2) Now, let's talk more generally about threats. Students sometimes make threatening statements they don't really mean, so threat assessment does *not* follow a zero tolerance policy. Instead, disciplinary actions are based on the *seriousness* of the misbehavior.

30. (N1) Students are *not* automatically suspended or arrested for making a threat. In a *very serious* situation, a student might be suspended or transferred to a different school. In some cases, students have been arrested. If a student threatens someone in a way that truly frightens them, then it can be considered a crime.

31. (N2) A threat that seems like a joke to a student might be taken seriously by someone else. Students should avoid making threatening statements, because they might be misunderstood.

32. (N1) Students need to understand that making threats via e-mail, text, or the Internet *can* be considered a *crime*. Some examples of threats that could result in a student's arrest and being charged with a felony are sending a text or e-mail that says something such as, "I'm going to kill you for that," or posting something online such as, "It's time to blow up this school." Threatening

statements can be misinterpreted, and we should help students understand that some threats are a violation of state or federal law.

33. (N2) Some incidents, such as fights, may break out without warning, and no threat assessment was possible. In cases where a fight or assault has already occurred, the threat assessment team may want to conduct a threat assessment focused on whether a student might commit an additional violent act in the future.

34. (N1) Threats of suicide or self-harm, such as cutting, should *always* be reported. In most cases, threats to self are handled by the school's procedures for responding to suicide and self-harm. If there is an *additional* concern that the student may want to harm *others*, a threat assessment that considers self-harm *and* harm to others will be conducted.

35. (N2) Threat assessment has been tested in schools for more than 15 years, and there's strong scientific evidence that it's safe and effective.

36. (N2) Research in Virginia schools has found that 99 percent of threat assessment cases are resolved without the threat being carried out. In the first two years since the state law was enacted, school threat assessment teams responded to 3,335 student threats to harm others. Only 42, or 1%, of the threats were carried out. These threats involved fights that did not result in serious injuries.

37. (N1) Threat assessment can't prevent *all* acts of violence, but it *can* help *reduce* violence. Research shows that schools that use threat assessment have less bullying and peer aggression. Teachers report feeling safer in schools that use threat assessment.

38. (N2) There's a lot of concern about the high rates of out-of-school suspensions, but schools that use threat assessment are less likely to use long-term suspensions and alternative placements. There has also been concern nationwide about racial disparities in school suspension, but research has found that when schools use a threat assessment approach, those disparities are not present.

39. (N2) In Virginia schools, there have been no racial differences in suspension rates for Black, Hispanic, and White students who are seen for a threat assessment.

40. (N2) In summary, threat assessment is a violence prevention strategy that can help keep our schools safe. Threat assessment teams assess each student individually so that we can take actions that do not over-react or under-react to student behavior. However, threat assessment depends on the willingness of students, parents, and teachers to recognize and report threatening statements or behaviors. Share what you've learned in this program with your students. And if you see or hear something that concerns you, consult with your school team.

41. (N1) Now, please answer a few questions to see how much you've learned. This will help us determine how we can improve the program. If you don't know the answer, please select "Don't Know" so we'll know which areas we need to improve upon. [survey audio]

42. (N2) Thank you for watching this presentation on school safety and threat assessment. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak with a member of your school's threat assessment team.

Threat Assessment Team Basics Program Script

[#1 is live action video/can see the narrators on screen]
1. (N1) Hi, I'm [insert name/introduction here].
2. (N2) And I'm [insert name/introduction here].
3. (N1) Today, we're going to talk about school safety and threat assessment, and what you can do to help keep your school safe. But before we started, we'll ask you some questions about your background and how much you already know about threat assessment.
4. (N2) The answers you provide throughout this program will be kept confidential. Your individual answers won't be shared with the school, but since we're conducting a research study to evaluate the effectiveness of the training, we'd like you to read the information on the next page and consent to participate.
5. [Consent survey – no audio]

6. (N2) Let's get started with a few questions so that we know the backgrounds of the many different individuals who have participated in this educational program. [audio for survey]
7. (N1) Now, let's see what you already know about threat assessment. If you don't know the answer, please tell us you don't know rather than guess. This will help us measure whether or not this program covers information you already know. [audio for survey]
8. (N2) School safety is a complex topic. Overall, schools are very safe places, but we want to do everything we can to keep them safe. That's why we created this program, which covers all forms of aggression at school, from rare, severe events such as shootings, to more common, less severe incidents such as bullying and fighting.
9. (N1) Although we *are* concerned about school shootings and want to review ways to prevent them, keep in mind that they are rare. Nationwide, there is an average of 21 homicides of students per year in our schools. That means the majority of the nation's 125,000 schools will never have a homicide. Dividing 125,000 schools by 21 homicides per year tells us that student homicides occur in one out of approximately 6,000 schools. Another way to think about this is that the average school will experience a student homicide every 6,000 years.
10. (N2) Violence is more of a community problem than a school problem, and students may be exposed to violence in their community. Shootings are a serious national concern, with approximately 12,000 gun homicides every year in the U.S. FBI crime statistics show that homicides are *10* times more likely to occur in a *restaurant* than in a school. And homicides are *200* times more likely to occur in a *residence* than in a school. While we *should* be concerned about school shootings, we should also keep them in perspective.
11. (N1) Violence at school, even shootings, *can* be prevented. Research on school shootings has found that most attackers made threats of violence before their attack. Many school shootings have been prevented because a student's threat was reported, investigated, and found to be serious. That's one reason law enforcement and education authorities have recommended that threats of violence be investigated using a standard threat assessment process.
12. (N1) The threat assessment team helps students, faculty, and staff recognize and report threats or threatening behavior.
13. (N2) Who are the members of the threat assessment team?
14. (N1) A threat assessment team typically includes the principal or assistant principal, a law enforcement officer such as a school resource officer, and other staff members such as a counselor, psychologist, social worker, and teacher.
15. (N2) What is threat assessment?
16. (N1) Threat assessment is a standard process for investigating threatening statements or behavior. The goal is to prevent violence by first assessing the situation and then intervening to resolve threats before they escalate. Threat assessment can be used to prevent any form of violence, from bullying to shootings.
17. (N2) A threat is defined as *any communication or behavior that conveys an intent to harm someone*. Threats can be made directly to the intended target, or indirectly to a third party. Threats can be explicit such as, "I am going to kill you," or implied, such as, "You better watch out."
18. (N1) The first step to preventing violence is to report threats. Threat assessment is a valuable way to prevent violence, but the process only works if threats are reported and an assessment is carried out promptly.
19. (N2) All school staff members are expected to report serious threats to school authorities. There is *no* need to report a threat that's *obviously* not serious, but if you're not sure whether a threat is serious, then you should report it. Threats should be reported to a member of the threat assessment team or to a school administrator. Encourage people to report threats in person or by telephone so that they can explain what they know to the school team member.
20. (N1) It's important to encourage students and parents to report threats that seem serious. These threats should *also* be reported in person or by telephone. Many schools have hotlines or websites where threats can be reported anonymously. Most threats are *not* serious. Statements such as, "I'm

going to kill you," or, "I want to blow up this school," could be serious or not serious depending on the situation. Students might say something when they're angry, but not really mean it, and schools don't want to overreact to threats that *aren't* serious. Sometimes a threat *is* serious, and someone *really could* get hurt. The threat assessment team's job is to decide whether a threat is serious, and, if it is, stop it from being carried out.

21. (N2) Students need to understand that making threats via e-mail, text, or the Internet can be considered a *crime*. Some examples of threats that could result in a student's arrest and being charged with a felony are sending a text or e-mail that says something such as, "I'm going to kill you for that," or posting something online such as, "It's time to blow up this school." Threatening statements can be misinterpreted, and we should help students understand that some threats are a violation of state or federal law.

22. (N1) Threats can mean different things depending on the situation and the person's intentions. Let's start with low-level threats. Sometimes threats are just figures of speech or jokes that aren't serious. Other times, threats are expressions of anger that aren't literal. Threats might also be attempts to get attention, cause a disruption, or frighten somebody, even though the person doesn't intend to carry them out. These kinds of threats will receive disciplinary consequences, but they are *not* as serious as threats that indicate impending violence. The threat assessment team focuses on identifying how serious a threat is and will sometimes classify threats. Non-serious threats might be classified as "low risk" or "transient" threats. Threats that are more serious might be called "high risk" or "substantive" threats.

23. (N2) In many cases, a threatening situation involves an argument, conflict, or some other kind of problem between individuals. Threat assessment is often a problem-solving process. A threat indicates that a student is frustrated with a problem he or she cannot solve. The team looks for ways to help the student learn more acceptable ways to solve the problem.

24. (N1) Bullying and harassment are common in schools. Bullying can have serious consequences for students, resulting in anxiety, depression, and poor academic performance. Bullying can also escalate into more serious acts of violence.

25. (N2) Threat assessment teams conduct an evaluation of a threat by interviewing witnesses, the person who made the threat, and other people, such as teachers and parents, who can help them better understand the situation. A comprehensive threat assessment may include a law enforcement investigation as well as a mental health evaluation of the student, referral for special education evaluation, and other services. The extent of the evaluation depends on the seriousness of the threat, and a comprehensive threat assessment is not needed in every case. Next, we'll show you a situation that could happen at your school. Take a minute to watch the following video. [Note: a video with 5 brief scenes will follow]

26. VIDEO SCENE 1
Boy [patting his backpack]: I've got it right here. (shows part of a gun to another student). I'm going to catch him in the cafeteria and take him out.

27. (N1) Threat assessment teams and all school staff should help students understand that if a student talks seriously about killing someone or brings a gun to school, it should be reported immediately. Threat assessment can save lives. School shootings have been prevented because a student reported a threat.

28. VIDEO SCENE 2
Boy [to a friend]: Look, I'm worried he really means it, but I don't want to be a snitch.
Friend: A snitch is someone who tells on you to get something for himself. It's not snitching if you're trying to keep somebody from getting hurt.

29. (N2) Sometimes, students don't want to report a threat because they think it's "snitching," but there's a big difference between snitching and seeking help. Explain to students that snitching is something people do for their own benefit. For example, some students might snitch to get out of trouble. Emphasize that they aren't snitching if they report a threat; they're trying to prevent someone from being hurt.

30. VIDEO SCENE 3

Friend [continues to boy]: How are you gonna feel if he really does it? How will you live with yourself if somebody gets killed and you could have stopped it?

31. (N1) School shootings are rare compared to the large number of schools in the U.S., but there have been many situations where a shooting was prevented because a student reported a threat. In schools where shootings occurred, there were often students who decided not to say anything.

32. **VIDEO SCENE 4**
    Boy [to friend]: OK, I guess you're right. I don't want somebody getting killed if I can prevent it. Who do I talk to about this?

33. (N2) Encourage students to report threats to an adult they trust such as a teacher, counselor, coach, principal, or police officer.

34. **VIDEO SCENE 5**
    Boy: I don't know how to say this, but I'm kinda worried about Connor.
    Adult: If you're worried about him, I want to know about it.
    Boy: Well, he says he has a gun, and he's gonna shoot Evan in the cafeteria.
    Adult: You did the right thing letting me know. Let me make sure I understand the situation. Tell me more about this… (fades to black).

35. (N1) At the 1999 FBI conference on school shootings, someone in the audience objected that we could never convince all of our students that they should report threats. The reply? We don't need to convince every student to report a threat. We only need to convince one. And in fact, studies have found that one student has made the difference in averting many potential shootings. Even if we can't convince all students, we can increase the likelihood of preventing violence by convincing as many students as possible.

36. (N2) Because threat assessment is a violence prevention strategy, it's different from other kinds of school safety measures. Threat assessment is different from a crisis response plan that's enacted after violence erupts, and from building security measures such as door locks and surveillance cameras. Threat assessment, like other prevention models, can take place on three levels: primary, secondary, and tertiary.

37. (N1) Primary prevention is also called *universal* prevention. It involves programs for all students. Some examples of a threat assessment approach on a primary prevention level are: encouraging students to treat one another with respect and not use threatening language; encouraging students to seek help when a classmate has been threatened, teased, or bullied; and teaching all students that seeking help to prevent violence is *not* snitching.

38. (N2) Secondary prevention is also called *targeted* or *supplemental* prevention. It involves services for students who are identified as at-risk for violence. Some examples of a threat assessment response on a secondary prevention level include short-term counseling for a student with anger problems, conflict resolution for a dispute between peers, and interventions for students who engaged in verbal bullying.

39. (N1) Tertiary prevention is also called *intensive* or *indicated* prevention. It involves individualized services for a small group of students who have *already demonstrated* serious potential for violence. Tertiary prevention efforts may involve special education services, ongoing behavior plans, or placement in an alternative school.

40. (N2) Some incidents, such as fights, may break out without warning, and no threat assessment was possible. In cases where a fight or assault has already occurred, the threat assessment team may want to conduct a threat assessment focused on whether a student might commit an additional violent act in the future.

41. (N1) Threats of suicide or self-harm, such as cutting, should *always* be reported. In most cases, threats to self are handled by the school's procedures for responding to suicide and self-harm. If there is an *additional* concern that the student may want to harm *others*, a threat assessment that considers self-harm *and* harm to others will be conducted.

42. (N2) Threat assessment has been tested in schools for more than 15 years, and there's strong scientific evidence that it's safe and effective.

43. (N2) Research in Virginia schools has found that 99 percent of threat assessment cases are resolved without the threat being carried out. In the first two years since the state law was enacted, school threat assessment teams responded to 3,335 student threats to harm others. Only 42, or 1%, of the threats were carried out. These threats involved fights that did not result in serious injuries.

44. (N1) Threat assessment can't prevent *all* acts of violence, but it *can* help *reduce* violence. Research shows that schools that use threat assessment have less bullying and peer aggression. Teachers report feeling safer in schools that use threat assessment.

45. (N2) In summary, threat assessment is a violence prevention strategy that can help keep our schools safe. Threat assessment teams assess each student individually so that they can take actions that do not overreact or underreact to student behavior.

46. (N1) However, threat assessment depends on the willingness of students, parents, and teachers to recognize and report threatening statements or behaviors. Share what you've learned in this program with the students, parents, and teachers in your school.

47. (N2) Now, please answer a few questions to see how much you've learned. This will help us determine how we can improve the program. If you don't know the answer, please select "Don't Know" so we'll know which areas we need to improve upon. [survey audio]

48. (N1) Thank you for watching this presentation on school safety and threat assessment.

Threat Assessment Discipline and Research Program Script

1. (N1) Hi, I'm [female narrator insert name/introduction here].
   (N2) And I'm [male narrator insert name/introduction here].
   (N1) Today, we're going to talk about school discipline and research associated with threat assessment.

2. (N2) Let's get started with a few questions about your views on school discipline and what you already know about threat assessment. If you don't know the answer, please tell us you don't know rather than guess. This will help us measure whether or not this program covers information you already know. [audio for survey]

3. (N1) Threat assessment is a violence prevention strategy, not a discipline program. Threat assessment does not replace your existing disciplinary system, but the information gained in a threat assessment may lead you to make different disciplinary decisions.

4. (N2) Threat assessment and discipline are distinct processes. A threat assessment focuses on the meaning of a student's behavior and whether it's a warning of impending or future violence. Most threats to harm someone are not serious – they're often expressions of emotion, or maybe efforts to cause a disruption or intimidate someone, and the person doesn't actually intend to carry out the threat.

5. (N1) Unlike threat assessment, discipline is concerned with what a student has already done; whether the student disobeyed a rule; the impact that the student's behavior had on others; and what the consequences should be. A threat might not be serious from a threat assessment perspective but very serious from a disciplinary perspective.

6. (N2) We're going to show you a series of case situations. For each case, we can only present a limited amount of information, and in a real case, you would gather more information before you made a decision. However, for teaching purposes, we're going to ask you to make some decisions based on the information provided here, assuming there is no additional information that would contradict what has been presented. In other words, these cases are designed to make a teaching point and do not illustrate the full range of information you would want to gather in a real case.

7. **VIDEO OF ANGRY THREATS SCENE 1 BOY WITH PAPERWAD**

8. (N1) Does this interaction suggest the student poses a threat?
   (N2) This boy's behavior clearly merits disciplinary action. He was aggressive, disrespectful, and disruptive. The teacher cannot allow this kind of behavior in her classroom. That is the disciplinary side of this situation. But we also need to look at this case from a threat assessment

perspective. Here all we know is that the boy is expressing anger in an inappropriate manner. The behavior itself does not show that he poses a threat that requires the team to take protective action.

(N1) However, the threat assessment team should assess his mental state and his intentions toward the teacher. In many cases like this, a student will calm down and admit that he was frustrated and acted inappropriately. He may apologize to the teacher for his behavior. In these cases, the threat can be resolved as not serious.

(N2) But if the boy continued to express anger or hostility toward the teacher, or if there were other threats the boy had made regarding this teacher, the threat might be more serious. Let's look at another situation.

9. **VIDEO OF ANGRY THREATS SCENE 1 GIRL BOMB THREAT**

10. (N2) In this situation, does the girl pose a serious threat of violence?

(N1) This is another case where there is a big difference between the disciplinary side of the case and the threat assessment side of the case. From a disciplinary perspective, the student has broken the law and is in serious trouble. She could be arrested and charged with a crime. She could receive a serious disciplinary consequence from the school.

(N2) However, from a threat assessment perspective, there is no bomb and no indication that the student poses a threat to others. School discipline and threat assessment are separate processes and a serious disciplinary violation is not necessarily a serious threat. Let's look at one more situation.

11. **VIDEO ANGRY THREATS SCENE 3 HIT LIST**

12. (N1) This is a situation that many schools have experienced. How serious is this threat?

(N2) In many schools, a student has claimed to have a hit list of people he or she plans to kill. These lists are usually invented for the purpose of expressing anger and creating a sensation. A hit list can be disrupting and frightening, but by itself is not a serious threat. The threat assessment team would want to find out why the student has created a hit list, since there is likely a peer conflict or some other problem that merits attention.

(N1) The threat assessment team would want to investigate the report of a hit list, because it's possible that the student not only has a hit list, but has acquired weapons and made plans to carry out an attack.

13. (N1) Threat assessment takes a problem-solving approach to student misbehavior. A threat often indicates that a student is frustrated with a problem he or she cannot solve, and the team looks for ways to help the student learn more acceptable ways to deal with conflict.

14. (N2) A threat assessment considers the seriousness of the student's behavior. It considers the student's intentions and the circumstances of the behavior. An accidental violation of rules is not the same as an intentional violation, and a minor violation is treated differently than a major violation.

15. (N2) Threat assessment represents a different approach to school safety and student misbehavior than zero tolerance. Zero tolerance policies are intended to deter violence and substance use by sending a strong message of strict discipline for even minor violations. Research has found no evidence that zero tolerance makes schools safer or improves student behavior. On the contrary, zero tolerance practices have contributed to a large increase in school suspensions. Under a zero tolerance approach, punishment is automatic for all cases, regardless of the circumstances, the student's intentions, or the severity of the behavior. Suspension or expulsion are routine outcomes. But under a threat assessment approach, the punishment varies according to the circumstances, the student's intentions, and the severity of the behavior. In most cases, the student is not suspended or expelled. The differences between zero tolerance and threat assessment are clearest in the cases of toy guns, such as water guns, bubble guns, and other objects that do not pose a serious threat of violence.

16. (N1) There are reasons to be cautious about using out-of-school suspension. A large body of educational research has found that suspension does *not* have its desired effects on most students, and schools that make greater use of suspension have lower achievement levels. Some of the

common negative consequences of suspension are: students tend to fall behind in their coursework, and are at increased risk of failing; students feel alienated and unwanted at school; and students who are suspended are more likely to misbehave and get suspended again rather than improve their behavior. Research also indicates that schools that use suspension as a frequent disciplinary consequence have higher dropout rates than schools that use suspension less often. These findings are not simply because students in some schools misbehave more often. These studies compared schools with similar student demographics to isolate the effects of suspension on dropout rates.

17. (N2) Research in Virginia high schools found the same problem: Schools that use suspension frequently have higher dropout rates than schools that use suspension less often. These findings were true for both Black and White students, high and low poverty schools, and urban and rural schools. The high suspension rates were not simply because students in some schools were more aggressive or rejected school rules.

18. (N1) In 2014, the U.S. Department of Education and Department of Justice issued a Dear Colleague letter to educators about the large racial disparities in school discipline. There is concern that racial disparities are not explained by differences in student behavior and instead reflect racial discrimination. Black students are suspended at approximately twice the rate of Hispanic and White students. We cannot simply stop using school suspension without having effective alternatives. Visit the U.S. Department of Education's website for resources and advice on improving school discipline.

19. (N2) Many schools now use an approach called Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, or PBIS. Schools using PBIS emphasize teaching and rewarding appropriate behavior. There is great emphasis on defining clear, tangible expectations for students and consistent rule enforcement. PBIS uses a multi-tiered approach to prevention. They conduct Functional Behavioral Assessments and develop positive behavioral intervention plans for students who repeatedly engage in inappropriate behavior. Randomized controlled trials have shown that schools using PBIS have lower suspension rates and fewer office referrals than control schools.

20. (N1) A relatively new and popular approach to discipline that can be used in conjunction with PBIS is restorative justice. Restorative justice places emphasis on teaching students to appreciate the impact of their actions on others and to take responsibility for any harm they cause. Classes hold regular meetings or circles to build a sense of community and shared commitment to treating one another with respect. A student who misbehaves is guided to take responsibility for the harm caused by his or her behavior, understand how it affected others, and take action to repair the harm. Suspensions are discouraged because harm cannot be repaired if the student is not there to participate in the process. A longitudinal study in Denver public schools demonstrated significant reductions in the gap between Black and White suspension rates in schools using restorative justice practices.

21. (N2) Now let's talk about research on threat assessment. There is more than 15 years of research on threat assessment involving hundreds of Virginia schools as well as schools in other states. Most of this research was conducted with schools using the University of Virginia's model, the Virginia Student Threat Assessment Guidelines. Controlled studies using several hundred schools have found that threat assessment is a safe and effective practice. Schools using the Virginia Guidelines have lower suspension rates, less bullying, and a more positive school climate than schools using other models of threat assessment or no form of threat assessment. A randomized control trial found that the University of Virginia's threat assessment program resulted in increased counseling for students, more parental involvement, fewer suspensions, and fewer school transfers for students who made threats of violence.

22. (N1) Virginia schools were surveyed about their threat assessment cases in the 2014-15 school year. Schools were free to use any model of threat assessment that met the basic requirements of the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services. Here is a summary of findings from a sample of 1,865 cases reported by 785 schools.

23. (N1) Threat cases occurred at all grade levels, but primarily in the middle grades.

24. (N1) Students made different types of threats. The most common specified threats were to kill or to use a weapon.
25. (N1) Students most often threatened other students.
26. (N2) Following a threat assessment and appropriate follow-up interventions by team members, almost all threats were not carried out. In a small percentage of cases, a student attempted to carry out a threat but it was averted or stopped. For example, a student who had made a threat was apprehended with a weapon before it could be used. In less than 1% of cases, the threat was carried out. All of these cases involved some kind of physical assault such as a fight, but none of them resulted in a serious injury.
27. (N1) There were a wide range of disciplinary outcomes for threats. The most frequent outcome was out-of-school suspension, but this occurred in about half of the cases. The most serious consequences were rare, with only 2% being expelled, and fewer than 2% being arrested or placed in juvenile detention.
28. The vast majority of students were able to return to their original school with no change in placement. About 10% were transferred to an alternative school and a few transferred to a different regular school or moved out of the school district. About 5% were placed on homebound instruction.
29. There were no statistically significant racial differences in disciplinary outcomes. White, Black, and Hispanic students were equally likely to be suspended, removed from their school, or expelled. There were no racial differences in other disciplinary outcomes that were examined, either.
30. (N1) In summary, research in Virginia schools shows that threat assessment teams respond to student threats at all grade levels and involving a wide range of threats. Almost all threats are resolved without being carried out. There was a wide range of disciplinary consequences for threats, but the majority were resolved without severe consequences. Almost all students are able to return to their school, although about 20% ended up receiving educational services in a different school or at home. Most noteworthy is that there were no differences between Black, Hispanic, and White students in disciplinary outcomes.
31. (N1) Now, please answer a few questions to see how much you've learned. This will help us determine how we can improve the program. If you don't know the answer, please select "Don't Know" so we'll know which areas we need to improve upon. [survey audio]
32. (N2) Thank you for watching this presentation on school safety and threat assessment.

Threat Assessment Case Management Program Script

1. [#1 is live action video/can see the narrators on screen]
2. (N1) Hi, I'm [female narrator insert name/introduction here].
3. (N2) And I'm [male narrator insert name/introduction here].
4. (N1) Today, we're going to talk about threat assessment case management.
5. (N2) We'll also show you some case examples and ask for your assessment of each situation.
6. (N1) Let's get started with a few questions about case management. [survey audio]
7. (N2) Threat assessment is more than just assessment. It involves interventions and case management. In the beginning of your threat assessment, you'll determine how serious the case is and what kind of intervention it requires. Generally, the more serious the case, the more case management will be needed.
8. (N1) You'll want to keep in mind some of the basic principles of threat assessment, such as threat classification. Many low level threats are not serious and can be described as low risk or transient. They may be figures of speech or jokes, or they may be expressions of anger. Threats might also be attempts to get attention, cause a disruption, or frighten somebody, even though the person doesn't intend to carry them out. Only a small number of threats *really* indicate impending violence, and we would call these "high risk" or "substantive" threats.

9. (N2) Even if a threat is not serious, it may be a serious disciplinary violation. A threat assessment team must assess the risk of violence a student poses and consider which disciplinary actions are appropriate. Distinguishing between threat assessment and discipline can be difficult, especially if the student has said or done something that's disruptive, disrespectful, or frightening to others.

10. (N1) Threat assessment teams don't want to overreact to threats that aren't serious or underreact to threats that *are* serious. Teams must gather as much information as possible to understand the situation and make good decisions. In order to understand the student's intentions, team members will often interview the student who made the threat, witnesses or observers, and people who have been threatened. Depending on the circumstances, they may gather information from parents, teachers, and others who have worked with the student. The extent of the evaluation depends on the seriousness and complexity of the threat. Most threats are *not* serious, especially with younger students. Even an alarming statement such as, "I could kill you for that" or "I'm going to kill you," could just be an expression of anger that the person doesn't really mean.

11. (N2) There's an important distinction between *making* a threat and *posing* a threat. Many student threats are not serious. Depending on the classification system used, research in Virginia schools has found that 65% to 75% of student threats are judged to be low risk or transient, which basically means that the student doesn't pose a threat.

12. (N1) We say that a student poses a threat when the student has the means *and* the intent to harm someone. This means the threat is serious, and serious threats require protective action to prevent the threat from being carried out. For a threat that is *not* serious, such as a joke or figure of speech, no protective action is needed.

13. (N2) Next, we're going to show you a series of case situations. For each case, we can only present a limited amount of information, and in a real case, you would gather more information before making a decision. However, for teaching purposes, we'll ask you to make decisions based on the information provided, assuming there is no additional information that would contradict it. In other words, these cases are designed to make a teaching point and *do not* illustrate the full range of information you would want to gather in a real case.

14. VIDEO YARDSTICK SCENE 1

15. (N1) Does this interaction suggest that the student poses a threat? Remember, in a real case, you'd gather more information before making a decision. [survey audio]

16. (N1) This one seems pretty easy. The correct answer is "No." The boy is joking around with the girl and she understands that he's joking. In some circumstances a student might be reprimanded for being disruptive, but this would not be considered a serious threat with a weapon. Let's consider a slightly different situation.

17. VIDEO YARDSTICK SCENE 2

18. (N2) Does this interaction suggest that the student poses a threat? [survey audio]

19. (N2) This one's a little more complicated. The boy is not just joking. He seems genuinely angry at the girl. Still, he's only using the yardstick to express his anger. Someone on the threat assessment team will want to speak with him about his behavior and find out what he's angry about. However, based on the limited information in the video, you would not conclude that he posed a threat, because he can't shoot anyone with a yardstick. Let's try another one.

20. VIDEO YARDSTICK SCENE 3

21. (N1) Does this interaction suggest that the student poses a threat? [survey audio]

22. (N1) Here, the boy has clearly threatened to hit the girl. Even though it's just a yardstick, this was an aggressive act. The student might be disciplined for his misbehavior, but the threat assessment team will also want to investigate his threatening behavior and find out what he's angry about. In all three cases, there may be room for disagreement about the boy's behavior. In a real situation, you'd want more information, and that information could lead to different conclusions. Context matters. The same behavior could have different meanings depending on the context and the student's intentions. That's why we do threat assessments.

23. (N2) Threat assessment is designed to prevent violence, but sometimes a violent incident has already taken place. What's the role of threat assessment in *this* situation?

24. **VIDEO OF TWO STUDENTS ARGUING ABOUT A BOYFRIEND**
25. (N1) Is a threat assessment needed or is it too late? [survey audio]
26. (N1 on camera) Threat assessments should be conducted any time there's a fight or serious confrontation that suggests that further violence is possible. It may be too late to prevent the incident in the hallway, but there's potential for another fight. Let's look at what happens next and decide whether further threat assessment is needed.
27. **VIDEO OF TWO STUDENTS ARGUING ABOUT A BOYFRIEND – IN COUNSELOR'S OFFICE**
28. (N2) Is there a threat present? [survey audio]
29. (N2) The answer is "yes." The conflict between the two girls has not been resolved and one of them has indicated that it isn't over. These circumstances suggest that a fight is a real possibility and that at least one girl poses a threat to the other.
30. (N1) If a student commits a violent act before a threat assessment is conducted, it's too late to do an assessment for the committed act, so don't record this case as a threat assessment that resulted in violence. However, you should conduct a threat assessment *after* a fight or some other violent act to assess the potential for future acts of violence.
31. (N2) How do you know whether a future act of violence is going to occur? One appealing strategy is to assess whether a student fits a profile of a violent individual. This is called prospective profiling, and it's not the same as retrospective profiling that's done to identify an offender after the fact. Prospective profiling occurs before a violent act has occurred. It's an attempt to match a student's characteristics with a checklist of characteristics commonly found among individuals who have committed similar violent acts. For example, there have been attempts to develop a profile of students who have attacked their school, the so-called school shooter profile. This approach has serious limitations and should not be used.
32. (N1) Research on school shootings by the FBI and Secret Service concluded that a school shooting profile was not possible. The characteristics of students who committed school shootings were not specific to people who were violent, but applied to many more students who were not violent. In other words, these profiles falsely identified many students as dangerous who in fact were not dangerous.
33. (N2) One reason why profiles don't work is that violent individuals are a heterogeneous group. There are many different motives and reasons why someone would engage in a violent act. There are at least three different pathways to serious criminal violence. First, there are individuals who follow a delinquent or conduct disorder pathway. These individuals are defiant of rules and authority, and they use aggression to get what they want. Then, there are individuals with a serious mental illness who are motivated by delusional thinking. They may have auditory hallucinations and paranoid ideas that lead them to commit a violent act. Most people with serious mental illness are not violent, and only a small portion of serious violence is committed by people in this group. The third group is neither delinquent nor experiencing mental illness. Instead, they are typically embroiled in a relationship conflict in which they feel abused, bullied, or mistreated in some way and lash out in retaliation.
34. (N1) Instead of matching individuals to a specific profile, teams should look for evidence that the person is on a pathway toward violence. Has the person made a threat? Is there evidence of planning or preparation to carry out an attack? Has the person acquired weapons, recruited accomplices, or warned friends? These are the most important indications of violence.
35. (N2) Another concept used in threat assessment is "Leakage." Leakage means that someone has intentionally or unintentionally revealed feelings or thoughts about an impending violent attack. Some examples of leakage are bragging or dropping hints about an attack. In some cases, a student will brag about an attack through social media, although this can be a false threat intended to arouse fear and concern. Leakage is not a definitive indication of violence, but it may signal the need for a threat assessment.
36. (N1) Once a threat assessment has been initiated, the team should take a problem-solving approach to student misbehavior. This means that a threat is often an indication that a student is frustrated by a problem that he or she cannot solve. The team should help the student find a better solution to the

problem than resorting to violence. This can be the most effective way to prevent violence and help the student at the same time.

37. (N2) When the team judges that a student has the means *and* intent to harm someone, then the team should develop an individualized safety plan. The plan should be documented in school records, either in records for the student or in separate records used for safety purposes, consistent with your school's policy. A safety plan will be individualized to meet the student's needs and the actions needed to maintain safety. The safety plan will include one or more protective actions to prevent the threat from being carried out.

38. (N1) It's important to take protective actions that are appropriate to the individual situation. In almost all cases, you'll want to warn potential victims. Remember that safety trumps confidentiality, which means you can reveal confidential information, such as the name of a student who threatened someone, to prevent someone from being hurt. If a student has been threatened, you'll also want to contact that student's parents. Sometimes a student or parent will have a strong reaction to learning about a threat, so you might need to reassure them that you're taking measures to keep everyone safe. You might want to talk with them about avoiding confrontation and de-escalating the situation.

39. (N2) There are other protective actions to consider, such as increasing your supervision of the student who made the threat and notifying that student's parents. In serious cases, you'll want to notify your school resource officer or a law enforcement representative. You might take other actions to increase security at the school and it may be appropriate to search for weapons, consistent with state and federal law on search procedures. In cases where there is an immediate risk of violence and the student has broken the law, it may be necessary to arrest the student. In most cases, a student is able to return to school, but the team might decide that it would be best for the student to be placed in a different educational setting such as an alternative school.

40. (N1) Teams must weigh the pros and cons of different protective actions. Suspending a student might be helpful in removing a student from a stressful situation, but it could also leave the student supervised or alienate the student. In the most serious cases, the student may need extended case management. This could mean monitoring the student's behavior and providing support for a month or longer. Monitoring should be carried out in a supportive manner to benefit the student.

41. (N2) Next, we'll review some situations where extended monitoring may or may not be appropriate. Keep in mind that we can only present a limited amount of information, and in a real case, you would gather more information before making a decision. However, for teaching purposes, we're going to ask you to make decisions based on the information provided here, assuming there is no additional information that would contradict it.

42. VIDEO OF STUDENT YELLING THREATS ON A SCHOOL BUS

43. (N2) The school bus driver responded to this situation. Is a threat assessment needed? [survey audio]

44. (N2) A threat assessment *is* needed in this situation. The bus driver should report the incident so that the team can begin an assessment. Let's consider what happens next.

45. VIDEO OF STUDENT YELLING THREATS ON A SCHOOL BUS – SCENE 2 IN COUNSELOR'S OFFICE

46. What should the counselor do next? Close the case, continue counseling, or do something else? [survey audio]

47. VIDEO OF STUDENT YELLING THREATS ON A SCHOOL BUS – SCENE 3 COUNSELOR ON PHONE

48. (N2) Certainly the counselor should continue counseling the boy and also investigate the bullying. The counselor should advise the principal and the rest of the team about the incident so they can take the next steps as a team. One of those steps will be to contact the parents of children who ride that bus. The news of this incident will spread quickly and parents will be alarmed about a shooting threat. They will expect school authorities to contact them.

49. (N2) Does this information suggest that extended monitoring is needed? [survey audio]

50. (N2) The best answer is yes, the team should continue to monitor this situation because the bullying might reoccur. Monitoring could include checking in with the student each day after riding the bus, or if the student is not on the bus, checking in at the end of the school day. After a week or so, the team

can reassess how frequently check-ins should be, provided the student is willing to seek help immediately if bullied or harassed. The bus driver should remain observant and report any problems immediately. There should also be periodic checks with the student's parents, school counselor, teachers, or others who might have relevant information. Threat assessment requires a team effort. Here's an example.

51. VIDEO OF TEAM DISCUSSION BULLYING CASE

52. (N1) How well does your team work together? Consider all of the cases your team has done in the past year. If you're a new team member or have a new team and haven't done any cases yet, select "not applicable." Otherwise, rate your team from 1 to 10. [survey audio]

53. (N1) Some threat assessment cases require careful planning and follow-up to make sure that the plan is working and violence does not occur. Here's an example.

54. VIDEO TO TEAM DISCUSSION GANG CASE

55. (N1) How well does your team plan follow-up efforts? Consider all of the cases your team has done in the past year. If you're a new team member or have a new team and haven't done any cases yet, select "not applicable." Otherwise, rate your team from 1 to 10. [survey audio]

56. (N2) A threat assessment might include a mental health assessment conducted by a member of the school's team, or in some cases, an external consultant. Most cases don't require this level of assessment. A mental health professional should *not* be asked to predict whether a student will engage in a violent act. It's extremely difficult to make accurate predictions of violence and experts often err on the side of safety and over-predict violence. A mental health assessment is not intended to predict violence, but to identify strategies for *preventing* violence. The assessment should determine whether there are mental health needs that require intervention and why the student made the threat. Here's another case.

57. VIDEO OF GIRL REPORTING A LETTER FROM STALKER followed immediately by BOY IN COUNSELOR'S OFFICE

58. (N1) Does this information suggest a mental health assessment is needed? [survey audio]

59. (N1) A mental health assessment *is* appropriate in this situation. In some cases, stalking occurs when a student can't accept the end of a relationship, and counseling can be helpful. But in this case, there was no previous relationship. The student may have delusional thoughts and an irrational obsession with the girl that indicates a serious mental disorder.

60. (N1) How well does your team identify cases that are appropriate for mental health assessment? This includes identifying cases that should receive a mental health assessment and excluding cases where a mental health assessment is not needed. If you're a new team member or have a new team and haven't done any cases yet, select "not applicable." Otherwise, rate your team from 1 to 10. [survey audio]

61. (N1) A group of girls report that another girl in their class has threatened to poison them. The threat assessment team learns that the girl who made the threat has been socially bullied by her classmates. The girl reportedly has talked about killing herself and has a number of superficial scratch marks on her arm. When asked about the scratches, she says it's no one's business what she does and refuses to say anything else. Does this information suggest a mental health assessment is needed? [survey audio]

62. (N1) In this situation, a mental health assessment *is* needed, because the girl may be cutting herself and may be suicidal. A mental health assessment would be useful to assess for depression and potential for self-injury, as well as to gather more information about the bullying situation and her threat to poison her classmates.

63. (N1) Threat assessment and suicide assessment are closely related processes. In most cases where there is a concern about suicide or self-harm alone, school authorities should follow their regular procedures. A suicide assessment usually includes a school-based mental health professional evaluating the student, developing a plan to keep the student safe, and notifying parents or guardians. When there is concern that the student may want to harm others as well, a threat assessment that considers harm to self *and* others should be conducted.

64. (N2) A law enforcement investigation can be a valuable element of a safety plan. A school resource officer might interview witnesses, visit the student's home and ask permission to search the home or obtain a search warrant, and investigate whether the student has acquired weapons. A search for

evidence that the student is preparing to carry out an attack may be appropriate. School authorities may search students, lockers, backpacks, and other school premises provided they have reasonable suspicion. Law enforcement searches require a higher standard of probable cause. A search could include the student's social networking sites, text messages, and other forms of communication. Team members should learn the standards and practices in their jurisdiction.

65. (N1) In summary, threat assessment often requires a careful assessment of whether a student who has made a threat actually poses a threat. The team should always consider the context and meaning of the student's behavior and whether the student demonstrates intent to harm someone. In serious cases, case management will include the development of an individualized safety plan and appropriate protective actions to prevent violence. There may be a mental health assessment of the student to identify mental health needs and address the problem or conflict that underlies the student's threatening behavior. A safety plan may include a law enforcement investigation.

66. (N2) Now, please answer a few questions to see how much you've learned. This will help us determine how we can improve the program. [survey audio]

67. (N2) Thank you for participating in this program on school safety and threat assessment.

Parent Program Script

1. [#1 is live action video/can see the narrators on screen]
2. (N1) Hi, I'm [insert name/introduction here].
3. (N2) And I'm [insert name/introduction here].
4. (N1) Today, we're going to talk about school safety and threat assessment, and what you can do to help keep your child's school safe.
5. (N2) Let's get started with a few questions so that we'll know how many different families have participated in this program. [audio for survey]
6. (N1) Now, let's see what you already know about threat assessment. If you don't know the answer, please tell us you don't know rather than guess. This will help us measure whether or not this program covers information you already know. [audio for survey]
7. (N2) School safety is a complex topic. Overall, schools are very safe places, but we want to do everything we can to keep them safe. That's why we created this program, which covers all forms of aggression at school, from rare, severe events such as shootings, to more common, less severe incidents such as bullying and fighting.
8. (N1) Although we *are* concerned about school shootings and want to review ways to prevent them, keep in mind that they are rare.
9. (N1) Nationwide, there is an average of 21 homicides of students per year in our schools. That means the majority of the nation's 125,000 schools will never have a homicide. Dividing 125,000 schools by 21 homicides per year tells us that student homicides occur in one out of approximately 6,000 schools. Another way to think about this is that the average school will experience a student homicide every 6,000 years.
10. (N2): Violence is more of a community problem than a school problem. Shootings are a serious national concern, with approximately 12,000 gun homicides every year in the U.S. Our students may be exposed to violence outside of school in their community. FBI crime statistics show that homicides are *10* times more likely to occur in a *restaurant* than in a school. And homicides are *200* times more likely to occur in a *residence* than in a school. While we *should* be concerned about school shootings, we should also keep them in perspective.
11. (N1) Violence at school, even shootings, *can* be prevented. Research on school shootings has found that most attackers made threats of violence before their attack. Many school shootings have been prevented because a student's threat was reported, investigated, and found to be serious. That's one reason law enforcement and education authorities have recommended that threats of violence be investigated using a standard threat assessment process.
12. (N2) Who are the members of the threat assessment team?

13. (N1) A threat assessment team typically includes the principal or assistant principal, a law enforcement officer such as a school resource officer, and other staff members such as a counselor, psychologist, social worker, and teacher.
14. (N2)What is threat assessment?
15. (N1) Threat assessment is a standard process for investigating threatening statements or behavior. The goal of threat assessment is to prevent violence by first assessing the situation and then intervening to resolve threats before they escalate. Threat assessment can be used to prevent any form of violence, from bullying to shootings.
16. (N2) A threat is defined as *any communication or behavior that conveys an intent to harm someone*. Threats can be made *directly* to the intended target, or *indirectly* to a third party. Threats can be explicit, such as, "I'm going to kill you," or implied, such as, "You better watch out."
17. (N1) How should you report a possible threat?
18. (N2) Parents and students should report possible threats of violence to someone such as an administrator, counselor, officer, or teacher. It's best to report a threat in person or by telephone so that you or your child can explain what you know. However, many schools have hotlines and websites where threats can be reported anonymously.
19. (N1) Threats should be reported immediately, but there is *no* need to report a threat that's *obviously* a joke or figure of speech. If you're not sure whether a threat is serious, you should report it.
20. (N2) Most threats are *not* serious. Statements such as, "I'm going to kill you," or, "I want to blow up this school," could be serious or not serious depending on the situation. Students might say something when they're angry, but not really mean it, and schools don't want to overreact to threats that *aren't* serious.
21. (N1) Sometimes a threat *is* serious, and someone *really could* get hurt. So, the job of the threat assessment team is to decide whether a threat is serious, and, if it is, stop it from being carried out.
22. (N2) Threats can mean different things depending on the situation and the person's intentions. Let's start with low-level threats. Sometimes threats are just figures of speech or jokes that aren't serious. Other times, threats are expressions of anger that aren't literal. Threats might also be attempts to get attention, cause a disruption, or frighten somebody, even though the person doesn't intend to carry them out. These kinds of threats will receive disciplinary consequences, but they are *not* as serious as threats that indicate impending violence. The threat assessment team focuses on identifying how serious the threat is. The more information you can give the team, the better. Threat assessment teams sometimes classify threats depending on how serious they are. Non-serious threats might be classified as "low risk" or "transient" threats. Threats that are more serious might be called "high risk" or "substantive" threats.
23. (N1) In many cases, a threatening situation involves an argument, conflict, or some other kind of problem between individuals. Threat assessment is often a problem-solving process. A threat indicates that a student is frustrated with a problem he or she cannot solve. The team looks for ways to help the student learn more acceptable ways to solve the problem.
24. (N2) Bullying and harassment are common in schools. Bullying can have serious consequences for students, resulting in anxiety, depression, and poor academic performance. Bullying can also escalate into more serious acts of violence. Next, we'll show you a situation that could happen at school. Take a minute to watch the following video. [Note: a video with 5 brief scenes will follow]
VIDEO SCENE 1
Boy [patting his backpack]: I've got it right here. (shows part of a gun to another student). I'm going to catch him in the cafeteria and take him out.
25. (N1) Parents should teach their children that if a student talks seriously about killing someone or brings a gun to school, it should be reported immediately. Threat assessment can save lives. School shootings have been prevented because a student reported a threat.
VIDEO SCENE 2
Boy [to a friend]: Look, I'm worried he really means it, but I don't want to be a snitch.
Friend: A snitch is someone who tells on you to get something for himself. It's not snitching if you're trying to keep somebody from getting hurt.

26. (N2) Sometimes, students don't want to report a threat because they think it's "snitching," but there's a big difference between snitching and seeking help. Explain to your child that snitching is something people do for their own benefit. For example, some students might snitch to get out of trouble. Emphasize that they aren't snitching if they report a threat; they're trying to prevent someone from being hurt.

VIDEO SCENE 3

Friend [continues to boy]: How are you gonna feel if he really does it? How will you live with yourself if somebody gets killed and you could have stopped it?

27. (N1) School shootings are rare compared to the large number of schools in the U.S., but there have been many situations where a shooting was prevented because a student reported a threat. In schools where shootings occurred, there were often students who decided not to say anything.

VIDEO SCENE 4

Boy [to friend]: OK, I guess you're right. I don't want somebody getting killed if I can prevent it. Who do I talk to about this?

28. (N1) Encourage your child to report threats to a trusted adult such as a teacher, counselor, coach, principal, or police officer.

VIDEO SCENE 5

Boy: I don't know how to say this, but I'm kinda worried about Connor.
Adult: If you're worried about him, I want to know about it.
Boy: Well, he says he has a gun, and he's gonna shoot Evan in the cafeteria.
Adult: You did the right thing letting me know. Let me make sure I understand the situation. Tell me more about this… (fades to black).

29. (N1) At the 1999 FBI conference on school shootings, someone in the audience objected that we could never convince all of our students that they should report threats. The reply? We don't need to convince every student to report a threat. We only need to convince one. And in fact, studies have found that one student has made the difference in averting many potential shootings. Even if we can't convince all students, we can increase the likelihood of preventing violence by convincing as many students as possible.

30. (N2) Threat assessment is just one kind of safety measure in your child's school. Because threat assessment is a violence prevention strategy, it's different from other kinds of school safety measures. Threat assessment is different from a crisis response plan that's enacted after violence erupts, and from building security measures such as door locks and surveillance cameras. Your child's school has multiple safety measures.

31. (N1) Now, let's talk more generally about threats. Students sometimes make threatening statements they don't really mean, so threat assessment does *not* follow a zero tolerance policy. Instead, disciplinary actions are based on the seriousness of the misbehavior.

32. (N2) Students are *not* automatically suspended or arrested for making a threat. In a *very serious* situation, a student might be suspended or transferred to a different school. In some cases, students have been arrested. If a student threatens someone in a way that truly frightens them, then it can be considered a crime. We should help students understand that some threats are a violation of state or federal law.

33. (N1) A threat that seems like a joke to a student might be taken seriously by someone else. Students should avoid making threatening statements, because they might be misunderstood.

34. (N2) Students need to understand that making threats via e-mail, text, or the Internet *can* be considered a *crime*. Some examples of threats that could result in a student's arrest and being charged with a felony are sending a text or e-mail that says something such as, "I'm going to kill you for that," or posting something online such as, "It's time to blow up this school."

35. (N1) Students should also seek help for a classmate who is thinking of hurting himself or herself. Threats of suicide or self-harm, such as cutting, should *always* be reported. In most cases, threats to self are handled by the school's procedures for responding to suicide and self-harm. If there is an *additional* concern that the student may want to harm *others*, a threat assessment that considers self-harm *and* harm to others will be conducted.

36. (N2) Threat assessment has been tested in schools for more than 15 years, and there's strong scientific evidence that it's safe and effective.
37. (N2) Research in Virginia schools has found that 99 percent of threat assessment cases are resolved without the threat being carried out. In the first two years since the state law was enacted, school threat assessment teams responded to 3,335 student threats to harm others. Only 42, or 1%, of the threats were carried out. These threats involved fights that did not result in serious injuries.
38. (N1) Threat assessment can't prevent *all* acts of violence, but it *can* help *reduce* violence. Research shows that schools that use threat assessment have less bullying and peer aggression. Teachers report feeling safer in schools that use threat assessment.
39. (N1) Research has found that schools that use threat assessment have reductions in out-of-school suspensions. Threat assessment does *not* follow a zero tolerance policy with automatic suspensions. Instead, disciplinary actions are based on the seriousness of the threat. Research has also found *no* racial differences in suspension rates for Black, Hispanic, and White students who are seen for a threat assessment.
40. (N2) In summary, threat assessment is a violence prevention strategy that can help keep our schools safe. Threat assessment teams assess each student individually so that they can take actions that do not over-react or under-react to student behavior. However, threat assessment depends on the willingness of students, parents, and teachers to recognize and report threatening statements or behaviors. Share what you've learned in this program with your children. And if you see or hear something that concerns you, consult with your school team.
41. (N2) Now, please answer a few questions to see how much you've learned. This will help us determine how we can improve the program. If you don't know the answer, please select "Don't Know" so we'll know which areas we need to improve upon. [survey audio]
42. (N1) Thank you for watching this presentation on school safety and threat assessment. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak with your school's principal.

APPENDIX C: ONLINE PROGRAM PRE/POST ASSESSMENTS

Student Program

Background Questions
1. Are you male or female? (male, female)
2. What grade level are you in? (6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12)
3. Is your ethnic background Hispanic or Latino(a)? (yes, no)
4. What is the best description of your race? (American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, White, 2 or more races, Other)

Pre/Post Questions

Yes	No	Do Not Know	What do you already know about threat assessment? It's ok to say you don't know the answer rather than guess.
			Threat assessment teams include members with expertise in school administration and counseling, but not law enforcement
			Threat assessment teams only investigate threats to kill someone
			A threat assessment team will automatically suspend a student for making a threat.
			Students who make threats will most likely be arrested.
			Most threats are not serious.
			Threat assessment is not used for threats to fight.
			Threat assessment teams can prevent school shootings.
			A threat assessment team may try counseling to prevent two students from fighting.
			Even if a threat is a joke, you should report it.
			Threat assessment teams include members with expertise in school administration and counseling, but not law enforcement
			Threat assessment teams only investigate threats to kill someone

How much do you agree or disagree with these statements?	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Don't know	Agree	Strongly Agree
Students who bully someone should be reported to a teacher or counselor.					
If my friend talked about killing someone, I would tell one of the teachers or staff at school					
If my friend brought a gun to school, I would tell one of the teachers or staff at school.					
If you report a threat you are snitching					

Post Questions:

How much do you agree or disagree with these statements?	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Don't know	Agree	Strongly Agree
This program was a useful learning experience.					
I found the information in this program to be clear and easy to understand.					
I am telling the truth on this survey.					

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How many questions did you answer truthfully on this survey? (only a few or none of them, some of them, most of them, all but 1 or 2 of them, all of them)

Parent Program

Background Questions: (If you have more than one child at this school, choose the oldest.)
1. What is the name of your child's school?
2. Do you have a son or daughter at this school? (son, daughter)
3. What grade level is your child in? (If more than one, choose oldest in this school) (6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12)
4. Are you male or female? (male, female)
5. Is your ethnic background Hispanic or Latino(a)? (yes, no)
6. What is the best description of your race? (American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, White, 2 or more races, Other)

Pre/Post Questions

Yes	No	Do Not Know	What do you know about threat assessment? It's ok to say you don't know the answer rather than guess.
			My child's school has a threat assessment team.
			Schools have a relatively high rate of shootings compared to other locations in the U.S.
			The primary purpose of threat assessment is to provide an overall assessment of whether a school is safe from an attack.
			Threat assessment teams investigate threatening statements or behaviors by students.
			Threat assessment teams include members with expertise in school administration and counseling, but not law enforcement.
			Students are automatically suspended for making threats.
			Threat assessment consists of a crisis response and recovery plan in the event of an attack.
			A threat assessment team's job is to recommend new security measures such as door locks and video surveillance cameras.
			Schools are required to notify parents/guardians if it is determined that their student poses a threat of violence or physical harm to self or others.

How familiar are you with the concept of threat assessment?								
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all familiar				Moderately familiar				Extremely familiar
How concerned are you that a shooting might occur at your child's school?								
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all concerned				Moderately concerned				Extremely concerned
How likely are you to talk with your child about threats of violence at school?								
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not likely				Moderately likely				Highly likely

Post Questions:

How much do you agree or disagree with these statements?	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Don't know	Agree	Strongly Agree

This program was a useful learning experience.					
I found the information in this program to be clear and easy to understand.					
This program increased my motivation to speak with my child about violence prevention					
This program increased my motivation to teach my child about the difference between snitching and seeking help.					
This program increased my knowledge of the role of our school threat assessment team.					
This program increased my willingness to encourage my child to report threats.					
I am willing to report a threat to a school authority.					
I trust our school to respond appropriately to threats of violence.					

Staff Program

Background Questions

1. What is your staff position in this school? In order to protect your anonymity, reports concerning an individual school will combine all staff members into a single group. Your individual answers will not be released to anyone. For the overall report combining all schools, however, we want to compare different school roles. (administrator, counselor, nurse, psychologist, school resource officer/sro, social worker, teacher, other)
2. How many years have you been working in a school setting (1-3 years, 4-10 years, >10 years)
3. Approximately how many hours of training have you had in threat assessment?

Pre/Post Questions

Yes	No	Do Not Know	What do you know about threat assessment? It's ok to say you don't know the answer rather than guess.
			Schools have a relatively high rate of shootings compared to other locations in the U.S.
			The primary purpose of threat assessment is to provide an overall assessment of whether a school is safe from an attack.
			Threat assessment teams investigate threatening statements or behaviors by students.
			Threat assessment teams include members with expertise in school administration and counseling, but not law enforcement.
			Students are automatically suspended for making threats.
			Threat assessment focuses on prevention, rather than a crisis response and recovery plan after an attack.
			A threat assessment teams job is to recommend new security measures such as door locks and video surveillance cameras.
			All students who make threats of violence are referred for a mental health evaluation.
			Threat assessment includes intervention with students whose behavior may pose a threat to others.
			Threat assessment can involve primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention efforts.
			Schools are required to notify parents/guardians if it is determined that their student poses a threat of violence or physical harm to self or others.
			Virginia law requires threat assessment teams to provide guidance to students on recognizing and reporting threats.

			Threat assessment is considered a form of tertiary prevention that supplements primary or secondary primary prevention efforts.

How familiar are you with the concept of threat assessment?								
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all familiar				Moderately familiar				Extremely familiar

How concerned are you that a shooting might occur at your school?								
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all concerned				Moderately concerned				Extremely concerned

Post Questions

How much do you agree or disagree with these statements?	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
This program was a useful learning experience.				
I will be able to apply what I learned in this program to my work.				
I found the information in this program to be clear and easy to understand.				
This program increased my motivation to speak with students about violence prevention.				
This program increased my motivation to teach students the difference between snitching and seeking help.				
This program increased my knowledge of the role of our school threat assessment team.				
This program increased my willingness to encourage students to report threats.				

Here are my suggestions for improvement:

Threat Assessment Team Basics Program

Background Questions
1. What is the full name of your school?
2. What is your staff position in this school?
3. How many years have you been working in a school setting? (1-3 years, 4-10 years, > 10 years)
4. Approximately how many hours of training have you had in threat assessment? _____ hours
5. How many years have you been on a threat assessment team? (If this is your first year, enter 1, if this is your 2nd year, enter 2, etc.)
6. Approximately how many threat cases have you worked on? _____ cases

Pre/Post Questions

Yes	No	Do Not Know	What do you know about threat assessment? It's ok to say you don't know the answer rather than guess.
			Schools have a relatively high rate of shootings compared to other locations in the U.S.

			The primary purpose of threat assessment is to provide an overall assessment of whether a school is safe from an attack.
			Threat assessment teams investigate threatening statements or behaviors by students.
			Threat assessment teams include members with expertise in school administration, counseling, instruction, but not law enforcement.
			Threat assessment focuses on prevention, rather than a crisis response and recovery plan after an attack.
			A threat assessment team's job is to recommend new security measures such as door locks and video surveillance cameras.
			All students who make threats of violence are referred for a mental health evaluation.
			Threat assessment includes intervention with students whose behavior may pose a threat to others.
			Threat assessment can involve primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention efforts.

How familiar are you with the concept of threat assessment?								
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all familiar				Moderately familiar				Extremely familiar

How well do you understand your role in threat assessment?								
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all well				Moderately well				Extremely well

How concerned are you that a shooting might occur at your school?								
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all concerned				Moderately concerned				Extremely concerned

How confident are you that threat assessment is a safe and effective practice?								
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not confident				Moderately confident				Extremely confident

Post Questions

How much do you agree or disagree with these statements?	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
This program was a useful learning experience.				
I will be able to apply what I learned in this program to my threat assessment work.				
I found the information in this program to be clear and easy to understand.				

Here are my suggestions for improvement:

Threat Assessment Team Discipline Program

Pre/Post Questions

The disciplinary practices at my school are effective.								
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Strongly Disagree				Not sure				Strongly Agree

Zero tolerance makes a significant contribution to maintaining order at my school.								
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Strongly Disagree				Not sure				Strongly Agree

We need zero tolerance for student threats of violence in my school.								
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Strongly Disagree				Not sure				Strongly Agree

Suspension is a necessary tool for maintaining school order.								
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Strongly Disagree				Not sure				Strongly Agree

If a student threatens an act of violence, immediate suspension is necessary.								
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Strongly Disagree				Not sure				Strongly Agree

These questions concern disciplinary practices in our public schools. Answer "Yes" or "No" if you know the answer, and use "Do not know" if you are unsure of the answer.

Yes	No	Do Not Know	
			Statistically, Black students are suspended at more than double the rate of White students in our schools.
			Zero tolerance discipline practices are consistent with a threat assessment approach.
			Out-of-school suspension is an effective way to improve student behavior.
			The U.S. Department of Education is concerned that the high suspension rate of Black students may be evidence of a civil rights violation.
			Schools that use suspension as a frequent disciplinary consequence have lower dropout rates than schools that use suspension less often.
			Research has have shown that schools using PBIS have lower suspension rates and office referrals than control schools.
			Restorative justice uses school suspensions as a way to teach students to understand the consequences of their actions.

Post Questions

How much do you agree or disagree with these statements?	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
This program was a useful learning experience.				
I will be able to apply what I learned in this program to my threat assessment work.				
I found the information in this program to be clear and easy to understand.				

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Here are my suggestions for improvement:

Threat Assessment Team Case Management Program

Pre/Post Questions

How well do you understand case management in threat assessment?								
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all				Not sure				Very well
How well do you understand your role in threat assessment?								
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all				Not sure				Very well

Yes	No	Do Not Know	Answer "Yes" or "No" if you know the answer, and use "Do not know" if you are unsure of the answer.
			If a student has already gotten into a fight, it is too late to conduct a threat assessment.
			In threat assessment, the term leakage refers to the disclosure of confidential information.
			Prospective profiling is a useful way to assess a student's risk of violence.
			The team must develop a comprehensive individualized plan for each threat assessment case.

Yes	No	Answer "Yes" or "No."
		Does this interaction suggest that the student poses a threat?
		Does this interaction suggest that the student poses a threat?
		Does this interaction suggest that the student poses a threat?
		Is there a threat present?
		The bus driver responded to this situation. Is a threat assessment needed?
		What should the counselor do next?
		Does this information suggest that extended monitoring is needed?
		How well does your team work together?
		How well does your team plan follow-up efforts?
		Does this information suggest a mental health assessment is needed?
		How well does your team identify cases that are appropriate for mental health assessment?
		Does this information suggest a mental health assessment is needed?

Post Questions

How much do you agree or disagree with these statements?	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
This program was a useful learning experience.				
I will be able to apply what I learned in this program to my threat assessment work.				
I found the information in this program to be clear and easy to understand.				

Here are my suggestions for improvement:

APPENDIX D: JOURNAL ARTICLES AND BOOK CHAPTERS

1. Cornell, D., Maeng, J., Burnette, A.G., Jia, Y., Huang, F., Konold, T., Datta, P., Malone, M., Meyer, P. (2018). Student threat assessment as a standard school safety practice: Results from a statewide implementation study. *School Psychology Quarterly, 33*, 213-222. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/spq0000220

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3. Burnette, A. G., Datta, P. & Cornell, D. G. (2018). The distinction between transient and substantive student threats. *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management, 5,* 4-20. http://psycnet.apa.org/record/2017-56103-001

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5. Burnette, A.G., Huang, F., Maeng, J.L., & Cornell, D. (2018). School threat assessment versus suicide assessment: Statewide prevalence and case characteristics. *Psychology in the Schools*. |https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.22194

6. Stohlman, S., & Cornell, D. (2019). An online educational program to increase student understanding of threat assessment. *Journal of School Health*, *89* (11), 899-906. https://doi.org/10.1111/josh.12827

7. Cornell, D. (in press). Threat assessment as a school violence prevention strategy. *Criminology & Public Policy,* 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-9133.12471

8. Burnette, A. G., Konold, T., & Cornell, D. (in press). Grade-level distinctions in student threats of violence. *Journal of School Violence*.

9. Maeng, J., Cornell, D., & Huang, F. (in press). Student threat assessment as an alternative to exclusionary discipline. *Journal of School Violence*.

Book Chapters

1. Cornell, D., & Datta, P. (2017). Threat assessment and violence prevention. In L. Wilson (Ed.), *The Wiley handbook of the psychology of mass shootings* (pp. 353-371). Hoboken, NY: Wiley.

2. Nickerson, A. B., Cornell, D., Espelage, D. L., Osher, D., Jimerson, S. R., & Mayer, M. J. (2017). Violence prevention in schools and communities. In M. Casas, L. Suzuki, C. Alexander, & M. Jackson (Eds.), *Handbook of multicultural counseling, 4th Ed.* (pp. 323-331). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

3. Cornell, D., & Malone, M. (2017). Child and adolescent homicide. In V. Van Hasselt and M. Bourke (Eds.). *Handbook of behavioral criminology: Contemporary strategies and issues.* Cham, Switzerland: Springer International: Cham, Switzerland. doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-61625-4_9

4. Cornell, D., & Huang, F. (2018). Collecting and analyzing local school safety and climate data. In Mayer, M., & Jimerson, S. (Eds.) *School safety and violence prevention: Science, practice, and policy driving change*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

5. Nickerson, A., & Cornell, D., (2018). School crisis prevention, response, and recovery. In Mayer, M., & Jimerson, S. (Eds.) *School safety and violence prevention: Science, practice, and policy driving change*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

6. Cornell, D., (2018). Programs and evaluations: Threat assessment. In H. Shapiro (Ed.). *The Wiley handbook of the psychology of violence in education* (pp. 37-52) Hoboken, NY: Wiley.

7. Nickerson, A., & Cornell, D. (2018). Threat assessment and school crisis preparedness. In Mayer, M., & Osher, D. (Eds.) *Keeping students safe and helping them thrive: A collaborative handbook for education, safety, and justice professionals, families, and communities*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

8. Wanless, S.B., Cornell, D., & Davis, D. (in press). Emotional and physical safety. In Mayer, M., & Osher, D. (Eds.) *Keeping students safe and helping them thrive: A collaborative handbook for education, safety, and justice professionals, families, and communities*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

9. Cornell, D., & Stohlman, S. (in press). Violence in schools. In R. Geffner, V. Vieth, V. Vaughan-Eden, A. Rosenbaum, L. Hamberger, J White, and B. Geffner (Eds) *Handbook of interpersonal violence across the lifespan*. Springer.

10. Cornell, D. & Crowley, B. (in press). Strategies to prevent school violence. In P. Lazarus, S. Suldo, & B. Doll (Eds.) *Fostering the emotional well-being of our youth: A school-based approach*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

11. Flannery, D., Mayer, M., Bear, G., Skiba, R., Benbenishty, R., Weist, M., Astor, R., Espelage, D., Bradshaw, C., Furlong, M., Sugai, G., Guerra, N., Cornell, D., Jagers, R., Gottfredson, D., Noguera, P., Nation, M., Webster, D., Jimerson, S., Osher, D., & Nickerson, A. (in press). In Osher, D., Mayer, M., Jagers R., Kendziora, K., & Wood, L. (Eds.). *Keeping students safe and helping them thrive: A collaborative handbook for education, safety, and justice professionals, families, and communities* (2 vols.). New York, New York: Praeger.

12. Cornell, D., & Burnette, A.G. (in press). Threat assessment and management in secondary schools. In J R. Meloy and J. Hoffman (Eds.) *International handbook of threat assessment and management (2nd edition)*. New York: Oxford University press.

13. Cornell, D. (in press). Threat assessment. In L. Theodore, M. Bray, & B. Bracken (Eds.) *Desk reference in school psychology*. In New York: Oxford University press.

APPENDIX E: CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

National

Burnette, A. G., Datta, P., & Cornell, D. (2016, August). Transient and substantive student threats. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association. Denver, CO.

Cornell, D. (March, 2017). The development of behavioral threat assessment as an evidence-based practice in K-12 schools. Spring regional conference of the Association of Threat Assessment Professionals. Orlando, FL.

Maeng, J.L., Burnette, A.G., Jia, Y., & Cornell, D. (April, 2017). Student threat assessment as an innovative violence prevention strategy: Results from a statewide implementation study. Annual Meeting of the American Education Research Association. San Antonio, TX.

Cornell, D. & Maeng, J. (May, 2017). Student threat assessment as a safe and supportive prevention strategy. Comprehensive School Safety Initiative Conference, National Institute of Justice. Alexandria, VA.

Cornell, D. (June, 2017). Safety assessment and intervention: A threat assessment program to prevent violence. 48th Annual Conference of the National Association of School Safety and Law Enforcement Officials. Miami, FL.

Maeng, J., Malone, M., & Cornell, D. (August, 2017). Student threats of violence against teachers: Prevalence and outcomes using a threat assessment approach. American Psychological Association National Convention. Washington, D.C.

Burnette, A. G., Maeng, J., Datta, P., & Cornell, D. (August, 2017). How does threat assessment differ from suicide assessment? American Psychological Association National Convention. Washington, D.C.

Stohlman, S., & Cornell, D. (August, 2017). An online educational program to increase student willingness to report threats of violence. American Psychological Association National Convention. Washington, D.C.

Cornell, D., Maeng, J., Huang, F., Konold, T., Burnette, A.G., Stohlman, S., Jia, Y., Datta, P., & Malone, M. (November, 2017). Statewide implementation of student threat assessment in Virginia public schools. American Society of Criminology Annual Meeting. Philadelphia, PA.

Cornell, D. (March, 2018). The prevention of gun violence in schools and communities. Testimony at the Democratic Forum on School Safety, House Committee on Education and the Workforce. Washington, DC. https://curry.virginia.edu/sites/default/files/images/YVP/Cornell%20Hearing%20Statement%203-20-18.pdf

Cornell, D. (March, 2018). Evidence-based school threat assessment. Congressional Briefing on School Violence, Safety, & Well-being: A Comprehensive Approach. National Prevention Science Coalition to Improve Lives. Washington, DC. 10.13140/RG.2.2.20857.16485

Cornell, D. (April, 2018). Student threat assessment as a violence prevention strategy. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association. New York, NY.

Cornell, D. (May, 2018). School climate and safety. Webinar for Section of Civil Rights and Social Justice, American Bar Association.

Cornell, D. (May, 2018). School safety and threat assessment. Webinar for School Social Work Association of America.

Cornell, D. (October, 2018). Student threat assessment: Best practices. Webinar for Raptor Technologies.

Maeng, J., & Cornell, D. (November, 2018). School violence: Using and enhancing knowledge to improve school safety. The American Society of Criminology Annual Meeting. Atlanta, GA.

Cornell, D. (March, 2019). Threat assessment as a school violence prevention strategy. Paper presented for the George Mason-Carnegie Mellon University Workshop on Mass Violence. Arlington, VA.

Burnette, A.G., Konold, T., & Cornell, D. (March, 2019). Grade level distinctions in student threats of violence. Poster presented at the national conference of the American Psychology-Law Society. Portland, OR.

Maeng, J., Cornell, D., & Huang, F. (April, 2019). Disciplinary outcomes of schools implementing the VSTAG model of threat assessment: A statewide effectiveness study. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association. Toronto, Canada.

Cornell, D. (June, 2019). The Virginia model of school threat assessment. Lecture for the Joint Threat Assessment Training Conference. Association of Threat Assessment Professionals. Philadelphia, PA.

Cornell, D. (June, 2019). An evidence-based approach to school safety. Webinar on Improving School Safety: Policy Trends, Assessment, and Prevention. WestEd and AASA: The School Superintendents Association.

Cornell, D. (June, 2019). Threat assessment as a school violence prevention strategy. Presentation for the Symposium on Mass Violence, Annual Conference of the Center for Evidence-Based Crime Prevention, George Mason University. Arlington, VA.

Cornell, D. (July, 2019). Threat assessment as a school violence prevention strategy. Presentation for the National Governors' Association conference, Strategies to Promote Child Health, Wellbeing and Safety in Schools and Communities Multi-state Convening. St. Paul, MN.

Cornell, D. (September, 2019). Before the gunman arrives: School threat assessment as a violence prevention strategy. FBI Office of Partner Engagement Speaker Series. Washington, D.C.

Virginia

Cornell, D. (2014, October). The value of collaboration and engagement: Threat assessment as a violence prevention strategy. Keynote presentation for Symposium on Children's Mental Health. Commonwealth Center for Children and Adolescents, Waynesboro, VA.

Cornell, D. (2014, December). School climate and safety in Virginia high schools: Perceptions of students and teachers. Keynote presentation for Strengthening Connections Climate Forum. Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety, Midlothian, VA.

Cornell, D. (2015, July). School climate and safety. Presentation for School Safety Institute. Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety, Mechanicsville, VA.

Cornell, D. (2015, August). School climate and safety in Virginia schools. Keynote presentation for the Virginia School Safety Conference, Hampton Roads, VA.

Cornell, D. (2015, August). School climate and safety in Virginia secondary schools. Workshop for the Virginia School Safety Conference, Hampton Roads, VA.

Cornell, D. (2015, October). Assessing threats in the K-12 setting. Keynote presentation for School and campus safety threat assessment conference, Richmond, VA.

Cornell, D. (2015, November). School climate and safety. Presentation for School Safety Institute. Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety, Richmond, VA.

Cornell, D. (2015, December). School climate and safety in Virginia schools. Presentation at the Strengthening connections conference, Richmond VA.

Cornell, D. (2016, September). School climate, safety, and threat assessment in Virginia. Invited presentation at the 2016 Virginia Academy of School Psychologists Convention. Blacksburg, VA.

Cornell, D., & Maeng, J. (2017, March). School climate and threat assessment in Virginia schools. Presentation at School Leader and Advanced Resource Office Forum for the Center for School and Campus Safety, Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services. Presented in Prince William County, Chesterfield, and Virginia Beach, VA.

Cornell, D. (2018, March). School safety: A focus on prevention. Webinar for the Virginia School Board Association.

Cornell, D. (2018, July). School safety in Virginia. Testimony before the General Assembly House of Delegates Select Committee on School Safety subcommittee. Charlottesville, VA.

Cornell, D. (2018, September). Preventing School Violence. Keynote address for the Virginia Council of Administrators of Special Education state conference. Richmond, VA.

Cornell, D. (2019, April). School safety in Virginia. Virginia School Boards Association Hot Topics Conference. Charlottesville, VA.

APPENDIX F: NEWS MEDIA RECOGNITION

Information for last 2 years only

2018

1. https://theconversation.com/threat-assessments-crucial-to-prevent-school-shootings-93636
2. http://educationpost.org/we-can-prevent-school-shootings-without-arming-teachers/
3. http://thehill.com/opinion/criminal-justice/365823-proactive-threat-assessment-not-surveillance-is-the-way-to-make
4. https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/can-schools-prevent-mass-shootings-sandy-hook-parents-train-teachers-to-help-at-risk-students
5. https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/what-we-dont-know-about-gun-violence
6. https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/mar/23/florida-school-shooting-parkland-teachers-impossible-choice
7. http://www.vieravoice.com/April-2018/Tighter-security-should-make-Brevard-County-schools-safer/
8. http://www.nbc29.com/story/37811933/forum-continues-conversation-on-gun-violence-following-march-for-our-lives
9. https://www.deseretnews.com/article/900013841/the-virginia-model-stop-school-shootings-before-the-bullets-fly.html
10. http://www.disasternews.net/news/article.php?articleid=5903
11. https://www.motherjones.com/crime-justice/2018/03/more-cops-wont-make-schools-safer-but-heres-what-they-will-do/
12. http://www.latimes.com/business/hiltzik/la-fi-hiltzik-school-safety-20180316-story.html
13. http://www.masslive.com/news/index.ssf/2018/03/amherst_superintendent_mike_mo.html
14. https://www.mercurynews.com/2018/03/14/local-student-join-national-protest-on-school-gun-violence/
15. https://www.cnn.com/2018/04/04/health/female-shooters-youtube/index.html
16. https://pilotonline.com/news/local/education/public-schools/article_0bf52c42-2bb7-11e8-9d52-5f6f48d148f4.html
17. https://wamu.org/story/18/04/14/after-parkland-schools-grapple-with-threats-and-the-best-ways-to-respond/
18. https://www.journalscene.com/news/task-force-to-propose-threat-assessment-policy-more-officers/article_bfcaa20c-5ab9
19. http://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/ct-met-school-shooting-threat-assessment-20180216-story.html
20. http://www.richmond.com/news/local/henrico/she-literally-thought-she-was-going-to-die-short-pump/article_0b10515f-6e55-5710-aafe-ce0a350778dc.html?utm_source=RTD%20Email&utm_medium=_RTD%20Morning%20News&utm_campaign=_RTD%20Morning%20News
21. https://www.clarionledger.com/story/news/2018/06/12/bullying-rankin-schools-mom-struggle/678441002/
22. https://www.journalscene.com/news/dd-continues-talk-on-threat-assessment/article_2fb440ce-6dd8-11e8-b41f-7ff95eed6dd6.html
23. http://www.philly.com/philly/opinion/commentary/the-best-way-to-stop-a-school-shooting-has-nothing-to-do-with-guns-or-locks-or-school-police-ideas-we-should-steal-20180613.html

24. https://www.educationdive.com/news/teacher-coaching-threat-assessment-can-reduce-disparities-in-discipline-s/526395/
25. http://ksltv.com/392852/ksl-special-in-search-of-safe-schools/
26. http://ksltv.com/392692/safe-schools-survivors-families-pushing-for-vas-threat-assessment-teams-across-us/
27. https://www.roanoke.com/news/politics/general_assembly/violence-prevention-the-focus-as-bipartisan-school-safety-panel-briefed/article_414784ae-1e5c-593a-adcc-a013a8d2b59c.html
28. https://www.deseretnews.com/article/900028720/utah-lawmaker-proposes-putting-a-team-in-every-school-to-catch-red-flags.html
29. https://www.the74million.org/article/6-7-of-students-skip-school-out-of-fear-worry-over-school-shootings-is-up-yet-school-violence-is-down-what-does-this-mean/
30. https://www.dailyprogress.com/opinion/opinion-editorial-good-data-needed-for-school-safety/article_c05c1c9a-904d-11e8-9cf5-83a8a2a66e39.html
31. https://thehill.com/opinion/criminal-justice/399260-how-a-proactive-preventive-approach-can-stem-the-tide-of-school
32. https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/31/opinion/schools-can-keep-kids-safe-without-giving-their-teachers-guns.html?rref=collection%2Ftimestopic%2FGun%20Control&action=click&contentCollection=timestopics&region=stream&module=stream_unit&version=latest&contentPlacement=1&pgtype=collection
33. https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/06/opinion/school-shootings-security-violence.html
34. https://poststar.com/opinion/editorial/editorial-more-debate-needed-about-armed-guards-in-school/article_b0676512-219c-5b4b-94de-34b8acd471d6.html
35. https://www.cnn.com/2018/09/20/health/female-shooters-rite-aid-distribution-center/index.html

2019

1. https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/01/190109090917.htm
2. http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/inside-school-research/2019/01/racial_bullying_Trump_Effect_in_Virginia.html
3. https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2019/01/10/study-bullying-rates-virginia-middle-schools-were-higher-trump-country-after-his-election/?utm_term=.deb3c68d7494
4. https://diverseeducation.com/article/135746/
5. https://www.inquisitr.com/5242813/bullying-increased-in-areas-that-voted-for-trump-study-finds/
6. https://www.npr.org/2019/01/09/683177489/virginia-study-finds-increased-school-bullying-in-areas-that-voted-for-trump
7. https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6573407/Bullying-common-middle-school-students-live-districts-voted-Trump-2016.html
8. Science Daily
9. Medical Xpress
10. Science Blog
11. https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/11/opinion/trump-bullying-virginia.html
12. WVTF Sandy Hausman radio interview 1-10-19

13. https://www.richmond.com/news/local/education/q-a-are-virginia-schools-safer-now-than-before-columbine/article_d152c050-7260-509a-87d9-84d96821ab7b.html?utm_source=RTD%20Email&utm_medium=NEWS%20-%20RTD%20Morning%20News&utm_campaign=_RTD%20Morning%20News%20Weekend

14. https://thecrimereport.org/2019/04/15/investigating-the-puzzles-behind-american-mass-violence/

15. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/mar/28/us-mass-shootings-panic-buttons-on-sale

16. https://www.courier-journal.com/story/news/crime/2019/03/01/louisville-olive-garden-shooting-people-asking-public-safety/2989163002/

17. https://www.kpbs.org/news/2018/mar/02/how-san-diego-schools-handle-threats-mass-violence/

18. https://www.journalpatriot.com/opinion/assessing-threats/article_93e7bb0e-d3bf-11e9-99b7-975cc738bc22.html

19. https://chicago.suntimes.com/news/2019/9/18/20872460/sandy-hook-promise-psa-school-shootings-back-to-school

20. https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2019/09/18/sandy-hook-promise-psa-gives-graphic-look-school-shootings/2301317001/

21. https://flaglerlive.com/144728/zero-tolerance-campus-security/

22. https://www.journalpatriot.com/opinion/assessing-threats/article_93e7bb0e-d3bf-11e9-99b7-975cc738bc22.html

23. https://www.inquirer.com/health/expert-opinions/mass-shooting-school-prevent-20190905.html

24. https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/vb537a/the-wrong-conversation-about-school-shootings

25. https://dailyiowan.com/2019/10/09/iowa-city-school-board-tentatively-supports-a-proposed-threat-assessment-team/

26. https://www.searchlightnm.org/whos-the-threat

27. https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2019/10/11/lockdown-drills-an-american-quirk-out-control/

28. https://www.houstonchronicle.com/news/politics/texas/article/Gov-Abbott-wants-to-identify-mass-shooters-14653314.php

29. https://www.wptv.com/news/local-news/investigations/more-florida-kids-are-threatening-to-shoot-on-campus-and-theyre-paying-the-price-for-it