

Threat Assessment and Threat Management (TATM) — A Model Critical to Terrorism Prevention (1 of 3)

This is the first of a series of TATM Toolboxes, to include **TATM**: **Multidisciplinary Teams (2)** and **TATM**: **Assessment and Management (3)**.

NOTE: The TATM model can be used to prevent escalation by individuals towards all types of targeted violence; however, this Toolbox is specifically focused on countering violent extremism.

The TATM Model is a proactive, prevention-based approach for recognizing, evaluating, assessing, and managing threatening or concerning behavior before an act of violence has occurred, including terrorism. Implementing a TATM system can aid public

scope: This product provides awareness to public safety professionals of the threat assessment and threat management (TATM) model for evaluating potential threats and mitigating radicalization, recruitment, and mobilization to violent extremism.

safety personnel in dealing with threatening or concerning behaviors that might be indicative of future acts of targeted violence, including terrorism. The keys to mitigating a threat are early identification of concerning or threatening behaviors and intervention by a multidisciplinary team (MDT) that can direct, document, and manage the threat assessment and response process. The TATM approach provides public safety personnel with options for responding to individuals whose behavior demonstrates they are at risk of committing future acts of violence, particularly when traditional law enforcement tools are unavailable, by working with non–law enforcement community partners.

The TATM Model uses a structured assessment process by a multidisciplinary TATM Team
to evaluate individuals who exhibit concerning behaviors and apply a tailored management
strategy to prevent violence.

NOTE: Some activities may be constitutionally protected and insignificant on their own, but when observed in combination with other suspicious behaviors, may constitute a basis for concern. Law enforcement action should not be based solely on the exercise of constitutionally protected activities or on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any combination of these factors.

KEY ELEMENTS OF A TATM MODEL

<u>Multidisciplinary Teams:</u> The multidisciplinary makeup of TATM teams is critical. Highly effective teams collaborate, coordinate, and communicate across various parts of organizations or communities to address threats of targeted violence, including terrorism, and reduce the

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threat posed by persons suspected of threatening violence. Leveraging the perspective, expertise, and insight of various disciplines aids in effectively assessing concerning behaviors and developing tailored threat management strategies. **See TATM: Multidisciplinary Teams.**

Ad Hoc Community Partners and Experts: Not all organizations have resident mental health or law enforcement experts on site, and therefore, it is important to develop relationships with these ad hoc community partners during the initial TATM development. These are the partners that will help mitigate potential threats.

Threat Assessment: TATM teams utilize a fact-based method of assessment that focuses on an individual's patterns of behavior^a to determine whether, and to what extent, they are moving toward an attack on an identified target. **See TATM: Assessment and Management.**

Threat Assessment and Threat
Management (TATM)—a process for
assessing suspicious or concerning behavior
to determine if a person poses a risk of
violence and to guide a course of action to
mitigate the threat.

Basic Steps for Establishing a TATM Model

- 1. Establish a multidisciplinary threat assessment team
- 2. Define concerning behaviors
- 3. Establish a central reporting mechanism
- 4. Determine threshold for law enforcement intervention
- 5. Establish assessment procedures
- 6. Develop risk management options to reduce risk of violence
- 7. Conduct training for all stakeholders, including potential bystanders

Source: Enhancing School Safety Using a Threat Assessment Model, US Secret Service NTAC 2018

Threat Management: A threat management

strategy is a coordinated plan of direct or indirect interventions with an individual that are based on current information and level of threat posed and are designed to reduce the risk of violence in a given situation at a particular point in time. Threat management involves the application of an individually tailored plan to reduce risk-enhancing factors and increase risk-mitigating factors. **See TATM: Assessment and Management.**

TRAINING

<u>Training:</u> All stakeholders should be provided with up-front and ongoing training related to threat assessment and terrorism prevention.

• **Threat Assessment Knowledge:** Members of the TATM team should be trained in effective threat assessment considerations and processes, including the goals and steps of an assessment, the type of information that should be brought forward, and how individuals report their concerns.

^aWARNING: Each indicator listed may be by itself lawful conduct or behavior and may constitute the exercise of rights guaranteed by the US Constitution. Evaluating a totality of behavioral indicators and other relevant circumstances when considering corrections or law enforcement response helps ensure no single indicator is used as the sole basis for action.









 Awareness of Violent Extremism: Training should also include information on the current threat environment, violent extremist groups and ideologies, common violent extremist tactics, techniques, and procedures, the process of radicalization to violence, and mobilization indicators.

Bystanders: Although not a formal part of the threat assessment team, potential bystanders play an important role in the process because of their ability to recognize, intercede, and report pertinent concerning behaviors and indicators. Training, engagement, and outreach can help equip bystanders and overcome obstacles to reporting.

• Bystander training should include the important role they play in terrorism prevention, guidance on what constitutes suspicious activity, and how to report suspicious information.

Federal-Level TATM Training Resources

FBI Behavioral Analysis Unit (BAU): In many instances, the local Threat Management Coordinator (TMC) in the FBI Field Office can provide training and resources to local and state partners through reach back to FBI's BAU's Behavioral Threat Assessment Center (BTAC).

DHS National Threat Evaluation and Reporting (NTER) Office: The NTER Office has developed several Threat Evaluation and Reporting Course Training Suites for community stakeholders to develop their understanding of TATM concepts and their role in larger TATM efforts affecting their agency or organization.

<u>DHS Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC):</u> FLETC offers an online training class called "Threat Assessment and Threat Management: Tools for the Frontline Officers Pertaining to Mass Casualty Violence" [G_VO_TATM-CTD-2203].

<u>US Secret Service (USSS)</u> <u>National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC)</u>: USSS NTAC provides customized trainings to organizations by request. Attendees often include law enforcement, K-12 schools, colleges/universities, and workplaces. https://www.secretservice.gov/ntac

Examples of Local and Non-Governmental Training Resources^b

The **Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS)**, in partnership with the Virginia State Police, developed the Domestic Extremism and Violent Extremism Awareness training, which is free for all participants. Funding for this training is provided through the DHS's Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention Grant. More information available at: https://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/training-events/domestic-extremism-and-violent-extremism-awareness

^bThese materials and trainings are listed to illustrate the variety of offerings and are not to be considered endorsements of the content of the material or trainings these organizations offer.







The **Texas State School Safety Center (TSSSC)** serves as a clearinghouse for the dissemination of safety and security information through research, training, and technical assistance for K-12 schools and junior colleges throughout the state of Texas. They have a free training on Behavioral Threat Assessments and Digital Threat Assessments. https://txssc.txstate.edu/

The **Association of Threat Assessment Professionals (ATAP)**^{USPER} provides training and certification to become a Certified Threat Manager through their threat assessment and management professional certification program. certification@atapworldwide.org

The McCain Institute **Prevention Practitioner Network (PPN)** USPER is a network of interdisciplinary professionals dedicated to preventing targeted violence, terrorism, and the impact of both in the United States. They are funded through DHS and host free training and workshops for interested parties. https://www.mccaininstitute.org/programs/preventing-targeted-violence/prevention-practitioners-network/

The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) is a professional association that provides a wide range of information related to school threat assessment and student mental and behavioral health.

TATM Team Examples	
FBI-Led TATM Teams	There are five FBI-led TATM teams, based in the Boston, Denver, Honolulu, Oklahoma City, and Philadelphia FBI field offices. One such example is highlighted below.
	FBI-Led TATM Team Example
	Established in 2017 to mitigate the potential for targeted violence, including violent extremism, and/or active shooter incidents in their communities, this FBI-led TATM team consists of two components: a Stakeholder Group and a Consultation Group.
	 The Stakeholder Group is a large team of more than 200 representatives, representing the Department of Education, the Department of Defense, hospitals, airlines, universities, community and religious organizations, US Probation, the Bureau of Prisons, the US Marshals, other law enforcement entities, social services, and prosecutors. The Consultation Group is a smaller operational team with approximately 15 representatives including those from FBI, the military, local police departments and sheriff's offices, the Department of Health and Human Services, police psychologists, the Department of Health, the State Fusion Center, and representatives from prosecutors' offices. Because of its diverse partnerships, the TATM team has developed the ability to pass ownership on certain threat investigations to stakeholders in the best positions to assist. In
	addition, FBI's BTAC resources have been leveraged in specific cases toward the development of tailored threat management strategies.
Local/Re gional	There are 12 active local or regional TATM teams with FBI participation, located in Baltimore, Buffalo, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Miami, Minneapolis, New Haven,







TATM New York, Phoenix, Pittsburgh, San Antonio, and Washington, DC. One such example is highlighted below. Teams **Local or Regional TATM Team Example** This regional TATM team was created to promote TATM awareness by sharing information, capabilities, and communication among partners to address targeted acts of violence, including violent extremism. The team is a locally created and driven organization that relies on law enforcement tools and mental health and social service resources. The TATM team meets approximately monthly and is comprised of high-level managers/directors from 35 federal, state, and local agencies, including members of the US Attorney's Office. A smaller, local TATM team meets three times per week to discuss individual cases and engages subject matter experts from the regional team as necessary. Cases with high threat concern that lack federal jurisdiction are often referred to the local TATM team for mitigation. The FBI's TMC is fully engaged in regional and local TATM efforts. In addition, an FBI Task Force Officer (TFO) who was the first to complete BTAC's Advanced TATM training is an integral member of both groups. The ability of the local FBI field office to leverage this BTACtrained TFO to push capabilities forward has served as a catalyst to train additional TFOs across the country. The partnership between the local and regional TATM teams has allowed threat investigations to be diverted to the stakeholders best positioned to assist. In addition, BTAC resources have been used in specific cases to develop tailored threat management

CONSIDERATIONS

strategies.

- FBI's BTAC Support—Several programs have been established as a result of trained TMCs and their field office management working collaboratively with BTAC program managers.
 BTAC can assist with generating buy-in from key stakeholders. This support often comes through the engagement of TATM services on a more complex or challenging case involving outside partners.
 BTAC can also assist by coordinating operationally focused training for field office partners.
- Start Small, But Start—Establishing a TATM team can be intimidating, and it takes time. Start by communicating with key stakeholders and using existing liaison relationships to identify whether a team already exists locally. Provide training to law enforcement and community partners on TATM concepts to generate interest in forming a TATM team. Similarly, start a small team covering a single jurisdiction by partnering with a local law enforcement counterpart with whom a relationship already exists. The key is to start small. School-based teams can also be a useful resource. These teams were mandated at universities in Virginia after the Virginia Tech shooting in April 2007, and many other states have followed suit. Some states have mandated them for K-12 schools as well.







• Law Enforcement Involvement—Law enforcement involvement can be critical to accurate threat assessment and effective threat management. However, the nature of law enforcement involvement can vary depending on the type of TATM team.

RESOURCES

FBI

The Behavioral Analysis Unit (BAU) Behavioral Threat Assessment Center (BTAC) is the primary national resource for TATM matters related to FBI-led terrorism investigations. BTAC conducts training and research and provides behavior-based investigative and operational support—including case consultations—to law enforcement, including to those personnel serving on TATM teams working on terrorism and targeted violence. BTAC's services can be requested by law enforcement through your local BAU TMC. https://www2.fbi.gov/hg/isd/cirg/ncavc.htm#bau

DHS

US Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC) is a pioneer in the field of behavioral threat assessment and provides research, training, and consultation on threat assessment and the prevention of targeted violence, including violent extremism. http://www.secretservice.gov/ntac

- Research and Guidance: Publications are available on the USSS website, including:
 - Mass Attacks in Public Spaces: 2016 2020 (January 2023), the latest report in a yearly series, examines 173 attacks in public or semi-public spaces, during which three or more people were harmed.
 - Hot Yoga Tallahassee: A Case Study of Misogynistic Extremism (March 2022)
 examines a 2018 shooting in which an attacker killed two women and injured four
 others.
 - Averting Targeted School Violence: A U.S. Secret Service Analysis of Plots Against Schools (March 2021) examines 67 averted attacks at K-12 schools from 2006 to 2018 planned by current or recent former students.
 - Protecting America's Schools: A U.S. Secret Service Analysis of Targeted School Violence (November 2019) examines 41 attacks perpetrated by current or recent former students at K-12 schools from 2008 to 2017.
 - Enhancing School Safety Using a Threat Assessment Model: An Operational Guide for Preventing Targeted School Violence (July 2018) provides actionable steps for schools to develop multidisciplinary violence prevention programs that proactively identify and assist students who may pose a risk of harm to themselves or others.
- **Consultations:** NTAC offers consultation services to public safety professionals on establishing threat assessment policies and programs and on complex threat cases.









- **Training:** NTAC provides customized training to organizations by request. Attendees often include law enforcement, K-12 schools, colleges/universities, and workplaces. Those who attend NTAC training learn to:
 - o Proactively identify individuals who may be exhibiting concerning behaviors.
 - Assess whether individuals pose a risk of violence, or other harmful behavior, to themselves or others.
 - Develop community-based risk-management strategies and proactive interventions.
- Domestic Security Strategists (DSS) are NTAC's regionally based personnel who build relationships with public safety professionals in their communities and facilitate access to NTAC's resources on targeted violence prevention. DSSs are located in the Philadelphia, Chicago, Dallas, and Los Angeles USSS field offices. <a href="https://www.ntac.ntmarker.ntmark

The National Threat Evaluation and Reporting (NTER) Office in DHS's Office of Intelligence & Analysis equips homeland security partners with tools and resources to identify and mitigate threats of terrorism and targeted violence. Through training, information sharing, and program support, NTER assists homeland partners with integrating a behavioral approach to targeted violence prevention.

- **Training:** The NTER Master Trainer Program certifies Federal, State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial partners in the instruction of Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management techniques and best practices. This train-the-trainer program prepares Certified Master Trainers to empower their local communities and organizations to mitigate threats and prevent acts of targeted violence. https://www.dhs.gov/nter
- The Nationwide Suspicious Activity Reporting (SAR) Initiative (NSI) is a joint collaborative effort by DHS, FBI, and state, local, tribal, and territorial law enforcement partners to provide law enforcement with a tool to help prevent terrorism and other related criminal activity by establishing a national capacity for gathering, documenting, processing, analyzing, and sharing SAR information. https://www.dhs.gov/nationwide-sar-initiative-nsi

The Center for Prevention Programs and Partnerships (CP3) helps to prevent targeted violence and terrorism through funding, training, increased public awareness, and the development of partnerships across every level of government, the private sector, and local communities across the country. https://www.dhs.gov/CP3

- **The Community Awareness Briefing** is a presentation that provides a foundation for communities across the country to learn about radicalization to violence and prevention efforts for it. The program provides communities with information and tools to assist them with understanding the issues and learning more about how they can prevent targeted violence and terrorism in their communities. CABBriefingRequest@hq.dhs.gov.
- **Regional Prevention Coordinators (RPCs)** are stationed across the United States to help establish and support prevention efforts at the local level. RPCs help to deliver CP3's







training, connect prevention practitioners, and build networks that can support local communities. cp3field@hq.dhs.gov

US Coast Guard Investigative Service Threat Management Unit is a prevention-based behavioral analysis program and an example of best practices when communicating across organizations.

https://www.dcms.uscg.mil/Portals/10/DOL/BaseSeattle/HSWL/docs/BehavioralRiskforComm ands.pdf

State and Major Urban Fusion Centers empower frontline law enforcement, public safety, fire service, emergency response, public health, and private-sector security personnel to lawfully gather and share threat-related information. https://www.dhs.gov/fusion-center-locations-and-contact-information

 The Colorado Information Analysis Center is the Colorado Fusion Center and focuses on prevention. It serves as a centralized resource that gathers, analyzes, and disseminates threat information and hosts a robust Preventing Targeted Violence Resource Hub.

https://ciacco.org/default.aspx?act=documents2.aspx&category=PTV%20RESOURCE%20 HUB&AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1

The Active Shooter Web Portal, a joint effort between DHS and FBI (in DHS's HSIN portal), provides a user-friendly environment to promote information sharing and collaboration among federal, state, local, tribal, territorial, private, civilian, and international entities working to help prevent active shooter incidents. http://www.dhs.gov/cveas-portal

NATIONAL COUNTERTERRORISM CENTER (NCTC)

The US Violent Extremist Mobilization Indicators Booklet (2021 Edition) is an NCTC, DHS, and FBI tri-seal product that provides a list of observable behaviors that may help determine whether individuals are preparing to engage in violent extremist activities. For inquiries or more information, contact mib@nctc.gov or visit https://www.dni.gov/index.php/nctc-newsroom/nctc-resources/item/2272-u-s-violent-extremist-mobilization-indicators-2021.

NCTC's Radicalization and Mobilization Dynamics Primer is a briefing on how and why individuals in the United States radicalize, and potentially mobilize, to violence. This offering can be accessed and requested by emailing NCTC-Domestic-Reps@nctc.gov.

NCTC Representatives are stationed across the United States and can be contacted by emailing NCTC-Domestic-Reps@nctc.gov.

US DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (ED)

Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) Technical Assistance Center offers live and virtual training on school behavioral threat assessments. Audiences will learn about the effective elements of a school threat assessment and how to recognize

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online risks. The training is not only encouraged for school districts but also for community partners such as law enforcement, youth-serving organizations, and local mental/behavioral health providers.

https://rems.ed.gov/Docs/Threat_Assessment_Website_Marketing_Flyer_508C.pdf

US HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) leads public health efforts to advance the behavioral health of the nation. Law enforcement can use SAMHSA to refer a person (or parent) to local counseling or mental health providers. https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov

US DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA)

The Veterans Crisis Line is a free, confidential resource available to any veteran, even if they are not enrolled in VA health care or registered with the VA. It offers online chat, phone, and text functions and is operated 24/7 by qualified responders, many of whom are also veterans. The Veterans Crisis Line can connect veterans to their local suicide prevention coordinators who follow up to coordinate care. https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/

STATE-OPERATED REPORTING PROGRAMS: Several states have implemented state-operated reporting programs for community members, including students, to report concerning behaviors and threats of violence through mobile app, phone, text, or website. Examples include:

- Courage2Report Missouri:
 - https://www.mshp.dps.missouri.gov/MSHPWeb/Courage2ReportMO/index.html
- FortifyFL: https://getfortifyfl.com/
- Kansas School Safety Hotline: https://www.ksde.org/Agency/Fiscal-and-Administrative-Services/School-Finance/School-Bus-Safety/School-Safety-Hotline
- OK2SAY Michigan: https://www.michigan.gov/ok2say/
- O Safer Ohio School Tip Line: https://ohioschoolsafetycenter.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/ossc/pre-k-12-schools/school-safety-resources/safer-ohio-school-tip-line
- o Safe2Help Nebraska: https://www.safe2helpne.org/
- Safe2Say Something Pennsylvania: https://www.safe2saypa.org/
- Safet2Tell Colorado: https://safe2tell.org/

*These materials and trainings are listed to illustrate the variety of offerings and are not to be considered endorsements of the content of the material or trainings these organizations offer.







REFERENCE MATERIALS

NTAC's Enhancing School Safety Using a Threat Assessment Model: An Operational Guide for Preventing Targeted School Violence provides actionable steps for schools to develop multidisciplinary violence prevention programs that proactively identify and assist students who may pose a risk of harm to themselves or others. https://www.cisa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/18_0711_USSS_NTAC-Enhancing-School-Safety-Guide.pdf

FBI's Making Prevention a Reality: Identifying, Assessing, and Managing the Threat of Targeted Attacks is a practical guide on assessing and managing the threat of targeted violence. It contains strategies to help communities prevent these types of incidents. https://www.fbi.gov/file-repository/making-prevention-a-reality.pdf/view

DHS's Violence Prevention Resource Guide provides an overview of available DHS resources supporting violence prevention for stakeholders in the field, as well as grant and funding opportunities. https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/21_0903_dhs-violence-prevention-resource-guide.pdf

DHS's *Behavioral Approach to Violence Prevention* identifies common threatening or concerning behaviors across a wide variety of completed and averted acts of targeted violence. https://www.dhs.gov/publication/behavioral-approach-violence-prevention

DHS's *Threat Assessment and Management Teams* provides an overview of the TATM model and its resources. https://www.dhs.gov/publication/threat-assessment-and-management-teams

SAMHSA and ED's Addressing the Risk of Violent Behavior in Youth: Know the Signs of Youth Violence and How to Identify and Reduce Risk in Schools is a 90-minute presentation meant to be used as a general guide on both risk and protective factors, as well as the warning signs. https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/addressing-risk-violent-behavior-youth-know-signs-youth-violence-and-how-identify-and-reduce-risk

The Ohio Attorney General's *Ohio School Threat Assessment Training* provides best practices through video training, which includes an emphasis on establishing a multidisciplinary team and determining an appropriate threshold for law enforcement. https://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/threatassessment

ED and the USSS's Eleven Questions to Guide Data Collection in a Threat Assessment Inquiry provides a list of suggested questions to help guide a threat assessment and management team when evaluating an individual of concern. https://health.esc2.net/sites/Health/files/u134/Eleven-Questions-to-Guide-Data-Collection-in-a-Threat-Assessment-Inquiry.pdf

NC State Bureau of Investigation's Connecting the Dots - The Behavioral Threat Assessment Unit's Law Enforcement Educational Resource Guidebook was compiled to support law enforcement agencies new to behavioral threat assessments and who would like a better understanding of their role in preventing targeted violence. https://www.ncsbi.gov/getattachment/BeTA/Law-Enforcement-Resources/BeTA-s-LE-Educational-Resource-Guidebook-RESTRICTED.pdf.aspx?lang=en-US

NIJ's Threat Assessment: An Approach To Prevent Targeted Violence discusses operational and investigative tools and approaches that can be used to recognize, evaluate, and manage the risks of targeted violence before crimes occur. https://nij.ojp.gov/library/publications/threat-assessment-approach-prevent-targeted-violence

The International Handbook of Threat Assessment (2022) editors J. Reid Meloy and Jens Hoffmann is the gold standard textbook for the prevention of targeted violence. This new edition explores the foundations of threat assessment and the fields of practice in which it is utilized, and it provides details on practical applications from the most notable threat assessors and programs worldwide.









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ADDITIONAL COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS, OR QUESTIONS.

WHAT TOPICS DO YOU RECOMMEND?





