



Insider Threat Program Kinetic Violence Self-Assessment: Lessons Learned from School Safety

Introduction

This job aid provides lessons learned from school safety program studies for organizations to consider in self-assessment of their insider threat programs' preparation and response to the threat of kinetic violence. There have been more than 250 active shooter incidents since 2000, with more than 50 of them occurring within the education system and 37 at K-12 schools. Studies showed that school sizes and security postures differ significantly. There is no one-size-fits-all solution, and your program will vary based on the size and complexity of your organization. Factors such as entrance and exit points; physical barriers; on-site law enforcement or security presence; training and awareness, including active shooter drills; and services provided to employees in need of help should be customized to address both threats and vulnerabilities at your location.



Self-Assessment

Organizations should incorporate a self-assessment to evaluate their security posture and the effectiveness of their insider threat program to implement preventive and protective measures to address the risk posed by an active shooter. Self-assessments should be conducted on a continuous basis to properly identify threats and vulnerabilities and work to mitigate associated risks to personnel, facilities, networks, and information, including threats of kinetic violence. Specifically, the inclusion of active shooter drills is recommended.

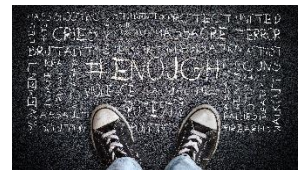


Lessons Learned from School Safety

The U.S. Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center's operational guide is available for public use on the DHS website; [click here](#). This guide provides actionable steps that can be taken to develop comprehensive targeted violence prevention plans for conducting threat assessments. These lessons learned and recommendations for school safety best practices can be applied to many organizations.

Key Considerations

- The threat assessment process is an effective component in ensuring the safety and security of organizations. Organizations should consider the employment of trained threat assessment teams, which are viewed as the best way to prevent violent incidents.
- Threat assessment procedures recognize that employees engage in a continuum of concerning behaviors. The vast majority of these behaviors will be non-threatening and non-violent but may require intervention. Organizations should consider incorporating behavioral science personnel as part of its team to conduct behavioral threat assessments.
- The threshold for intervention may be relatively low, which can help identify employees in distress before their behavior escalates to a level eliciting concerns about safety. Organizations should incorporate year-round training and awareness to assist managers and employees in identification of potentially risky behaviors.
- Everyone has a role to play. Employees should feel empowered to come forward without fear of reprisal. Managers and staff should take all incoming reports seriously and assess



information regarding concerning behaviors or statements. Organizations should have an anonymous reporting mechanism, follow up on reports, and provide feedback to employees regarding its programs.

Self-Assessment Considerations

- **Does your organization have a multi-disciplinary threat assessment team** that includes leadership support and involvement by HR, Security, Behavioral Science, and Information Technology?
- **Did your organization define behaviors to look for**, including those that are prohibited and should trigger immediate intervention (e.g., threats, violent acts, or weapons on site)? Does your organization have access to mental health and/or behavioral science professionals?
- **Does your organization have established training programs and provide training on a central reporting system**, such as an online form on the organization's website, email address, phone number, smartphone application, or other mechanisms? Ensure your organization provides anonymity to those reporting concerns and reports are followed up on. Does your organization conduct active shooter training?
- **Has your organization determined the threshold for law enforcement intervention**, especially if there is a safety risk? Do employees have reporting procedures available in the event they are needed?
- **Has your organization established threat assessment procedures** that include practices for maintaining documentation, identifying sources of information, reviewing records, and conducting interviews?
- **Has your organization developed risk management options** to enact once an assessment is complete and created individualized management plans to mitigate identified risks?
- **Has your organization created and promoted a safe work environment** built on a culture of safety, respect, trust, and emotional support?



Does it encourage communication, intervene in conflicts, and empower employees to share their concerns. What is HR and Management's role in supporting a safe work environment?

- **Does your organization provide training for all stakeholders**, including senior leaders, supervisors, employees, and support staff?

Best Practices

Organizational safety and positive work climate are not achieved by singular actions but rather by comprehensive and collaborative efforts requiring the dedication and commitment of all. Organizations require consistent and effective approaches. Consider the following best practices:

- Integrate prevention and response across your organization through collaboration
- Implement multi-tiered systems of support
- Utilize employee assistance programs and improve access to mental health support
- Integrate workplace safety and crisis/emergency prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery
- Balance physical and psychological safety
- Apply effective, positive workplace discipline
- Allow for consideration of context
- Acknowledge that sustainable and effective improvement takes patience and commitment

Organizational Culture

Organizational culture is the set of underlying beliefs, assumptions, values, and norms that contribute to the unique social and psychological environment of an organization. This is important because the organization's culture functions as a "lens" that can influence attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors in employees. Organizations should include its organizational culture in its self-assessment and proactively identify any areas relating to its culture that could impact risk.

Resources

You can find more information on this topic at:

- [DHS Insider Threat Mitigation](#)
- [US Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center](#)
- [CDSE Insider Threat Toolkit/Kinetic Violence Tab](#)
- [ASIS: Best Practices School and Campus Security](#)