Threat Assessment, Mental Health & Behavioral Intervention Teams

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SSI Guardian, Certified Executive Instructor
Institutions wanted a better solution for safety & security and School Specialty responded by creating SSI Guardian.

- Set the New Standard in Advanced Safety Education Training
- Full service safety & security consulting firm
- Comprehensive Solutions
Case Study: Steven
Questions to Ask Yourself

- Is there immediate or imminent danger?
- Is there a threat of possible violence?
- Can I resolve this situation myself?
- If I ignore this, what else might happen?
- What information should I report and to whom?
Targeted Violence

- purposeful, deliberate selection of a target prior to a violent attack
- target can be specific individual or individuals, class of individuals, or an institution
- Predatory vs. Affective/Reactive Violence
- offenders do not “just snap”
Pathway to Violence

(Grievance → Ideation → Research & Planning → Preparation → Breach → Attack)

(Prevention)

(Calhoun & Weston, 2003)
Threat Assessment

- consistent and standardized process
- identifying situations and persons of concern
- gather all available information related to reports of person of concern or threats of violence

(US Department of Justice, 2016)
Threat Assessment

- determine via threat assessment and risk rubrics if person poses a safety threat
- intervening before an attack occurs
- offer management recommendations to promote safety for all

(US Department of Justice, 2016)
Things to Look For

- threats
- inappropriate behavior
- dangerous behavior to self or others
- signs of a mental health problem

(Clarke, 2017)
Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT)

- multidisciplinary group that meets regularly
- receives reports of disruptive, problematic, or concerning behavior or misconduct
- tracks “red flags” over time and detects patterns, trends, and disturbances in individual or group behavior

(NaBITA, 2014)
Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT)

- conducts an investigation and performs a threat assessment
- determines the best avenues for support, intervention, warning/notification, and response
- deploys resources and coordinates follow-up
- caring and preventative, not punitive

(NaBITA, 2014)
BIT Characteristics

- multidisciplinary
- set/fixed membership
- decision makers with power & knowledge of the campus and students
- regular meeting times (90-120 mins, 1x/week)
- regular training
- single point of contact/case manager

(Van Brunt et. al., 2015)
BIT Composition – Core Members

- Counseling / Guidance Counselor / School Psychologist
- Police / Campus Safety / School Resource Officer
- Dean of Students
- Student Conduct
- Housing and Residential Life
- Case Manager
- Human Resources
- Academic Administration / Principal

(Van Brunt et. al., 2015)
What Additional or Ad Hoc Members Are Needed for Steven’s Case?
Additional/Ad Hoc Members

- Academic Affairs
- Health Services
- Vice President of Student Affairs
- Faculty Member
- Financial Aid
- Athletics
- University Chaplain
- Community Mental Health
- Title IX Official
- Risk Manager

- Student Activities
- Legal Counsel
- Admissions
- Greek Life
- ADA Coordinator
- Veteran Affairs
- Multicultural Affairs
- First-year Programs
- Student Success Achievement

(Van Brunt et. al., 2015)
BIT Campus Culture

- web presence
- accessible to public
- anonymous reporting
- marketing material

- foster culture of reporting
- train community on what/how to report

(Van Brunt et. al., 2015)
Mental Health Issues

- 65% of BIT Referrals*
- Depression and Suicide
- Alcohol and Addiction
- Eating Disorders
- Anxiety
- Bipolar Disorder
- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Thought Disorders

*(Van Brunt et. al., 2012)  
(Van Brunt & Lewis, 2014)
Threat Assessment Strategies and Tools
NaBITA Threat Assessment Tool

- Assess level of risk as mild, moderate, elevated, severe, extreme
- Harm to Others – 9 levels of hostility & violence
- Mental & Behavioral Health D-Scale

(Sokolow et. al., 2014)
NaBITA Tool also recommends appropriate interventions based on level of risk
BIT Follow Up

- Prompt response to referral/report
- Discussion/meeting with reporter prior to contacting student
- Discussion/meeting with student
- Meeting with reporter and student when requested
- Follow-up with reporter after information has been gathered

(White, 2015)
Case Management

- solution-focused approach dealing with a wide variety of needs
- interventions, referrals
- monitoring
- connect to resources e.g., food, housing, counseling, medication, academic, community

(Van Brunt et. al., 2012)
Possible Referrals

- 911
- Campus Security
- Suicide Hotline
- Mobile Crisis Unit
- Campus Counseling Services
- Health Services
- Community Mental Health Centers
- Student Conduct Officer
- Accessibility (Disability) Services
- Student Affairs
BIT Training

- Regular training
- Create a training policy, plan, and schedule
- Don’t skip meetings; train instead
- Keep track of training
- Training and plan reduces risk of litigation

(US Department of Justice, 2016)
BIT Training Topics

- Threat assessment and data-driven rubrics
- Suicide assessment and intervention
- Mental health problems e.g., depression, psychosis, substance abuse
- Suicide Postvention, Bereavement and Grieving
- Domestic and dating violence, sexual violence, stalking
BIT Training Topics

- Counseling referrals
- Addressing disruptive and dangerous student behavior
- Inclusiveness, Cultural Responsiveness, Diversity, Microaggressions
- Team Building
References


References


Thank you!

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