



United Educators

# Dealing with Acts of Random Violence: From Assessment to Response

United Educators Telephone Roundtable  
Reference Materials

Wednesday, May 9, 2007  
1:00 p.m. Eastern Time

Presented by

**Allen Bova**

Director of Risk Management and Insurance  
Cornell University

**Dewey G. Cornell**

Professor of Education  
University of Virginia

**Christiane Groth**

Risk Analyst  
United Educators

# Table of Contents

<b>Speaker and Moderator Biographies</b> .....	3
<b>Roundtable Agenda</b> .....	4
<b>Reference Materials</b> .....	5
• List of School and University Shootings Perpetrated by Students .....	5
• “The Virginia Model for Student Threat Assessment,” by Dewey G. Cornell, Ph.D., Curry School of Education, University of Virginia.....	7
• Web Resources .....	18

# Speaker and Moderator Biographies

**Allen Bova, MBA, ARM**, is the director of risk management and insurance for Cornell University. Allen has had numerous articles published on risk management for higher education and has been quoted in a number of national publications. He teaches and trains on a variety of risk management topics for Cornell employees, and guest lectures on risk management at Cornell's Hotel School, College of Human Ecology, and Law School. He obtained an MBA in finance from Rochester Institute of Technology, a BA in economics from the State University of New York, and an associate degree in risk management from the Insurance Institute of America.

Allen is a member of the National Business Honor Society (Beta Gamma Sigma), University Risk Management and Insurance Association (URMIA), and the Risk and Insurance Management Society (RIMS). He is the current President of the URMIA and a past President of the Upstate New York Chapter of RIMS. Also, he has received two NACUBO business improvement awards related to risk management.

**Dewey G. Cornell, Ph.D.**, is a clinical psychologist and professor of education in the Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia. Dr. Cornell is director of the Virginia Youth Violence Project and is a faculty associate of the Institute of Law, Psychiatry, and Public Policy. He holds the Curry Memorial Chair in Education.

As a forensic psychologist, Dr. Cornell has worked with juvenile and adult violent offenders since 1984. He has testified as both a defense and prosecution expert in numerous criminal proceedings, including the 1997 school shooting in Paducah, Kentucky and the 2002 DC sniper shootings. He has lectured on juvenile violence for the FBI National Academy since 1989 and assisted the FBI in its 1999 study of school shootings.

As a researcher, Dr. Cornell has conducted research on juvenile homicide, psychopathy, and forensic assessment. His work on school violence has included studies of bullying and student threats. He developed the Guidelines for Responding to Student Threats of Violence and has trained staff in hundreds of schools on school violence prevention.

**Christiane Groth, Ed.D.**, is the business and academic operations risk analyst at UE and is responsible for developing risk management materials on such subjects as crisis planning and response, campus security, and study abroad. Prior to joining UE, Christiane worked with both institutions of higher education and public high schools. Specifically, Christiane served as an assistant to the president at The College of William & Mary, responsible for presidential communications and as the president's liaison to student affairs. Christiane also co-chaired the College's review of its emergency response plan and coordinated its September 11 response with the vice president for student affairs. At Georgetown University, she held a position in research administration and development, focusing on research collaboration and funding. Prior to becoming a higher education administrator, Christiane taught high school in Virginia and Japan for three years.

Christiane received her B.A. and M.T. from Virginia Commonwealth University and her Ed.D. in higher education from The College of William & Mary.

# Roundtable Agenda

## 1. Understanding Acts of Violence by Students

- Dispelling Myths
  - Prevalence of School Violence
  - “Profiles” of Violent Students
- Understanding Students and Violence
  - Pathways to Violence
  - The Copycat Effect

## 2. Identifying and Responding to Troubled Students

- Creating Threat Assessment Teams
  - Personnel
  - Training
- Intervention and Engagement with Troubled Students
  - Identifying Students on a Path to Violence
  - Involving Parents
  - Involving Law Enforcement

# List of School and University Shootings Perpetrated by Students

## School Shootings

**Sept. 29, 2006:** 15 year old Eric Hainstock brought two guns to a school in rural Cazenovia, Wis., and fatally shot the principal, a day after the principal gave him a disciplinary warning for having tobacco on school grounds.

**March 21, 2005:** 16 year old Jeff Weise shot and killed five schoolmates, a teacher and an unarmed guard at a high school on the Red Lake Indian Reservation in Minnesota before taking his own life. Earlier, Weise had killed his grandfather and his grandfather's companion.

**Nov. 22, 2004:** 16 year old Desmond Keels was accused of and tried for fatally shooting one student and wounding three others outside Strawberry Mansion High School in Philadelphia. The attack apparently was over a \$50 debt in a rap contest.

**April 24, 2003:** 14 year old James Sheets shot and killed the principal in the crowded cafeteria of a junior high school in south-central Pennsylvania, before killing himself.

**May 26, 2000:** 13 year old Nathaniel Brazill killed his English teacher on the last day of classes in Lake Worth, Fla., after the teacher refused to let him talk with two girls in his classroom. He was convicted of second-degree murder and is serving a 28-year sentence.

**April 20, 1999:** Students Eric Harris, 18, and Dylan Klebold, 17, killed 12 students and a teacher and wounded 23 others before killing themselves at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colo.

**May 21, 1998:** Two teenagers were killed and more than 20 people hurt when Kip Kinkel, 17, opened fire at a high school in Springfield, Ore., after killing his parents. Kinkel was sentenced and is serving a 100-plus year prison term.

**May 19, 1998:** Three days before his graduation, an honor student opened fire at a high school in Fayetteville, Tenn., killing a classmate who was dating his ex-girlfriend. Jacob Davis, 18, was sentenced to life in prison.

**March 24, 1998:** Two boys, ages 11 and 13, fired on their Jonesboro, Ark., middle school from nearby woods, killing four girls and a teacher and wounding 10 others. Both boys were later convicted of murder and can be held until age 21.

**Dec. 1, 1997:** Three students were killed and five wounded at a high school in West Paducah, Ky. Michael Carneal, then 14, later pleaded guilty but mentally ill to murder and is serving life in prison.

**Oct. 1, 1997:** 16 year old Luke Woodham of Pearl, Miss., fatally shot two students and wounded seven others after stabbing his mother to death. He was sentenced the following year to three life sentences.

**Nov. 15, 1995:** High school student, Jamie Rouse, 17, killed a student and a teacher at Richland High School in Lynnville, Tenn

*Source: ABCNews.com*

## U.S College and University Shootings

**April 16, 2007:** A student armed with two automatic handguns kills 32 people in a residence hall and a classroom building at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Va., before killing himself.

**Oct. 28, 2002:** Failing University of Arizona nursing student and Gulf War veteran, Robert Flores, 40, walks into an instructor's office and fatally shoots her. A few minutes later, armed with five guns, he enters one of his nursing classrooms and kills two more instructors before fatally shooting himself.

**Jan. 16, 2002:** Graduate student Peter Odighizuwa, 42, following dismissal from Virginia's Appalachian School of Law, returns to campus and kills the dean, a professor and a student before being tackled by students. The attack also wounded three female students.

**Aug. 28, 2000:** James Easton Kelly, 36, a University of Arkansas graduate student, who was dismissed from a doctoral program after a decade of study, and John Locke, 67, the English professor overseeing his coursework, were found shot to death in an apparent murder-suicide.

**Aug. 15, 1996:** Frederick Martin Davidson, 36, a graduate engineering student at San Diego State, pulls out a handgun and kills three professors while defending his thesis before a faculty committee.

**Nov. 1, 1991:** Gang Lu, 28, a graduate student in physics from China, reportedly upset because he was passed over for an academic honor, opened fire in two buildings on the University of Iowa campus. Five university employees were killed, including four members of the physics department, and two other people were wounded. Afterwards, the student fatally shot himself.

**Aug. 1, 1966:** Charles Whitman, a student at the University of Texas at Austin, shot a rifle from the observation deck of a tower located on the university's campus. The homicidal rampage continued for 96 minutes, after which 16 people were killed and 31 wounded.

*Source: FOXNews.com*

## The Virginia Model for Student Threat Assessment

Dewey G. Cornell, Ph.D.  
University of Virginia

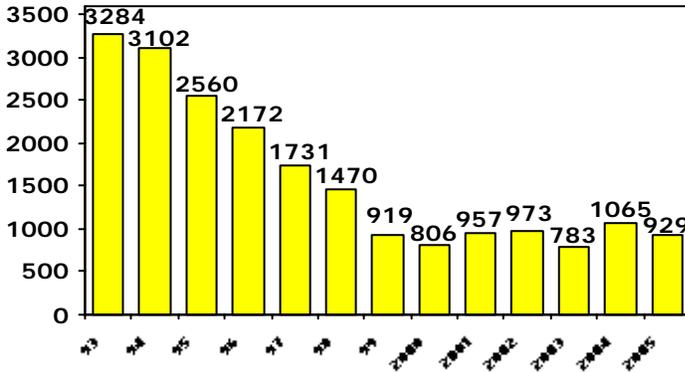
Each time there is a highly publicized school shooting, there is widespread concern that school violence is rampant in the United States. For example, after the 1999 Columbine shooting, a Gallup poll found that two-thirds of Americans believed that a similar incident could happen at schools in their community (Saad, 1999). Zero tolerance policies were greatly expanded nationwide so that students were expelled for seemingly minor offenses such as bringing a plastic knife to school, pointing a finger like a gun, or shooting a paper clip with a rubber band (Cornell, 2006).

After several high profile shootings in the fall of 2006, there were renewed recommendations to arm teachers with guns (Associated Press, 2006b) and even a call to issue Kevlar-coated textbooks to students for use as bullet shields (Associated Press, 2006a). A Fort Worth suburban school division went so far as to hire a former military officer to train students to attack and subdue an armed gunman (Dallas Morning News, 2006). Rather than rely on unrealistically heroic measures, it may be more useful to consider less dramatic but more practical prevention approaches that can be implemented well before a gunman appears on school property. Strategies to maintain school safety must be based on a factual assessment of the risk of violent crime and objective evidence of what prevention methods are effective.

**School homicides are rare.** Objectively, student-perpetrated homicides are rare events in the nation's 119,000 schools. There were 103 such cases during the 12 school years from 1992-93 to 2003-04, which means an average of 8.58 per year. Although even one school homicide is too many, an event that affects an average of 8.58 schools out of 119,000 means that the average school can expect a student-perpetrated homicide about once every 13,870 years (119,000 divided by 8.58; Cornell, 2006). Clearly the fear of school homicides as imminent or pervasive events is inaccurate. In contrast, every school must deal with student fights, threats, and bullying on a regular basis. School authorities should not lose perspective on the need for fair and proportionate discipline policies and practices for these frequent problems.

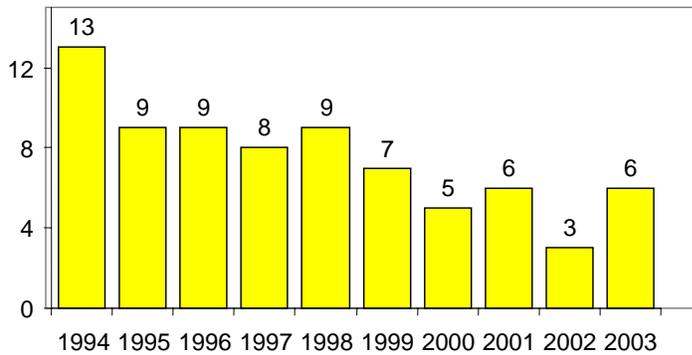
**Facts about youth violence and school safety.** The belief that juvenile violence is increasing or that schools are not safe is a serious misconception. According to the Youth Risk Behavior Surveys administered nationally to over ten thousand students each year, there have been declines of 21% in physical fighting and 48% in weapon carrying at school from 1993 to 2003 (Brener, Lowry, Barrios, Simon, & Eaton, 2004). Results from self-report surveys are consistent with other sources of information indicating a downward trend in juvenile violent crime, including violent crime in schools. Although there are limitations to any single source of information about violent crime, the evidence from multiple sources is consistent in indicating an overall decline in school violence from the early 1990's to recent years. (See charts on the following page.)

Juvenile arrests for homicide in the U.S.



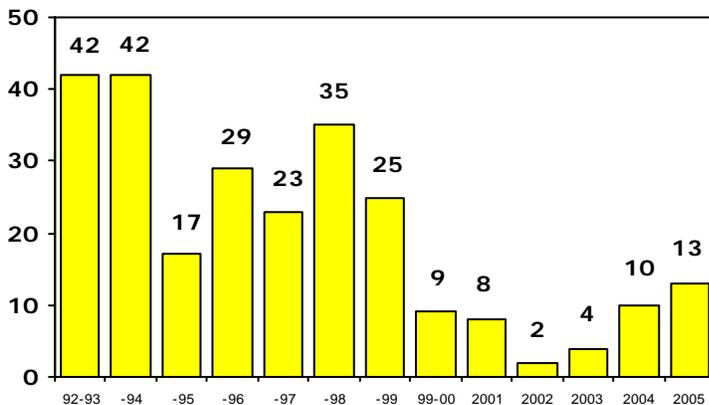
According to FBI arrest statistics, juvenile homicide declined over 70% from 1993 to 2005 (FBI, 1993-2005).

Serious violent crime rate per 1,000 students in U.S. schools



According to the National Crime Victimization Surveys, serious violent crimes at school (against students 12-18) declined 50% from 1993 to 2003 (DeVoe et al., 2005).

Student-perpetrated homicide cases in U.S. schools



Based on media reports tabulated by the National School Safety Center, student-perpetrated homicides at school declined from 42 in 1993 to 13 in 2005.

Students are safer in schools than almost anywhere else. For example, in the year (1999) of the Columbine shooting, 17 students were killed at school, but over 2,500 young people (ages 5 to 19) were murdered outside of school and over 9,700 were killed in accidents (Anderson, 2001). In 2003, students (ages 12-18) experienced twice as much serious violent crime away from school as at school (DeVoe et al., 2005).

**Rationale for threat assessment.** Although school homicides are rare, the threat of a homicide cannot be dismissed and must be carefully distinguished from more commonplace, less serious threats. Prevention efforts must be informed by an assessment of the factors that precede homicides and how would-be perpetrators can be identified before the shooting starts. Both the FBI and the Secret Service conducted studies of school shootings and found that these students were often victims of bullying who had become angry and depressed, and were influenced by a variety of social, familial, and psychological factors (O’Toole, 2000; Vossekuil, 2002). Unfortunately, these studies concluded that, because these characteristics can be found in so many students, it is not possible to develop a profile or checklist that could be used to pinpoint the small number of truly violent students among them. As a result, both the FBI and Secret Service cautioned schools against a *profiling* approach.

Nevertheless, the FBI and Secret Service did point out that almost all of these students communicated their intentions to attack through threats and warnings to their peers. Had these threats been reported to authorities and investigated, the shootings might have been prevented. In fact, the FBI identified a number of potential school shootings that were prevented because students reported a threat to authorities that was investigated and determined to be serious. Based on these observations, the FBI and Secret Service both recommended that schools adopt a *threat assessment* approach to prevent targeted acts of violence (Fein, et al., 2002; O’Toole, 2000).

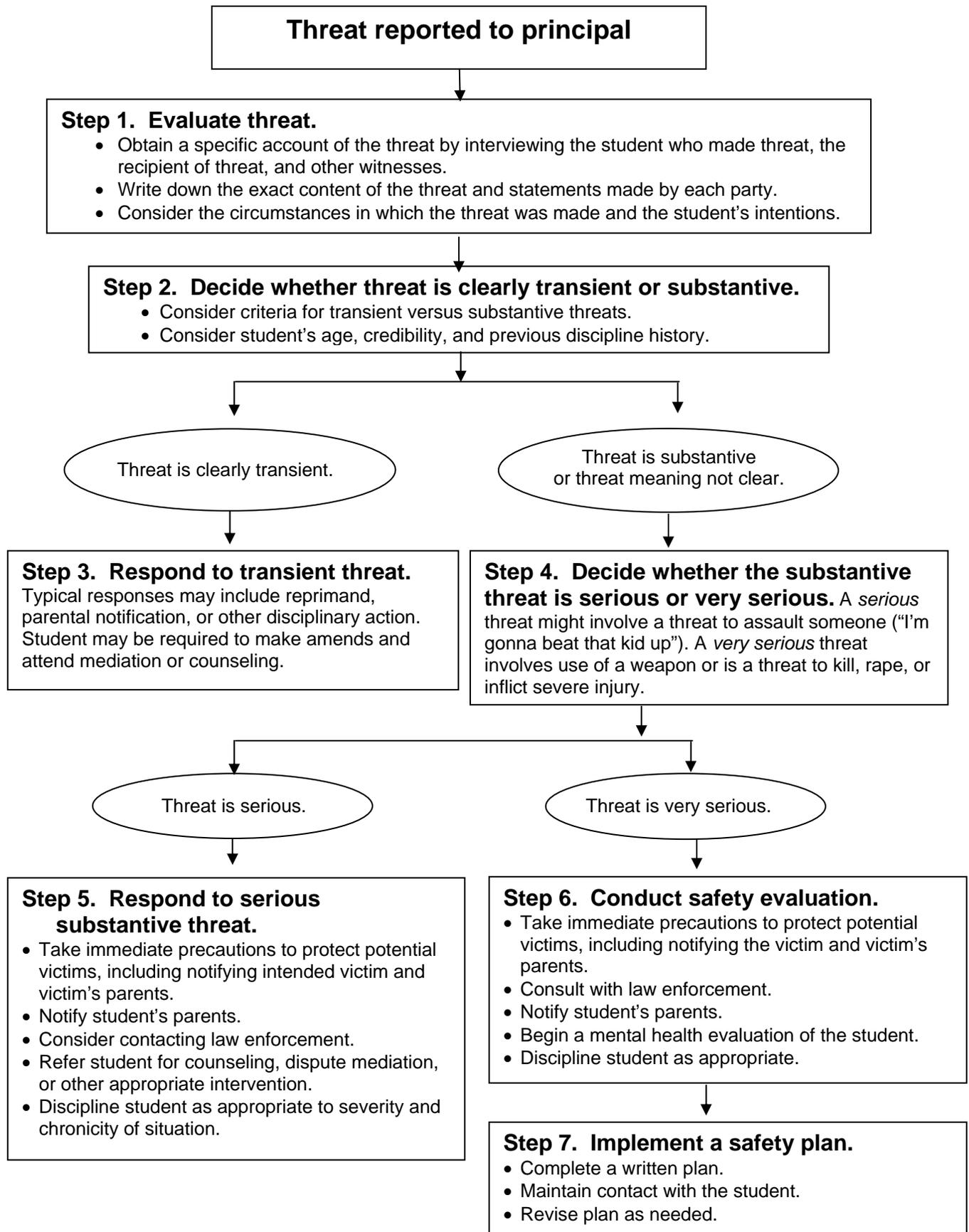
What is threat assessment? Threat assessment was developed by the Secret Service to deal with persons who threaten to attack public officials and has evolved into a standard approach to analyze a variety of dangerous situations, such as threats of workplace violence (Fein & Vossekuil, 1998). A threat assessment is conducted when a person (or persons) threatens to commit a violent act or engages in behavior that appears to threaten what is termed “targeted violence.” Threat assessment is a process of evaluating the threat, and the circumstances surrounding the threat, to uncover any facts or evidence that indicate the threat is likely to be carried out. Student threat assessment can be distinguished from profiling in part because the investigation is triggered by some form of student threat behavior rather than some combination of demographic and personal characteristics of the student.

Further, threat assessment is ultimately concerned with whether a student *poses* a threat, not whether he or she has *made* a threat (O’Toole, 2000). Any student can make a threat, but relatively few will engage in the planning and preparation necessary to carry out the threat. Threat assessment attempts to identify students who pose a threat, which means that they have the intent and means to carry out the threat. Moreover, threat assessment goes beyond the determination that a student poses a threat to include efforts to prevent the threat from being carried out.

**The Virginia model for student threat assessment.** How could the threat assessment approach used in law enforcement be adapted for schools and what would be the results? Our group, the Youth Violence Project of the Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia, sought to answer these questions by developing and field-testing a comprehensive set of threat assessment guidelines (Cornell & Sheras, 2006). We began by convening a work group of educators from two school divisions to help us develop procedures for schools to use in evaluating student threats. The two school divisions contained a socioeconomically and ethnically diverse population of 16,400 students enrolled in four high schools, six middle schools, 22 elementary schools, and three alternative schools. The work group studied how school principals typically handled threats in these 35 schools and attempted to identify common-sense practices and procedures that would be consistent with FBI and Secret Service recommendations.

Threat assessment teams were trained in each school. The teams were led by the principal or assistant principal and typically included a school counselor, a school psychologist, and a school resource officer. (The team composition can be adapted to meet the staffing patterns for different schools, and may include other disciplines as well.) Teams followed a seven-step decision tree. The initial stages of a threat assessment are typically handled by the team leader (principal) and many cases can be readily resolved. In more complex or ambiguous cases, the team leader brings in additional team members. The seven steps will be reviewed briefly here (See figure on following page; Cornell & Sheras, 2006).

1. At step one, the leader of the threat assessment team interviews the student who made the threat, using a standard set of questions. The principal also interviews the recipient of the threat and any witnesses. The principal is not concerned simply with what the student said or did, but the context in which the threat was made and what the student intended by making the threat.
2. At step two, the principal must make an important distinction between *transient* threats, which are easily resolved because they are not serious threats, and *substantive* threats, which are serious in the sense that they pose a continuing risk or danger to others. Transient threats can be readily identified as expressions of anger or frustration (or perhaps inappropriate attempts at humor) that dissipate quickly when the student reflects on the meaning of what he or she has said. In contrast, substantive threats represent a sustained intent to harm someone beyond the immediate incident. If there is doubt whether a threat is transient or substantive, the threat is regarded as substantive. One way to identify a threat as substantive is to look for certain characteristics derived from the FBI report (O'Toole, 2000) that suggest that the threat is likely to be serious:
  - The threat includes plausible details, such as a specific victim, time, place, and method of assault;
  - The threat has been repeated over time or communicated to multiple persons;
  - The threat is reported as a plan, or planning has taken place;
  - The student has accomplices, or has attempted to recruit accomplices;
  - The student has invited an audience of peers to watch the threatened event; and
  - There is physical evidence of intent to carry out the threat, such as a weapon or bomb materials.



3. A transient threat can be resolved quickly at step three without engaging the full team in a comprehensive threat assessment. The principal may require the student to apologize or explain to those affected by threat, or take other action to make amends for the student's behavior. The principal may also respond with a reprimand or other disciplinary consequence if the behavior was disruptive or violated the school's discipline code. If a transient threat was sparked by an argument or conflict, the principal can involve other team members in helping to address or resolve the problem.
4. If the threat is substantive, the principal skips step three and proceeds to step four. At step four, the substantive threat is determined to be *serious* or *very serious*. The distinction between serious and very serious threats is based on the intended severity of injury. A *serious* threat is a threat to assault, strike, or beat up someone. A *very serious* threat is a threat to kill, sexually assault, or severely injure someone. A threat involving the use of a weapon is generally considered a threat to severely injure someone.
5. In the case of a serious substantive threat, the team moves to step five and takes actions to protect potential victims. Protective actions depend on the circumstances of the threat, as well as how soon and where the threat might be carried out. Immediate protective actions include cautioning the student about the consequences of carrying out the threat and contacting the student's parents. The team also has the responsibility of notifying the intended victim of the threat.
6. Very serious threats require the most extensive action by the team. The team skips step five and moves to step six. Again the team takes immediate action to assure that the threat is not carried out, but in addition, the student should be suspended from school, pending a complete assessment of the threat and determination of the most appropriate school placement. The team conducts a more comprehensive safety evaluation that includes both a mental health and law enforcement component. The mental health assessment is conducted by the school psychologist or another suitably trained mental health professional and the law enforcement investigation is conducted by the school resource officer.
7. At step seven, the team integrates findings from the safety evaluation into a written safety plan. The safety plan is designed both to protect potential victims and to address the student's educational needs. At this point, the principal decides whether the student can return to school or should be placed in an alternative setting. If the student is permitted to return to school, the plan describes the conditions that must be met and the procedures in place to monitor the student when he or she returns.

**A field test of student threat assessment.** Over the course of one school year, the 35 schools dealt with 188 student threats. The field test results have been reported in several publications (Cornell et al., 2004a, 2004b; Cornell, 2006) and will be summarized here. The most common threat was a threat to hit or beat up someone (77 cases, 41%). In addition, there were 27 threats to kill, 24 threats to shoot, and 18 threats to cut or stab. There were 32 cases in which the threat was vague or nonspecific ("I'm going to get you"), and 10 miscellaneous threats, such as setting fires or detonating bombs. All types of threats were seen at all school

levels, although threats to kill and threats to shoot actually occurred more frequently in elementary school than in middle and high school combined.

The majority (70%) of threats were easily resolved as transient threats. Of the remaining 30% that were substantive threats, 22% (42 cases) were *serious* substantive threats that involved a threat to fight or assault someone, and 8% (15 cases) were *very serious* substantive threats to kill or severely injure someone.

Threats were made by students at all grade levels, from kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. There were 86 elementary school threats, although as might be expected, the vast majority (85%) were determined to be transient and could be resolved through counseling. Elementary school threats often involved rivalries for who would be “best friends” with whom. In some cases, these rivalries generated arguments and threatening statements. In a typical case, a fourth-grade girl wrote a letter making fun of a rival, and then, in reply, received a letter that contained some kind of threat.

Middle schools (grades 6-8) experienced the highest rate of threats, particularly in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. The 60 middle school threats were almost equally divided between transient (58%) and substantive (42%) cases; many involved an argument or conflict between students that escalated into a threat to fight or assault someone. Many of the threats were precipitated by teasing and bullying behavior; in some cases, the bully was reported for threatening another student, but in other cases, the victim of bullying made a provocative threat in retaliation (e.g., “I’m going to shoot him if he doesn’t leave me alone”).

The 42 high school threats were divided between transient (55%) and substantive (45%) cases. Ninth graders made the most threats; this is not surprising, since ninth graders generally commit more disciplinary violations than any other grade. Threats declined during the high school years, probably because students became more mature and because they became less likely to disclose threats to school authorities.

**Disciplinary consequences for threats.** A threat assessment approach gives school authorities flexibility in choosing the disciplinary consequences for students who make threats. Under a zero tolerance policy, many students would have been expelled for making threats to kill or injure someone. Using threat assessment guidelines, only three of the 188 threat cases resulted in expulsion:

- a 6<sup>th</sup>-grader who picked up a pair of scissors and threatened to stab a classmate;
- an 8<sup>th</sup>-grader who threatened to shoot a classmate;
- a 9<sup>th</sup>-grader who threatened to stab another student and was found to have a knife in her locker.

In each case, the student had ten or more disciplinary violations prior to the threat, and the decision to expel was based on a broader consideration of the student’s ability to function in school.

Half (94 cases) of the students who made threats were given a short-term suspension, either an in-school suspension or a suspension outside of school. The modal suspension (32 cases) was 1 day, with a range of one to ten days.

Twelve students were placed in an alternative educational setting, largely because they had a record of persistent behavior problems. These students had an average of 9.8 disciplinary infractions for the school year prior to their threat.

Only six students were arrested. Three students had made a false bomb threat, two students had assaulted a school staff member, and the final case involved a student found with a knife.

**Threat assessment follow-up.** At the end of the school year, principals were interviewed to obtain follow-up information on each of their cases. The first and most important question was whether the students carried out their threats. In three cases, the principal was not sure whether a student's threat to hit another student was carried out, but in all other cases, the principals reported that the threat was not carried out.

Principals were also asked about the student's relationship with the threat recipient after the threat was resolved. They were asked to judge whether the relationship had improved, remained about the same, or worsened. In 62 cases the principal did not feel sufficiently informed to make a judgment (or there were multiple persons who were threatened), but in the remaining 126 cases, the principals reported that in about one-third of cases the relationship had improved, and in nearly two-thirds (63%) the relationship was about the same; in only six cases (5%) was it worse.

Finally, principals were asked to assess the student's overall behavior after the threat. They rated 43% of the students as demonstrating improved behavior during the remainder of the school year, 39% as about the same, and only 18% as worse in their behavior. An independent review of school records found that many of the students continued to have discipline problems. More than half (53%) of the students had a subsequent disciplinary violation of some kind, and 16% had a disciplinary violation that involved violent or aggressive behavior such as hitting someone or getting into a fight.

It seems likely that the process of threat assessment contributed to the positive outcomes found in these schools, but this claim must be made with a caveat: this was a field test and not an experimental comparison between different approaches to student threats. The study was designed to demonstrate the viability of threat assessment as a new and previously untried procedure, but it did not have a comparison group to assess how threats would have been resolved using another method. Currently we are conducting a controlled study that compares schools using a threat assessment model with a comparison group of schools that do not use threat assessment. We also have informal feedback from dozens of schools that have implemented our threat assessment model and found it to be useful. We have provided formal training for over two dozen school divisions in Virginia as well as school divisions in California, Georgia, Indiana, Maryland, Tennessee, and Wisconsin. More information is available at <http://youthviolence.edschool.virginia.edu> .

**Threat assessment as part of a comprehensive model.** Threat assessment should be considered a component of a comprehensive approach toward maintaining a safe school (Osher, Dwyer, & Jackson, 2004). Threat assessment identifies students who may be in need of additional services as well as more general problems in the school environment, such as bullying, that merit broader attention. Wilson, Lipsey, and Derzon (2003) reviewed 221 studies of school-based interventions for aggressive or disruptive behavior by students, and found that well-implemented demonstration programs are highly effective.

More broadly, the foundation for a safe school rests on the creation of a caring community where students feel safe and secure (Catalano, et al., 2004). Safety and security derive from two conditions: (1) an orderly, predictable environment where school staff provide consistent, reliable supervision and discipline; and (2) a school climate where students feel connected to the school and supported by their teachers and other school staff. A balance of structure and support is essential, and requires an organized, schoolwide approach that is practiced by all school personnel (Mayer, 1995; Sprague et al., 2002; Sugai et al., 2000;). The good news is that there are effective programs and approaches, and threat assessment can help school authorities to use them effectively and efficiently by identifying student conflicts and problems before they lead to violence.

#### **Author Note**

**Dewey G. Cornell, Ph. D.**, is a forensic clinical psychologist and Professor of Education in the Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia. Dr. Cornell is Director of the UVA Youth Violence Project and a faculty associate of the Institute of Law, Psychiatry, and Public Policy. Dr. Cornell has worked with juvenile and adult violent offenders, testified in criminal proceedings and legislative hearings, and consulted on violence prevention efforts. Dr. Cornell has authored more than 100 publications in psychology and education, including studies of juvenile homicide, school safety, bullying, and psychological assessment of psychopathy and violence. His current projects include studies of middle school bullying and guidelines for schools to use in responding to student threats of violence.

## References

- Anderson, R. N. (2001). *Deaths: Leading causes for 1999*. National Vital Statistics Reports, 49, 1-88.
- Associated Press (2006a). *Candidate proposes using textbooks as shields*. Retrieved Nov. 12, 2006, from <http://www.cnn.com/2006/EDUCATION/10/20/school.shootings.textbooks.ap/index.html>
- Associated Press (2006b). *Wisconsin lawmaker urges arming teachers*. Retrieved Nov. 12, 2006, from [http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2006-10-05-arming-teachers\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2006-10-05-arming-teachers_x.htm)
- Brener, N., Lowry, R., Barrios, L., Simon, T., & Eaton, D. (2004). Violence-Related Behaviors Among High School Students --- United States, 1991—2003. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 53, 651-55.
- Catalano, R.F., Berglund, M.L., Ryan, J.A.M., Lonczak, H.S., & Hawkins, J.D. (2004). Positive youth development in the United States: Research findings on evaluations of positive youth development programs. *Annals of the Academy of Political and Social Science*, 591, 98-124.
- Cornell, D. (2006). *School violence: Fears versus facts*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Cornell, D. & Sheras, P. (2006). *Guidelines for responding to student threats of violence*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.
- Cornell, D., Sheras, P., Kaplan, S., Levy-Elkon, A., McConville, D. McKnight, L., & Posey, J. (2004a). Guidelines for responding to student threats of violence: Field test of a threat assessment approach. In M. J. Furlong, P. M. Bates, D. C., Smith, & P. M. Kingery, P.M. (Eds.), *Appraisal and Prediction of School Violence: Methods, Issues and Contents* (pp. 11-36). Hauppauge, NY: Nova Science Publishers.
- Cornell, D., Sheras, P. Kaplan, S., McConville, D., Douglass, J., Elkon, A., McKnight, L., Branson, C., & Cole, J. (2004b). Guidelines for student threat assessment: Field-test findings. *School Psychology Review*, 33, 527-546.
- Dallas Morning News (2006). *Burleson changes stance on student attack training*. <http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/dn/latestnews/stories/102606dnmetburleson.736f1085.html>
- DeVoe, J. F., Peter, K., Noonan, M., Snyder, T. D., & Baum, K. (2005). *Indicators of school crime and safety: 2005* (NCES 2006-001/NCJ 210697). U.S. Departments of Education and Justice. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- Federal Bureau of Investigation. (1993-2005). *Uniform Crime Reports: Crime in the United States*. Washington, DC: U.S. Printing Office.

- Fein, R.A., & Vossekuil, F. (1998). *Protective intelligence and threat assessment investigations: A guide for state and local law enforcement officials*. U.S. Secret Service. Washington, D.C.
- Fein, R., Vossekuil, B., Pollack, W., Borum, R., Modzeleski, W., & Reddy, M. (2002). *Threat assessment in schools: A guide to managing threatening situations and to creating safe school climates*. Washington, DC: U.S. Secret Service and Department of Education.
- Mayer, G. R. (1995). Preventing antisocial behavior in the schools. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 28, 467-478.
- National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). (2005). *Indicators of School Crime and Safety*.
- O'Toole, M. E. (2000). *The school shooter: A threat assessment perspective*. Quantico, VA: National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime, Federal Bureau of Investigation.
- Osher, D., Dwyer, K., & Jackson, S. (2004). *Safe, supportive and successful schools: Step by step*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.
- Saad, L. (1999, April 23). *Public views Littleton tragedy as sign of deeper problems in country*. Retrieved April 2, 2005, from <http://www.gallup.com/poll/content/login.aspx?ci=3898>
- Sprague, J., Walker, H., Golly, A., White, K., Myers, D., & Shannon, T. (2002). Translating research into effective practice: The effects of a universal staff and student intervention on indicators of discipline and school safety. *Education & Treatment of Children*, 24, 495-511.
- Sugai, G., Horner, R.H., Dunlap, G., Hieneman, M., Lewis, T.J., Nelson, C.M., et al. (2000). Applying positive behavior support and functional behavioral assessment in schools. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 2, 131-143.
- Vossekuil, B., Fein, R. A., Reddy, M., Borum, R., & Modzeleski, W. (2002). *The final report and findings of the Safe School Initiative: Implications for the prevention of school attacks in the United States*. Washington, DC: U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education.
- Wilson, S. J., Lipsey, M. W., & Derzon, J. H. (2003). The effects of school-based intervention programs on aggressive behavior: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 71, 136-149.

# Web Resources

## 1. Threat Assessment and Violence Prevention Resources

- **Campus Violence White Paper**  
American College Health Association  
[www.uhh.hawaii.edu/~eeoaa/Campus\\_Violence.pdf](http://www.uhh.hawaii.edu/~eeoaa/Campus_Violence.pdf)  
Paper presents an analysis of campus violence and the underlying issues as well as identifying promising practices to prevent violence on campus.
- **Colorado School Violence Prevention and Student Discipline Manual**  
Colorado Attorney General's Office  
[www.ago.state.co.us/schoolvio/svpm2006.pdf](http://www.ago.state.co.us/schoolvio/svpm2006.pdf)  
A thorough resource on student violence, including a discussion of gang symbols and dress, bullying and parental involvement.
- **Columbine Review Commission Report**  
State of Colorado; Office of the Governor  
[www.securitymanagement.com/library/Columbine\\_report0801.pdf](http://www.securitymanagement.com/library/Columbine_report0801.pdf)  
Analysis of the Columbine High School shooting, including recommendations for law enforcement planning and response to school shootings.
- **Guide for Preventing and Responding to School Violence**  
International Association of Chiefs of Police  
[www.theiacp.org/documents/pdfs/Publications/schoolviolence2.pdf](http://www.theiacp.org/documents/pdfs/Publications/schoolviolence2.pdf)  
Comprehensive resource for educators and law enforcement. Includes practical strategies for threat assessment, crisis planning, crisis management, and post-crisis response.
- **School Safety Audit Protocol**  
Virginia Department of Education  
[www.pen.k12.va.us/go/VDOE/Instruction/schoolsafety/safetyaudit.pdf](http://www.pen.k12.va.us/go/VDOE/Instruction/schoolsafety/safetyaudit.pdf)  
A comprehensive guide discussing the various components of a safe school environment, including facilities, training and education programs, law enforcement partnerships, and crisis management plans.
- **The School Shooter: A Threat Assessment Perspective**  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
[www.fbi.gov/publications/school/school2.pdf](http://www.fbi.gov/publications/school/school2.pdf)  
FBI research paper detailing a systematic procedure for threat assessments and intervention. The model is designed to be used by educators, mental health professionals and law enforcement agencies.

- **The Shootings at Columbine High School: Responding to a New Kind of Terrorism (Sequel)**  
Kennedy School of Government Case Program; Harvard University  
[www.ksg.harvard.edu/research/publications/cases/1612\\_1.pdf](http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/research/publications/cases/1612_1.pdf)  
Analysis of the law enforcement response during the Columbine High School shooting. Includes a discussion concerning the implementation of the lessons learned.
- **Student Threat Assessment**  
Virginia Youth Violence Project  
<http://youthviolence.edschool.virginia.edu/pdf/threatchap.pdf>  
Article describing threat assessment as a response to threats of violence by students. A hypothetical case is presented and strategies for setting up threat assessment teams are discussed.
- **Threat Assessment in Schools: A Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and to Creating Safe School Climates**  
U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education  
[www.secretservice.gov/ntac/ssi\\_guide.pdf](http://www.secretservice.gov/ntac/ssi_guide.pdf)  
Research paper that outlines a process for identifying, assessing, and managing students who may pose a threat of violence in schools. Based upon the Secret Service's threat assessment process, the strategies recommended are intended for use by educators as well as law enforcement officials.
- **Virginia Youth Violence Project**  
University of Virginia  
<http://youthviolence.edschool.virginia.edu/>  
The Project has developed a research-based manual that explains the use of school teams to evaluate and resolve potentially dangerous situations in schools. The Project is supported by the Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia in collaboration with Virginia's Department of Education, Center for School Safety, and Department of Criminal Justice Services.

## 2. Threat Assessment and Violence Prevention Policies

- **Boise State University**  
[www.boisestate.edu/policy/index.asp?section=5&policynum=5021](http://www.boisestate.edu/policy/index.asp?section=5&policynum=5021)
- **California State University – Bakersfield**  
[www.csub.edu/BAS/srm/EHS/Forms/pdf/violenceprev.pdf](http://www.csub.edu/BAS/srm/EHS/Forms/pdf/violenceprev.pdf)
- **Loyola University**  
[www.loyno.edu/~hrdept/policiesandprocedures/manual/5-15.html](http://www.loyno.edu/~hrdept/policiesandprocedures/manual/5-15.html)
- **Oklahoma State University**  
<http://home.okstate.edu/Policy.nsf/483c0b76d56e01c2862562b100059b03/9f5318d84ea89a528625672000602103?OpenDocument>

- **Texas Tech University**  
[www.depts.ttu.edu/opmanual/OP76.10.pdf](http://www.depts.ttu.edu/opmanual/OP76.10.pdf)
- **Threat Assessment Policies and Procedures**  
Los Angeles Unified School District  
[http://notebook.lausd.net/portal/page?\\_pageid=33,259504&\\_dad=ptl&\\_schema=PTL\\_EP](http://notebook.lausd.net/portal/page?_pageid=33,259504&_dad=ptl&_schema=PTL_EP)
- **Threat Assessment Policy (brochure that explains to parents)**  
Prince William County Schools  
<http://pwcs.edu/departments/studentservices/English%20Threat%20Assessment%20Brochure.pdf>
- **University of Alabama**  
[http://hr.ua.edu/empl\\_rel/policy-manual/campus-violence.pdf](http://hr.ua.edu/empl_rel/policy-manual/campus-violence.pdf)
- **University of Massachusetts Medical Center**  
[www.umassmed.edu/publicsafety/crimeprevention/index.aspx](http://www.umassmed.edu/publicsafety/crimeprevention/index.aspx)
- **University of New Mexico**  
[www.unm.edu/~ubppm/ubppmanual/2210.htm](http://www.unm.edu/~ubppm/ubppmanual/2210.htm)
- **Virginia Commonwealth University**  
[www.hr.vcu.edu/policies/Current%20Policies/ThreatAssess.pdf](http://www.hr.vcu.edu/policies/Current%20Policies/ThreatAssess.pdf)

### 3. Organizations

- **Center for the Prevention of School Violence**  
North Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention  
[www.ncdjjdp.org/cpsv/index.html](http://www.ncdjjdp.org/cpsv/index.html)
- **International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators**  
[www.iaclea.org/](http://www.iaclea.org/)
- **National Association of School Resource Officers**  
[www.nasro.org/home.asp](http://www.nasro.org/home.asp)
- **National School Safety Center**  
[www.schoolsafety.us/](http://www.schoolsafety.us/)
- **National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center**  
[www.safeyouth.org/scripts/index.asp](http://www.safeyouth.org/scripts/index.asp)
- **Virginia Center for School Safety**  
Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services  
[www.dcjs.virginia.gov/vcss/](http://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/vcss/)

#### 4. United Educators Resources

- [“Administrative Leave and Other Options for Emotionally Distressed or Suicidal Students,”](#)  
*Risk Research Bulletin*, April 2006.
- [“Students with Mental Health Problems: When Should Parents Be Notified,”](#)  
*Risk Research Bulletin*, April 2005.
- [“Strengthen Your Crisis Management Plan with Regular Exercise,”](#)  
*Risk Research Bulletin*, September 2006.