Reflections on Day 1

- Excellent school and community resources
- Legislation that facilitates cooperation
- Good will and momentum toward improvement

Reflections on Day 1

- Plan of action to maintain momentum
- Improvements of threat assessment procedures
- Greater inter-agency collaboration
- Make release of information the default rather than the exception
- Monthly meeting to share information on for students of concern

Role of Law Enforcement in Student Threat Assessment

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Topics for Today

1. The critical role of law enforcement
2. Where are police most needed?
3. What is the role of school resource officers?
4. How can law enforcement and education work together in threat assessment cases?

Shootings Prevented
Law Enforcement

March 6, 2018

Where are police most needed?

- Location A -- highest crime rate
- Location B -- medium crime rate
- Location C -- lowest crime rate

Unless we have unlimited police resources, we should place any additional officers in locations with the highest crime rates.

What if the media devotes 95% of its coverage to crime in Location C?

- Location A -- highest crime rate
- Location B -- medium crime rate
- Location C -- lowest crime rate

Media coverage should not compromise an objective assessment of crime rates and security needs.

What is the role of law enforcement in schools?

- Not as guards against shootings
- Crisis response and imminent threats of violence
- As school resource officers

What Can Be Done About School Shootings?
A Review of the Evidence

Randy Borum, Dewey G. Cornell, William Modzelewski, and Shane R. Jimerson

“Any given school can expect to experience a student homicide about once every 6,000 years.”

125,000 schools ÷ 21 deaths/year

Role of School Resource Officers

Role of School Resource Officers

- Police are part of the child-welfare interagency effort
- Triad role:
  - Educator
  - Informal counselor
  - Law enforcer

School Resource Officer Contributions

- Share information with schools on community crime and events
- Listen to student concerns
- Event planning and security
- Emergency drills
- Instruction on law-related topics

Role of Law Enforcement in School Discipline

NASRO Position Statement on Police Involvement in Student Discipline

Some evidence that SROs linked to higher exclusionary discipline

- SROs might detect crime previously overlooked
- SROs might judge misbehavior as criminal
- Schools favoring harsh discipline might employ SROs

Role of Law Enforcement in School Discipline

- Written memorandum to clarify roles
- No role in school discipline
- Training in children with special needs
- Minimal use of physical restraints

Reducing Exclusionary Discipline

- Clarify distinctions between misbehavior and crime
- Build relationships with students
- Develop cultural competence across student groups
**The Expansion of Zero Tolerance**

From No Guns to
- No Toy Guns
- No Nail clippers
- No Plastic utensils
- No Finger-pointing
- No Jokes
- No Drawings
- No Rubber band shooting

No Accidental violations

---

**Zero Tolerance Suspensions**

9 year old with toy gun
12 year old doodler
Poem about Sandy Hook, "I understand the killings..."

[Links to news articles]

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**Suspension Practices**

Suspension is a practice that has more negative than positive effects on students:

- Fall behind in their classes
- Feel alienated and rejected
- Continue to misbehave and be suspended
- Drop out of school
- Juvenile court involvement

The school-to-prison pipeline

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**3.3 Million U.S. Suspensions Per Year**

Fuel the School to Prison Pipeline

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**Aggression at School**

Rarely
Weekly
Daily

Bullying
Daily

Arguments

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Slides by Dewey Cornell, Ph.D.
Workshop participants may copy this handout for others in their school system or agency.
Accurate Threat Assessment Avoids 2 Errors ...

1. Over-reaction
   School Suspends Second Grader for Eating His Pop-Tart Into the Shape of a Gun

2. Under-Reaction

Accurate Threat Assessment Avoids 2 Errors ...

Profiling

FBI Recommendations on School Violence

“One response to the pressure for action may be an effort to identify the next shooter by developing a “profile” of the typical school shooter. This may sound like a reasonable preventive measure, but in practice, trying to draw up a catalogue or “checklist” of warning signs to detect a potential school shooter can be shortsighted, even dangerous. Such lists, publicized by the media, can end up unfairly labeling many nonviolent students as potentially dangerous or even lethal. In fact, a great many adolescents who will never commit violent acts will show some of the behaviors or personality traits included on the list. ” (FBI report pp 2-3)

Download at www.fbi.gov

What is Criminal Profiling?

Multiple terms and definitions

1. Retrospective profiling
   - Crime has occurred
   - Analysis of crime scene
   - Infer characteristics of offender

Another Form of Profiling

2. Prospective profiling
   - No crime has occurred
   - Checklist of possible characteristics
   - Speculate about future behavior
Law Enforcement Investigation of Very Serious Substantive Threats

- Interview suspects and witnesses.
- Conduct searches for weapons and other evidence of planning.
- Serve as a resource for students with fears or information to share.
- Take appropriate protective action.

Virginia Mandated Threat Assessment in Schools

§ 22.1-79.4. C “Each division superintendent shall establish, for each school, a threat assessment team that shall include persons with expertise in counseling, instruction, school administration, and law enforcement.”

Enacted 2013

Student Threat Assessment as a Safe and Supportive Prevention Strategy

4-year project (2015-2018)

The project supported by Grant #2015-CK-BX-0004 awarded by the National Institute of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this publication/program/exhibition are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of Justice.

Selected sample of 1,865 threat assessment cases reported by 785 Virginia public schools during the 2014-15 school year
Types of Threats (%) 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kill</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use weapon</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hit, beat</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stab, cut</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bomb</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arson</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentages for 1,865 threat cases from 785 schools. One case can involve more than one type of threat.

Threat Outcomes (%) 

- Threat Not Attempted: 97.7%
- Attempted and Averted: 2.6%
- Threat Carried Out: 0.7%

Disciplinary Outcome (%) 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reprimand</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suspension out of school</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suspension in school</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expulsion reduced to...</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detention after school</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placed in juvenile detention</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrested</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expelled</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentages for 1,865 threat cases from 785 schools. One case can involve more than one outcome.

School Placement Outcome (%) 

- No Change: 84%
- Transferred to alternative school: 8%
- Homebound instruction: 5%
- Transferred to regular school: 1%
- Other: 2%

Virginia Threat Assessment Experience

Our research shows that Virginia schools were able to safely implement threat assessment on a large scale, with only a small proportion of students receiving serious disciplinary and legal consequences.

No statistically significant differences for White vs Black or White vs Hispanic students.

Slides by Dewey Cornell, Ph.D.
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