

Best Practices for Establishing a Behavior Intervention Team

1) Establish mission and purpose for the team.

The Behavior Intervention Team is designed to be proactive in evaluating information and addressing behaviors of concern as related to students/faculty/staff

Sample language from Deisinger and Randazzo et al (2008):

- Threat assessment is a safety management tool that is based on information and observations about a specific situation.
- Assessment allows for early identification of situations that are likely to pose a risk, and provides a baseline against which to measure changes in the situation.
- The threat assessment and management team is committed to improving community safety. Through a proactive, collaborative, coordinated, objective and thoughtful approach, we will identify, assess, intervene and manage situations that pose or may reasonably pose a threat to the safety and well being of the campus community.
- Teams are responsible for the careful and contextual identification and evaluation of behaviors that may raise concern or may precede violent activity on campus.

2) Establish membership

Multidisciplinary teams representing various perspectives are recommended, including representatives from Student Affairs, Counseling, Health Services, Campus Police, Legal, Residence Life, and Academics. Ad hoc members could include representatives from Athletics, Human Resources, community law enforcement personnel, Office of Diversity, International Student Services, Public Information, etc.

The size of the group is dependent on the skills and expertise your campus has, but optimally should not exceed 7-8 members. Members should be trained on threat assessment and related topics and understand campus procedures. Teams should seek training together so they work effectively with one another.

Consider team authority and role:

- Understand threats
 - Evaluate legitimacy of concerns
 - Identify motivations for violence
 - Assess likelihood of physical harm
 - Reduce risk
 - Guide implementation of strategies
 - Evaluate community and victim needs
- (Deisinger and Randazzo, 2009)

3) Establish critical skill sets for team members

Individual team members must be collaborative, non-judgmental, possess good communication and problem-solving skills, the ability to both think critically and make decisions in a timely manner. Team members must agree to maintain confidentiality, demonstrate empathy, and

demonstrate the willingness to follow through on cases by proper case management and documentation.

4) Determine available and applicable resources for team to utilize.

These resources might include counseling, student conduct, student disability services, psychological assessment services (on campus or in the community), area law enforcement, and an administrator who can facilitate a medical or catastrophic withdrawal.

5) Determine protocol for meeting and how often will the team meet. Establish which agenda items are to be considered (i.e. case review, new behaviors of concern).

6) Provide training to team members as well as campus community on what to report. Encourage a culture of reporting....."If you see something, say something".

7) Create and maintain a secure database for documenting, reporting, and tracking cases.

Example: Maxient, SharePoint site

8) Regularly assess work and impact of the team. Determine gaps in current practice (ex. are faculty reporting cases to the team? Are students reporting other students?) Are responses effective in reducing threatening behavior? Is the team accomplishing mission/purpose?

9) Gather information about the person of concern from multiple sources:

- Student Affairs
- Housing
- Campus Police
- Human Resources
- Check computer websites (google, Facebook, MySpace, etc.)
- Faculty, roommates, friends, family, employers

10) Work with Legal Counsel to develop appropriate college or university policies and procedures consistent with:

- FERPA governs records only
- Due process
- First Amendment
- Search and seizure
- Title II ADA update