



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
Division of
Student Affairs

BEHAVIORAL APPROACH TO VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Many individuals who are planning to engage in targeted violence display threatening or concerning behaviors that are observable to others. Those who have perpetrated acts of targeted violence have no profile. The following categories are not exhaustive, but they represent some common threatening or potentially concerning behaviors identified across a wide variety of completed and averted acts of targeted violence. Observed alone, these threatening or potentially concerning behaviors may not signal violence, but they could indicate that an individual may need help. These behaviors and other relevant factors should be assessed within an individual's totality of circumstances, including life stressors, personal risk factors, and threat mitigators, to identify if an individual is moving along a pathway to violence and what help may be needed.

Unusual or unexplained activities, behaviors, or communications indicating preparation for end of life, including a manifesto.

Communications—verbal, written, in-person, or virtual—that intentionally or unintentionally reveal insight into an individual's thinking, planning, or execution of an act to harm oneself or others; this could include ambiguous threats of violence.

Threats explicitly stated or communicated to commit an act of targeted violence made virtually, in-person, written, or verbally against a particular target.

Collection or stockpiling of unusual amounts or types of weapons, tactical equipment, or destructive materials, including explosives and chemicals, as well as attempts to illegally gain access to these materials.

Unusual interest in previous attacks, attackers, or violent extremists, such as emulating the actions and statements of former attackers.

Communications signaling changed or increased desperation or distress, evidenced by fixated thought patterns of death, inability to regulate emotions, and/or lack of positive expression.

Unusual/unexplained deviation from an individual's prior behavioral pattern. Can include changes in hygiene and sleep habits. This may be in initiating report. Seek clarification when necessary.

New or alarming acts of aggressive or violent behavior, such as domestic violence, animal cruelty, or harassment; this could also include new patterns of violent or aggressive behavior. Note this if behavior escalates from assertive to aggressive.

Unusual, extreme preoccupation with a person, place, belief, or cause to the point that an individual cannot be redirected to end the infatuation.

Attempt to gain access or proximity to a target; refers to the type, frequency, and intensity of an individual's attempts to be physically close to the target; could include unusual travel or significant changes in travel patterns.

