



School Shooting Prevention: An Evidence Based Framework

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Research reported in this presentation was supported by the National Institute of Justice under award number

2018-75-CX-0023





Context

- ▶ A 2018 Pew Research Center poll found that **57%** of teens were somewhat or very worried that a school shooting could happen in their school.
- ▶ In 2018, 26 states considered bills or resolutions related to arming school personnel. Even more introduced legislation related to guns in K-12 schools more generally.

A majority of U.S. teens fear a shooting could happen at their school, and most parents share their concern

U.S. NEWS

Major retailers are selling bulletproof backpacks, as parents and kids fear more school shootings

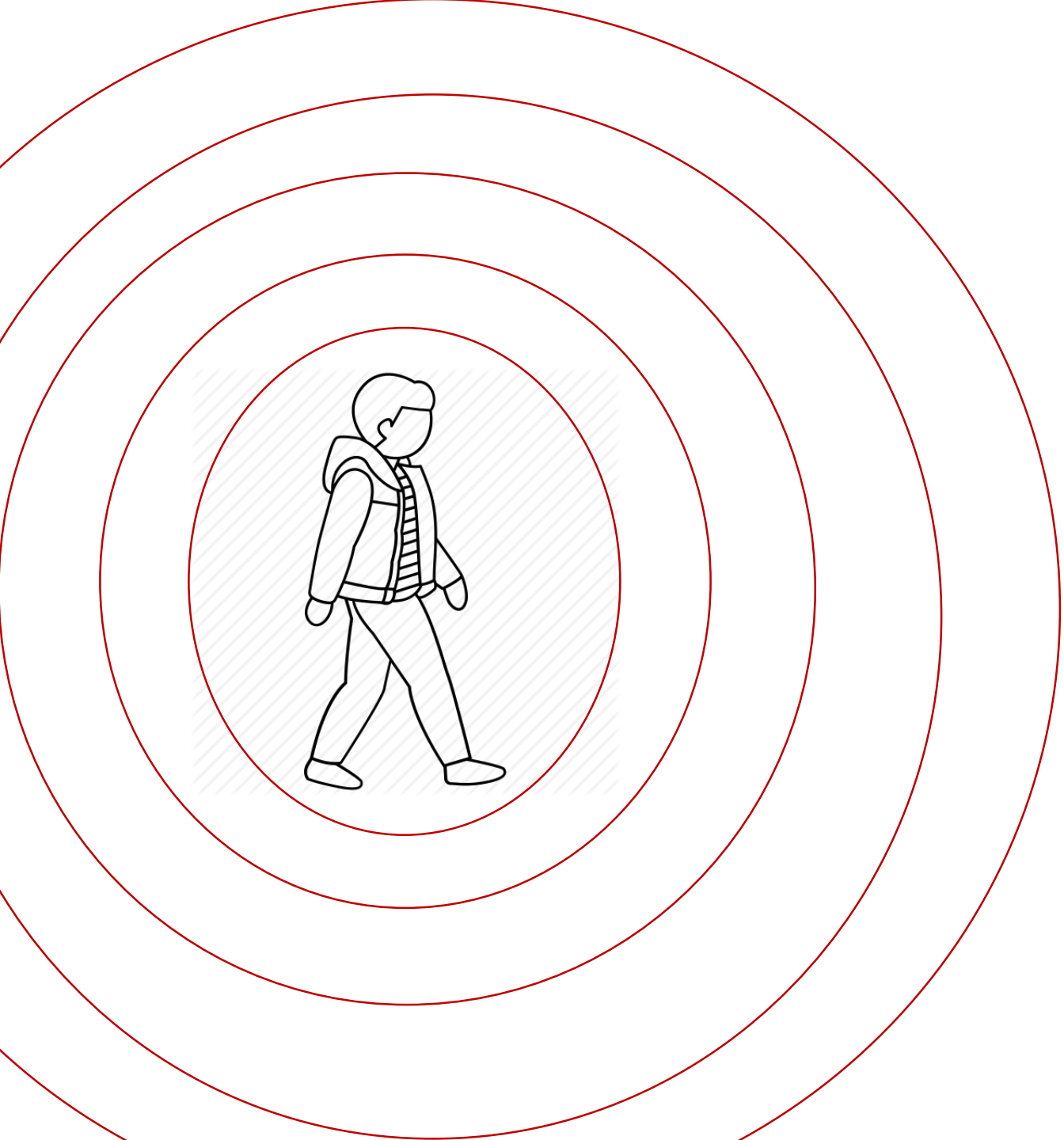
School Shooting *Prevention*

Is Not...



Is...





Diffusion of Benefits

A high-contrast, black and white graphic of the United States map. A dark silhouette of a person holding a gun is overlaid on the map, positioned in the central-eastern region. The background is a dark, textured grey.

MOST COMPREHENSIVE MASS SHOOTER DATABASE

EXPLORE THE DATABASE

GET IN TOUCH

SCROLL DOWN

Dear Miss Peterson

8-21-18

I received your letter requesting to have an interview for your study.

Sorry I did not respond in a timely manner concerning this request, however

P.S. Equanimity isn't bliss but this is one of the elements
insidious methods of brainwashing that has been
taught to my race of people which is the overall
outcome of our ignorant behavior. Conscious
enlightenment about one's history & knowledge of
self is a beautiful thing without it I would have
let you trick me into further exploitation of
my race of people & allowed you to continue to
falsely portray us as monsters who have no regard
for human life!! I know this wasn't the
response that you was looking for, so please don't
be put off or offended by my intellectual

1. You mentioned that there were some scary and confusing incidents from your childhood-what were they?

I was shown pornography as a child and it disgusted me. My father would sometimes hit or grab my mother. He was sometimes hard on me but he did it out of love.

2. What tests did you have trouble with in fifth grade? What happened as a result of you having trouble with those tests?

Vocabulary tests My grades suffered.

3. My mother was raised on a mid-sized farm (cows, pigs, sheep, chickens, ducks, horses, corn, oats, barley, wheat), one of four children. Her mom & dad were hardworking, catholic, alcoholic & abusive (physically) to each other & their children. She had one child prior to meeting my father (my sister, [redacted] when she became pregnant with me, her dad wanted to kill my dad, so they took off & ended up in New Mexico, where I was born ([redacted]). With a new grandson & a collie puppy they went back home & modified my grandfather. Mom worked as a care provider at the State mental home in Colquhoun, N.C. She worked hard, kept a clean house, cooked two - three meals a day & cared for us kids ([redacted]) as well as she knew how. She was quick to punish when we did wrong, cursed & smoked (rarely

What is a mass shooting?

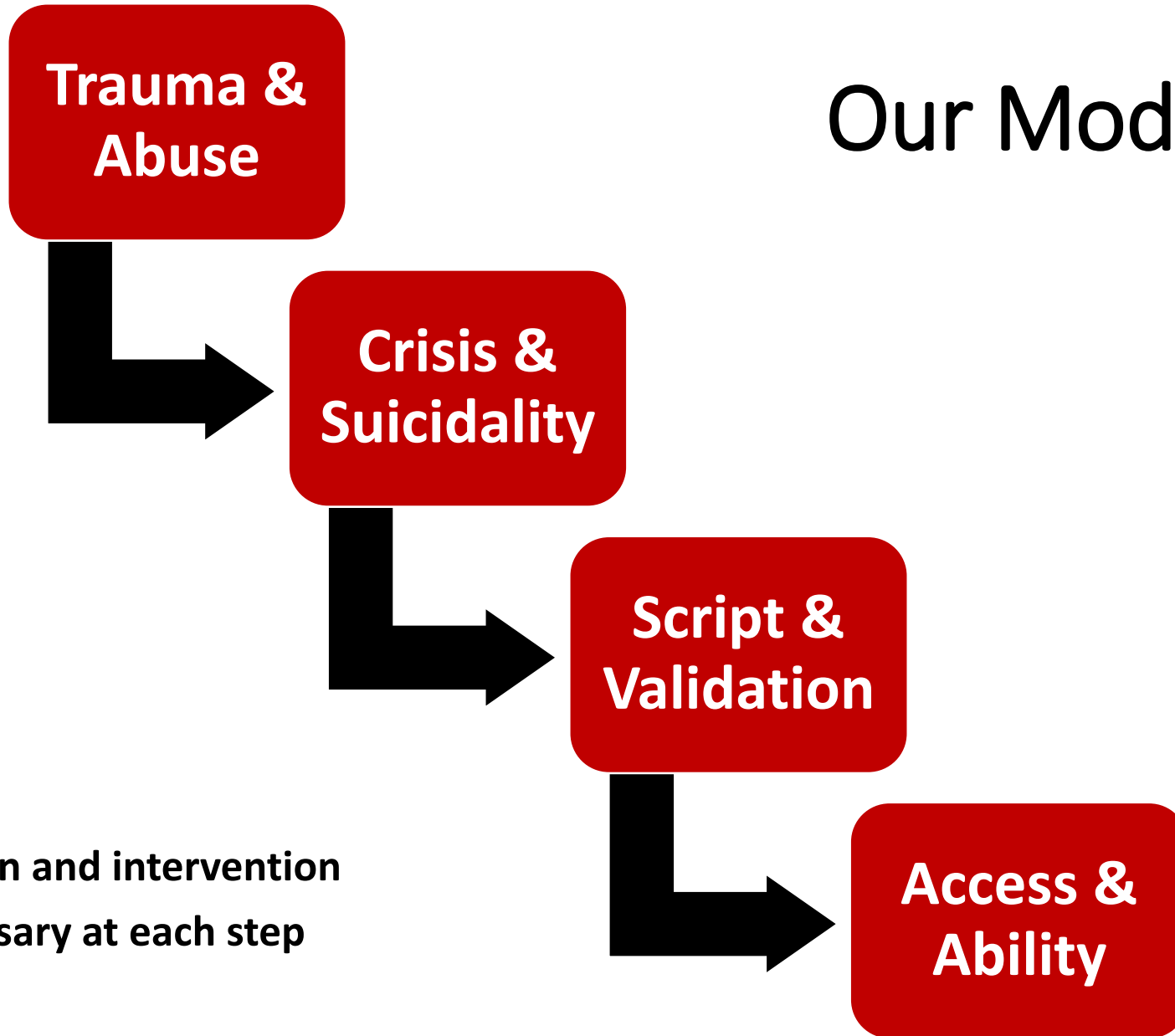
- “...**four or more victims** are murdered with firearms—not including the offender(s)—within one event, and at least some of the murders occurred in a **public location** or locations in close geographical proximity ... and the murders are not attributable to any other underlying criminal activity or commonplace circumstance.”

(Congressional Research Service, 2015)

Intended K-12 mass shooting

- The shooter came to school heavily armed with the intent to perpetrate mass violence and/or the shooter fired at one or more people.

Our Model



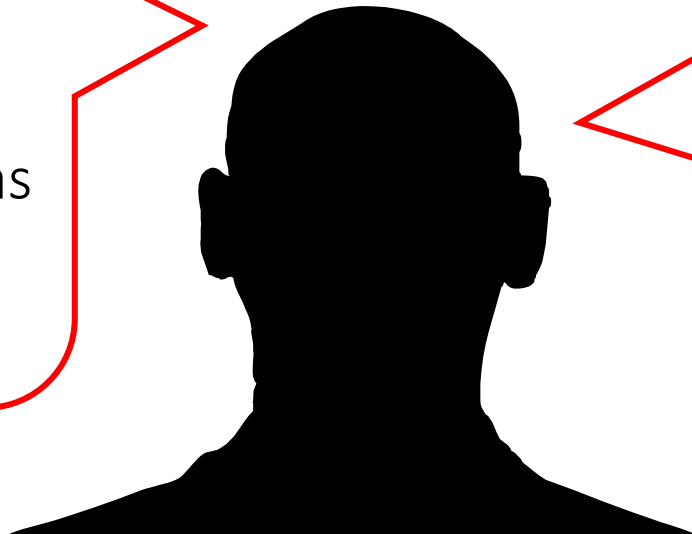
Prevention and intervention are necessary at each step

Current strategies



1.

School mass shooters often experienced abuse, neglect, and early exposure to trauma and violence.



I was shown pornography as a child and it disgusted me. My father would sometimes hit or grab my mother.

My father was a bitter, angry, abuse [sic] man. ... I know he was abused physically and I suspect sexually. ... He verbally abused all of us on a daily basis, beat my mom and I when we displeased him in any way, sexually abused my sister ... I lived in fear of my dad. Many times he beat me as if I were a grown man (fists and boots).

The abuse by my friend's stepdad was a huge impact. I thought it was my fault he abused me and that because I didn't stop it I was gay. I hated him for doing it and myself for thinking I allowed it.

My father killed himself

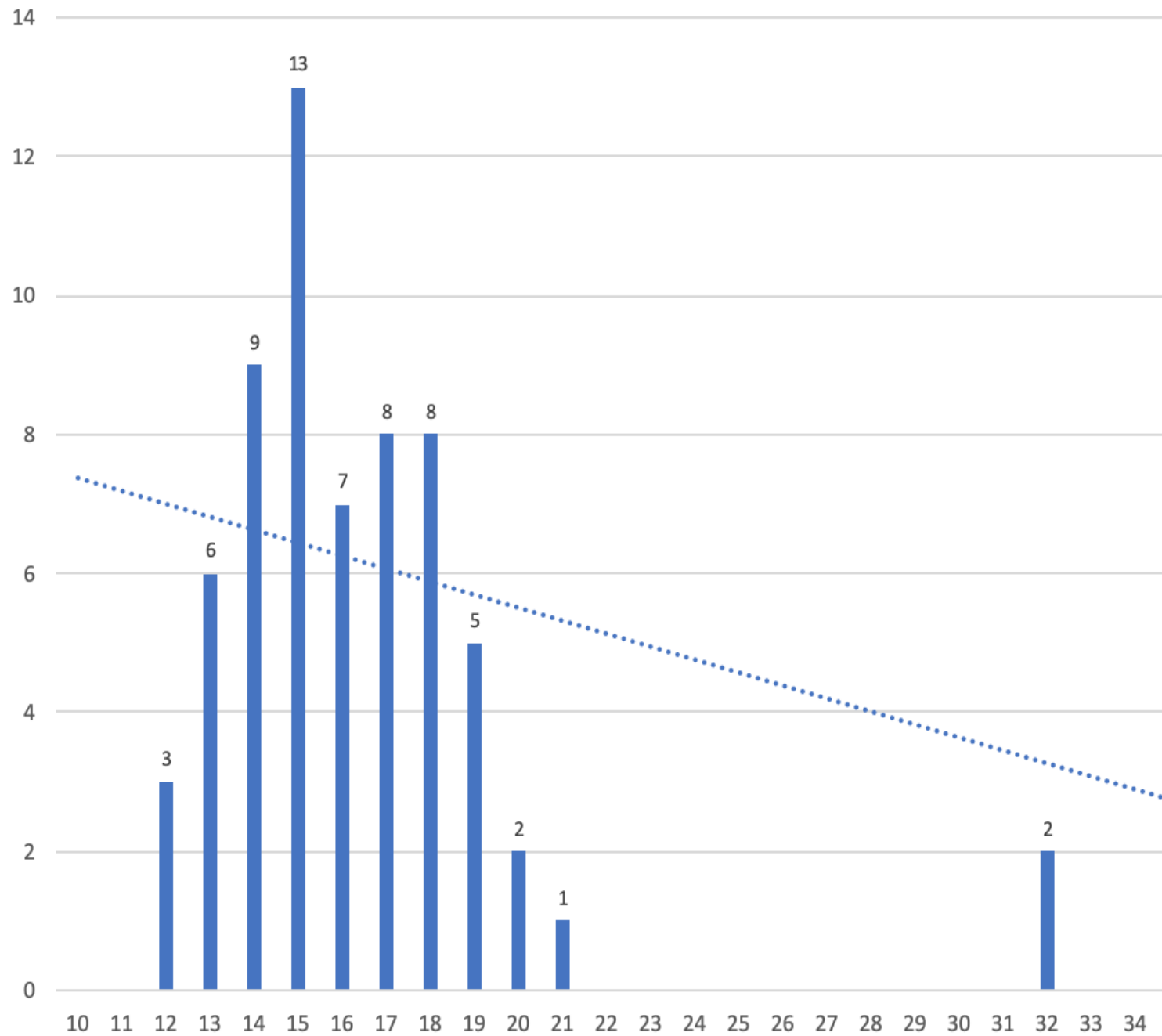
For this reason, children need
counselors*

*
*MN has one of worst student/counselor ratios in the country.
Nationally, the average is 482 students to one school counselor. In
Minnesota, it is 723.*

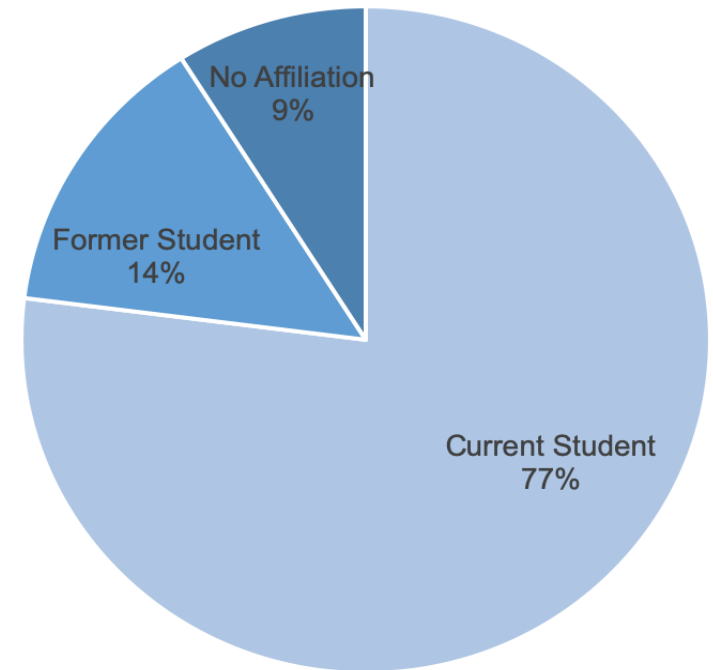
2.

Over 90% of school mass shooters were current or former students of the school

Intended K-12 mass shooters by age, 1999–2019 (N= 67). Mean = 17; Mode = 15



School Active Shooters 1999–2019 by School Relationship (N= 67)



If school mass shooters are *insiders* not *outsiders*, active shooters drills with children risk normalizing school violence and training prospective offenders in a school's exact response.

What Are Active-Shooter Drills Doing to Kids?

The psychological effects of realistic simulations could be dangerous.

'I Felt More Traumatized Than Trained': Active-Shooter Drills Take Toll on Teachers

Secure entrances, ID scanners and bullet-resistant film: How Minnesota schools are spending \$25 million in state safety grants

When Active-Shooter Drills Scare the Children They Hope to Protect

Active shooter drills are scaring kids and may not protect them. Some schools are taking a new approach.

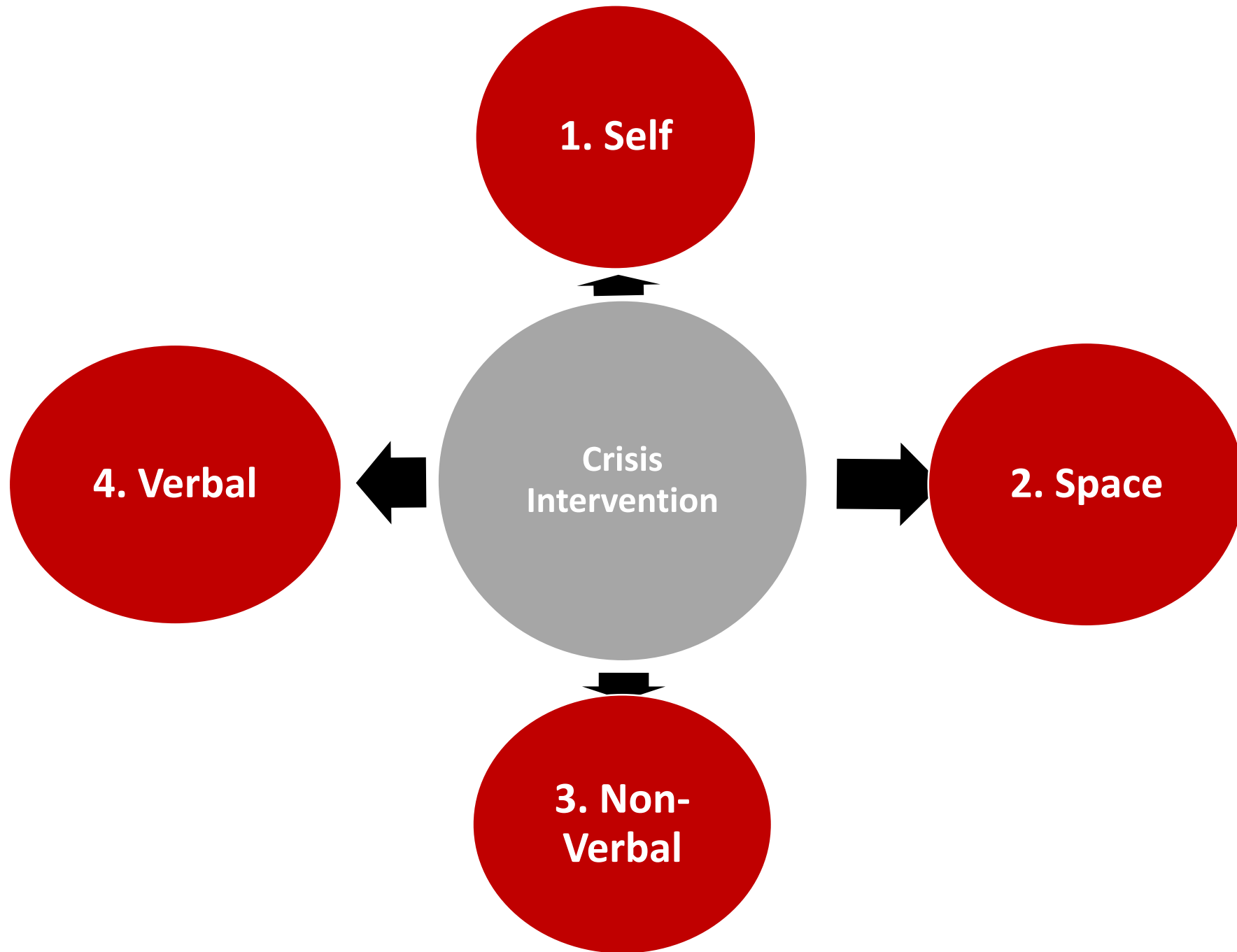
Research shows that lockdown drills increase student fear, inflate perceptions of risk, and decrease perceptions of school safety

(Huskey & Connell, 2020; Peterson et al. 2015)

3.

80% of school mass shooters were in a mental health crisis prior to their attacks, which was communicated by a marked change in behavior.

For this reason, all teachers and staff in school need high quality training in evidence-based crisis intervention and suicide prevention

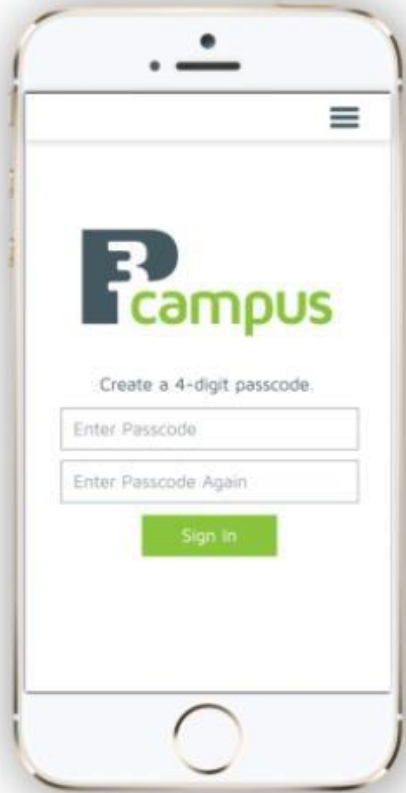


Note: The most common months for school shootings are May and September...the most stressful months at school

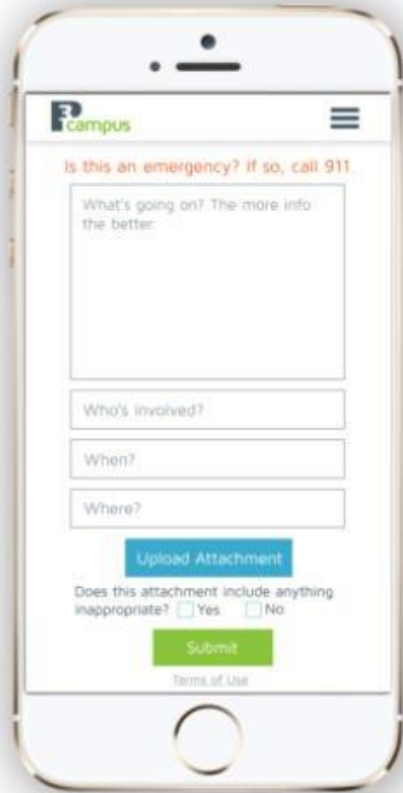
4.

Nearly 80% of school mass shooters leaked their plans to shoot ahead of time – telling family, teachers, or students in person or online that they were thinking of perpetrating violence

For this reason, all schools need anonymous reporting systems where students, teachers, and staff can report students in crisis or making threats of violence.



P3 Campus



Sandy Hook Promise



5.

School shooters were actively suicidal prior to their attacks and 1/3 died in the act

The First Modern School Shooter Feels Responsible for the Rest

“So, why did you commit this crime?” the head parole commissioner asked.


“Because I wanted to die,” she said. “I was trying to commit suicide.”

“Why pick the school across the street?” the commissioner asked.

“Because I knew that if I fired on the school the police would show up, and they would shoot me and kill me,” she said. “And every time I had tried suicide in the previous year I had screwed it up.”

The Grover Cleveland Elementary School shooting, San Diego, CA
January 29, 1979
The principal and a custodian were killed
8 children and a police officer were injured





I tried to shoot myself with a shotgun. ... I tried to strangle myself with a seatbelt.

I had a lot of suicide ideation. I put a loaded pistol in my mouth, I tried to buy heroin to OD when I was 14

Punitive measures are ineffective when a perpetrator is suicidal.

Punishing threats of violence by excluding a student from school or criminally charging them can exacerbate grievances and intensify feelings of crisis, hopelessness, and suicidality, increasing the odds that a shooting may occur.

6.

School shooters study other school shooters. 1/3 purposely used Columbine as a model

School shootings didn't start in 1999 at Columbine. Here's why that disaster became a blueprint for other killers and created the 'Columbine generation'

The Washington Post
Democracy Dies in Darkness

Media literacy can help disrupt
the cycle of violence

How Columbine became a blueprint for school shooters

Jillian Peterson & James Densley April 17, 2019

THE COLUMBINE EFFECT

AN OBSESSION WITH THE 1999 SCHOOL RAMPAGE HAS MOTIVATED DOZENS OF SHOOTING PLOTS AND ATTACKS.

By *Mark Follman and Becca Andrews*

November/December 2015 Issue

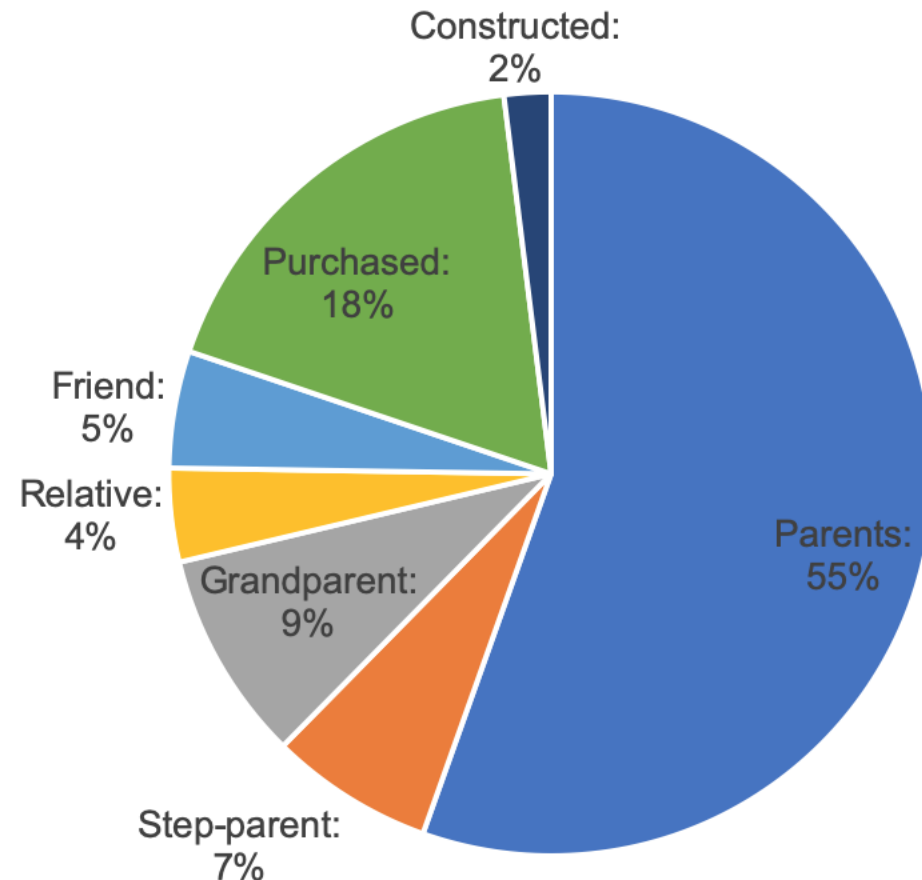
7.


80% of school mass shooters get
their weapons from family
members

K-12 Shooters, 1999-2019 (N = 67)

- Number of firearms:
 - One: 67%
 - Two: 21%
 - Three or more: 12%
- Type of firearm
(can use more than one type):
 - Handguns: 72%
 - Shotguns: 31%
 - Rifles: 25%

How Firearms were Obtained (N = 67)





I was suicidal. I did some dry runs with my Grandpa's shotgun. I would put it my mouth or under my chin to practice... I was afraid I would flinch. ... I took my Grandpa's pistol, a revolver, and a box of ammo, and put it in my bag. It was like, the best day. It didn't matter what anyone said or did, I held power over life and death in my backpack.

I stole the pistol from my Dad

The majority of gun owners admit they do not safely store all of their firearms, surveys show.

Under California law, parents can be criminally charged if they keep an unlocked firearm on their property where kids can get hold of it.

A public health campaign approach - send letters to every parent in Minnesota school districts encouraging safe storage and providing resources

And finally...

Schools need formal in-house intervention teams to research and assess student needs, recognize and respond appropriately to concerns, and refer students to long-term resources.

The R-Model Intervention Teams

Research

- Risks - what are the needs? Where are the gaps within the school, workplace, etc?
- Roles and Responsibilities - Who is involved? What role does everyone play?

Respond

- Recognize people in crisis
- React using evidence-based de-escalation (staff training)

Refer

- Refer to the assessment team that's in place
- Resources - what is available? How to connect?
- Review - Is the plan working?

Policy Summary

Stop Funding & Mandating

- Active shooter drills
- Hardening schools
- Punishing threats

Start Funding & Mandating

- School counselors
- Crisis intervention training
- Anonymous reporting
- Intervention teams
- Media literacy
- Safe storage

THANK
YOU



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