Creating a Student Behavioral Intervention Team

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Practice with Clickers...Click the number which best describes your school:

1. Men’s BB team will be in the NCAA tourney
2. Women’s BB team will be in the tourney
3. Both teams will be in the tourney
4. Neither team will be in the tourney
5. Have no idea: I don’t like sports
Who Are You? Click if you are a:

1. Senior Student Affairs Officer
2. Dean of Students
3. Housing Staff
4. Counseling Staff
5. Case Manager
6. Other
Session Outline

I. Introduction/Learning Objectives
II. Profile of UNCW
III. Rationale for Implementation
IV. Overview of Model
   -Structure, mission, scope, process
V. Training; Privacy & Confidentiality
VI. Assessing Cases
VII. Case Examples
VIII. Discussion
Learning Objectives

After attending today’s session participants will understand:

- the benefits to enacting a SBIT
- how to create and implement a SBIT
- resources for training your SBIT
- best practices/models of other schools
- how several case examples were reviewed by a SBIT
Profile of UNCW Students

- 10,989 Undergraduates
- 1,206 Graduates
- 58.4% Female students
- 11% Racial/ethnic minorities
- 14.5% Out-of-state students
- 9.7% Transfer students
Profile of UNCW Students
(continued)

- Average Freshman SAT: 1156
- 89% of entering freshmen lived on campus in fall of 2008
- 33% of all undergraduates are living on campus in 2008-2009
Behavioral assessment on your campus—Click if you:

1. Already have SBIT
2. Are in the process of convening a SBIT
3. Have a SBIT and a Case Manager
4. Have a combined campus TAT
STATs/SBITs Movement

The Report of the Virginia Tech Review Panel to Governor Tim Kaine (Aug. 2007), included key findings… “Although various individuals and departments within the university knew about each of these incidents, the university did not intervene effectively. No one knew all the information and no one connected all the dots.”
STATs/SBITs Movement

Report to President Bush on Issues Raised by the Virginia Tech Tragedy (2007, June 13), included key findings… “improved awareness and communication are key to prevention.” Also, that referrals for individuals needing mental health services is critical.
STATs/SBITs Movement

The State of Virginia (effective July 1, 2008) amended Code of Virginia § 23-9.2 to include “development of mandatory college campus violence prevention committees and threat assessment teams...tasked with the creation and implementation of policies and procedures relating to threatening behavior, its reporting, assessment, intervention, and resolution.”
STATs/SBITs Movement

U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Secret Services’ “Safe School Initiative” (2002) findings indicate that… “prior to most incidents other people knew about the attacker’s idea or plan to attack.”
Rationale for Implementation at UNCW

- Statewide Safety Task Force Rec. (Summer 2007)
- Campus murders in 2004
  - Changes to campus security…
  - Chancellor’s Safety Council; Campus Safety Investigations Committee; Criminal Background Checks; Statewide Suspension/Expulsion Database
- Funded Mandate for Case Managers after Virginia Tech
UNCW SBIT Model

- Case Manager
- SBIT
- Identify
- Refer
- Assess
- Monitor
- VC Student Affairs
- Housing & Residence Life
- Dean of Students Office
- Academic Affairs
- Counseling Center
- Student Health
- Police
SBIT Mission

“IRAM”

IDENTIFY students at risk or those whose behaviors are disruptive or threatening.

REFER students to the Dean’s Office for initial review, and possibly to the SBIT.

ASSESS each case to determine whether student is of “interest,” “concern” or a “threat.”

MONITOR each case.
SBIT Mission

- “IRAM” approach
- Assessment phase may include police investigation
- Balance the interests of the community with the rights and interests of the individual student
SBIT Scope of Duties

- Consultative in nature and designed to “Connect the Dots”
- Meets bi-weekly and as necessary for high risk cases
  - Creates synergy among team so goal of helping student is central, communication flows easily
- Discusses cases as presented by Case Manager
- Recommends appropriate action per case
- Follows established policies & protocols
The Process (for est. SBIT)

- Selected a cross-functional team
- Created the mission and functions
- Created referral forms and database for fac/staff
- Established roles
- Confidentiality & record-keeping
- Use of background checks
- Campus judicial system referrals, counseling referrals, and monitoring cases
Training

Training provides a threat assessment team the ability to “…gather information, evaluate facts, and make a determination as to whether a given student poses a threat of violence” to self or others ("Threat Assessment in Schools: A Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and to Creating Safe School Climates,” 2002; p. 29).
Training our SBIT

US Dept. of Justice “Threat Assessment Investigations”

US Dept. of Ed. & Secret Service “Safe School Initiative”

US Dept. of Ed. & Secret Service “Threat Assessment in Schools”
Training our SBIT

- NC State Safety Symposium (fall 2007)
- U.S. Secret Service Training (spring 2008)
- Campus Threat Assessment Strategies (spring 2009)
  - Strategic Interactions, Inc.
- Training Faculty and Staff on Referrals
  - “Baylor Model”
Assessing each student case

- How do we distinguish between:
  - “Students of interest”
  - “Students of concern”
  - “Students who pose a threat of harm to self or others”
- How long do students remain on the list?
“Students of Interest”

- Referred to Dean’s Office by faculty or staff for consideration
- Most referrals are initially categorized here and then are interviewed; usually consist of:
  - Behaviors of concern in housing or classroom
  - Bizarre behaviors/troubling writing/web sites, Facebook, Blogs…
  - Students who need help via various resources
“Students of Concern”

- After being interviewed, assessed, discussed by SBIT
- Police may investigate
- May have been reported and had difficulty in multiple areas on campus (housing, class)
- Require some intervention in order to manage their life on campus…
  - Counseling, student health, judicial affairs, housing change, academic resources, disability resources…
- Continuously discussed and “monitored” by SBIT
“Students Who Pose a Threat”

- Obvious threats such as overt threatening behaviors (assaults, weapons, threats to harm self or others)
- Evidence of likelihood of making good on threat
- Student remaining on campus poses a threat of harm to self or others
- Often accompanied by an arrest and/or judicial process, summary suspension, voluntary or involuntary hospitalization/committal
CASE STUDIES

CASE ONE
“SUSAN AND JEFF PART WAYS”

CASE TWO
“BOB, The next Stephen King”
Susan, an off campus student, complained that roommate Jeff “is obsessed with guns and constantly talks of wanting to ‘blow things up’.”

1. Student of Interest
2. Student of Concern
3. Threat
Susan showed campus officials a photo from Jeff’s Facebook page depicting him and another man aiming guns in a forest.

1. Student of Interest
2. Student of Concern
3. Threat
Susan moved out and Jeff began showing up at her workplace, and drove by her boyfriend’s house.

1. Student of Interest
2. Student of Concern
3. Threat
Jeff’s Facebook page is full of photos of the Susan with them out at clubs drinking and hugging, and includes a statement, “Give me Susan or give me death.”

1. Student of Interest
2. Student of Concern
3. Threat
Background check revealed Jeff has no criminal history and no prior campus judicial record.

1. Student of Interest
2. Student of Concern
3. Threat

33%  33%  33%
Interview by local police of Jeff, including search of his premises, found no weapons; no weapons registered to him.

1. Student of Interest
2. Student of Concern
3. Threat
Discussion of CASE ONE
Creative writing professor complained that he has asked Bob not to use classmates’ names in his fictional horror writing because the students said they are “creeped out.” Bob wrote a play where two of his classmates get murdered.

1. Student of Interest
2. Student of Concern
3. Threat
A classmate of Bob’s reports he thinks Bob is on drugs, and shows the assistant dean Bob’s Facebook page which shows Bob in a trench coat holding what looks to be a prop gun toward another student. Background looks like the inside of a dorm room.

1. Student of Interest
2. Student of Concern
3. Threat
Bob’s Facebook is “goth,” with satanic messages and symbols, strange poems and one particular poem entitled, “When my classmates fade away.”

1. Student of Interest
2. Student of Concern
3. Threat

33%  33%  33%
During a routine health and safety inspection, Bob’s room is found to be destroyed, with fake blood covering the bathroom walls; there are lots of video cameras in the room.

1. Student of Interest
2. Student of Concern
3. Threat
During an interview with the assistant dean, Bob indicates he has always been a little different, wants to be the next “Steven King,” and has never touched a drug in his life. He agrees to stop using his classmate’s names in his writings. Bob is earning a 3.9gpa as a sophomore.

1. Student of Interest
2. Student of Concern
3. Threat
Background check of Bob indicates he has a history of assaults, several drug convictions and a pending DWI charge. Bob’s application includes no admission of prior offenses.

1. Student of Interest
2. Student of Concern
3. Threat
Perspectives

- How has the SBIT been most useful from the perspective of a member of our University Counseling Center?
- What are several key issues that required special attention from a counselor’s perspective?
- How has creating and using a SBIT helped?
- Audience members- How has it helped you?
Discussion/Questions