

Participant Comments:

“The presenter has a comprehensive knowledge of active shooter perpetrators. His understanding of forensic psychiatry exceeds many of my colleagues. This is a refreshing, non-partisan examination of these perpetrators that is thoroughly backed by scholastic research!”

- Angelo Sambunaris, MD

Director of Forensic Psychiatry, Institute for Advanced Medical Research
Crisis Negotiator, North Fulton County (GA) SWAT Team

“This course presents hard-hitting, vetted data on active shooters and school assailants that every law enforcement officer and school official should know.”

- Rick Kaufman

Assistant Superintendent for Littleton-Columbine (CO) Schools
Director, Crisis Management Response Team for the 1999 Columbine shooting

“This is a fantastic course and quickly become one of the favorite videos on the FBI’s video training network. Multiple field offices made this video mandatory viewing for their agents and intelligence analysts.”

- SSA Justin Gerken

FBI Counterterrorism Division, ITOS 1 | CONUS IV

“This is a fascinating presentation and hugely informative. This is the best course available on understanding the psychology of active shooter perpetrators.”

- Detective Martin Toetz

University of Colorado at Colorado Springs Police Department

“The speaker is brilliant and impeccably eloquent. He is able to put a complex problem into simple terms for everyone to understand. The speaker truly understands active shooters.”

- Joseph Erardi, PhD

Superintendent of Newtown (CT) Public School, 2013-2018



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Presentation Title: *“Understanding the Adolescent Active Shooter: Psychology, Neuroscience, Behavior, Threat Assessment, and Threat Leakage”*

Presentation Description:

This comprehensive, research-based lecture examines the psychology and behavior of active shooter/mass violence perpetrators. Firmly grounded in 25,000 hours of research by Threat Suppression, this course is an apolitical, non-biased examination of perpetrator behavior, motives, and indicators. This course addresses many of the theories surrounding active shooter perpetrators. With more than 400 citations and references, this presentation provides a factual examination of available scholastic research.

Law enforcement officials, intelligence analysts, school administrators and others need to have a thorough understand of both the psychology and behavior to effectively prevent active shooter attacks. This course is ideal for law enforcement officers, intelligent analysts, school administrators, school counselors, school resource officers, mental health providers, prosecutors, military leadership, and security officials with recognized critical infrastructure. Threat Suppression has provided this training to multiple federal law enforcement agencies, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Department of Homeland Security, the United States’ District Attorney’s Office, the Department of Education, and the Department of Defense.

Active shooter/active assailant events continue to increase the United States. Unfortunately, in many cases, the identifying pre-attack clues are often discovered after the attack. In almost all cases, the perpetrator exhibited warning signs prior to the attack. In many cases, family, friends, and school employees stated that they were very concerned that the perpetrator would conduct some type of attack. However, in all attack cases, the warning signs were either not recognized or not acted upon in time to stop the attack.

Although there is no standard “profile” of the active assailant, there are many commonalities. In this course, the presenter will discuss the perpetrator commonalities, including the psychology, neuroscience, causative factors, common motives, pre-attack intelligence gathering, and pre-attack warning indicators. The presenter will discuss the adolescent active shooter, adult “workplace” active shooter, homegrown violent extremist, and domestic terrorist. Although each typology is similar, there are certain characteristics unique to each group.

Threat leakage is the communication to a third party of the intent to do harm. Threat leakage is fact-based, dynamic, acute, and often accelerates as the attack approaches. Threat leakage frequently occurs in active shooter attacks, especially those attacks perpetrated by adolescents. Leakage is one of the best and most important predictors of an adolescent’s impending violent act. In this presentation, the concept of threat leakage will be explored. The leakage pathway of warning behavior is covered, including numerous real-life examples of leakage in social media, diaries, school projects, and more. Numerous active shooter perpetrators will be discussed, and examples of each perpetrator’s threat leakage will be shown.

This presentation addresses some of the most controversial subjects surrounding active shooter perpetrators. This course discusses the correlation of mental illness, the debate about psychiatric medications as a causative factor, video games as a reported causative factor, bullying, copycat contagion, and more. This course presents a comprehensive package that allows the course participants to form their own opinion based on current scholastic research.

The presenter will discuss numerous hypothesized reasons for the increase in active shooter events. These reasons include Marcia's theory of identity, access to weapons, history of abuse, traumatic brain injuries, self-bullying, fatherless homes, and more. At the end of the course, the presenter will provide a case study of an adult active shooter and the events that led up to the shooting.

The presenter will discuss the threat assessment process and ways to systematically examine a potential perpetrator for warning behavior. Many threat assessment tools are widely available. The presenter will discuss fundamentals that should be included in any threat assessment tool. Last, the presenter will discuss how to determine a threat, including imminent threat, medium-risk threat, and low-risk threat. The presenter will describe key questions to ask during the threat evaluation process to determine the level of risk. The presenter will also describe clues to look for in an individual's social media profiles.

Presentation Objectives (depending on course length):

1. At the conclusion of this program, attendees will learn and discuss the dangers of profiling potential active shooter perpetrators.
2. At the conclusion of this program, attendees will learn and discuss the evolution of the active shooter perpetrator.
3. At the conclusion of this program, attendees will learn and discuss three major commonalities seen in adolescent active shooter perpetrators.
4. At the conclusion of this program, attendees will learn and discuss the neuroscience of active shooter perpetrators.
5. At the conclusion of this program, attendees will learn and discuss the commonalities with psychopaths, sociopaths, sadists, and narcissists.
6. At the conclusion of this program, attendees will learn and discuss the characteristics of a homegrown violent extremists.
7. At the conclusion of this program, attendees will learn and discuss the characteristics of a domestic terrorist
8. At the conclusion of this program, attendees will learn and discuss the radicalization process of homegrown violent extremists, domestic terrorists, and how this process is very similar to the disgruntled active shooter.
9. At the conclusion of this program, attendees will be able to describe debate regarding mental illness and active shooter perpetrators.
10. At the conclusion of this program, attendees will be able to describe debate regarding violent video games and active shooter perpetrators.
11. At the conclusion of this program, attendees will be able to describe debate regarding anti-psychotic medications and active shooter perpetrators.
12. At the conclusion of this program, attendees will be able to describe threat leakage.
13. At the conclusion of this program, attendees will be able to describe hypothesized reasons for the increase in active shooter events.
14. At the conclusion of this program, attendees will be able to describe the threat assessment process and fundamentals of every threat assessment.
15. At the conclusion of this program, attendees will be able to describe key questions to ask to determine credibility of threat from potential perpetrators.

Resources Needed:

Classroom, computer, projector, audio

Time Needed:

Four to eight hours