

Abstract

Schools have increasingly adopted threat assessment to prevent violence, but there is limited insight into whether assessors adhere to recommended practices and consider assessment acceptable and feasible in their schools. Therefore, the present study surveyed 146 assessors from schools in the United States and Canada. Most assessors (79%) reported that their school has a mandated protocol and most (>70%) use practices consistent with several recommendations (e.g., form a multidisciplinary team, collect information, determine risk level). However, despite the common use of protocols, a third were local models rather than evidence-informed, established models. Some shortcomings in practices were also reported (e.g., in training teams, educating about reporting concerns, screening concerns). Although assessors perceive assessment as having a positive impact, such as increasing support for individuals, most (>60%) do not perceive it to reduce suspensions and expulsions. The primary challenges assessors reported relate to training, time, and monitoring.

Keywords: school violence; school safety; school threat assessment