



# Summer Institute

August, 2002

**RICHARD LIEBERMAN**  
**SHANE JIMERSON**

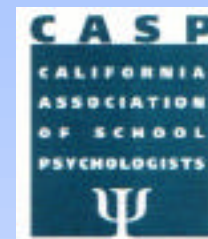
# RICHARD LIEBERMAN

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Suicide Prevention Unit

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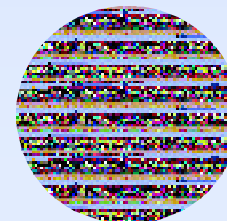
University of California, Santa Barbara

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Child and Adolescent Development

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# WHO IS PARTICIPATING

How many..... school psychologists?

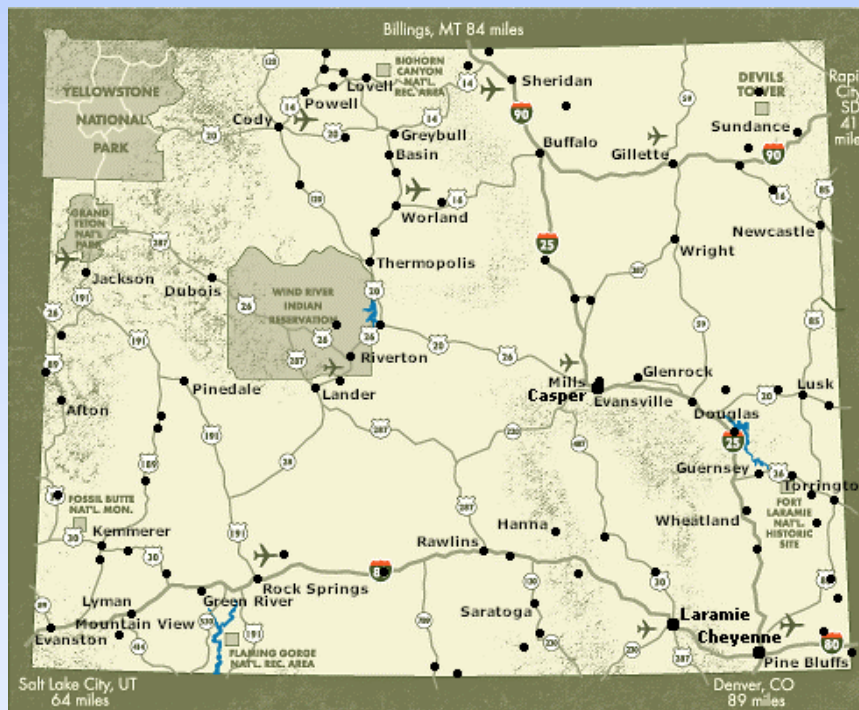
school counselors?

school administrators?

teachers?

others?

live in Wyoming?



# WSPA Summer Institute

## Jackson Hole, Wyoming



*Monday August 5<sup>th</sup> (1pm-5pm)*

**Introduction / Overview**

**Threat Assessment**

*Tuesday August 6<sup>th</sup> (8am-4pm)*

**Suicide Prevention / Intervention**

**Psychological First Aid**

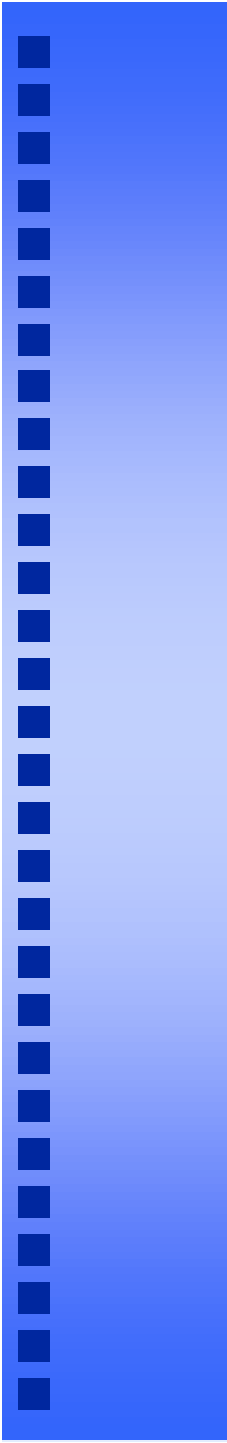
**Crisis Response / Working with Children and Schools following Trauma**

**Anniversaries / Memorials**

*Wednesday August 7<sup>th</sup> (8am-12pm)*

**Children and Grief / Working with Bereaved Children**





*“While our thanks go out to the national leaders and experts who came to Littleton to help, it was the local “insiders” who led the community’s response who were most valued by the Columbine students, staff, and their families. They were insider experts, familiar and trusted faces, who knew the history of the school and the community, were part of a shared culture and shared the loss. We especially appreciated the fact that these local leaders were here, in the community, and prepared to intervene.”*

- Beth Doll (1999). Reflections from Littleton. *The School Psychologist* (pp. 66,97)

# LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

- Policies and procedures
- Every school/safety plan
- Crisis teams
- 72hrs food/h<sup>2</sup>O
- Drills
- Training



# DISTRICT CRISIS TEAM MODEL: WEAKNESSES

- What if there are TWO crises?
- Burnout
- Over-responding
- Inappropriate services/personnel:  
language

# SCHOOL SITE CRISIS TEAM MODEL: STRENGTHS

- Who knows best?
- Reassuring Safety and Security
- Collaboration is your liability insurance
- Balance of Power in decision-making
- Suicide/Threat Assessment

# Crisis Team FUNCTIONS

- Assess & Advise
- Collaborate with parents, law enforcement, media, district, community agencies
- Initiate flow of information
- Identify those in need of psychological first aid



# Prevalence and Incidence

## **School and Student Crisis Statistics**

450,000 violent crimes each year

3 million children attacked annually

70,000 weapon attacks annually

5,200 teachers attacked each month

25% of schools vandalized monthly

burglaries occur 5x more

often at a school than a business

*Source: National School Safety Center, 1989*



# Prevalence and Incidence

## **Youth Homicide and Gun Arrests**

61% increase in teen homicide in the last decade

61,000 juveniles arrested with guns in 1995

estimated 270,000 guns carried to school daily

*Source: American Psychological Association*

*Task Force on Youth Violence, 1999*

# Prevalence and Incidence

## **Student Behaviors at School**

In 2000, 15% of students in grades 9-12 reported being in a physical fight on school property

*Source: Indicators of School Crime and Safety 2000, U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice, 2000*

*<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2001017>*

Fights or attacks with a weapon are more common in middle schools 21% of middle school/junior high schools reported these equals about 7,576 incidents

*Source: National Study of School Environment and Problem Behavior: The National Study of Delinquency Prevention in Schools*

*Gottfredson Associates, Inc., 2000*

*<http://www.gottfredson.com/national.html>*



# Prevalence and Incidence

## **Violent Crimes Against Teachers**

On average, each year there are 133,700 violent crimes against teachers at school and 217,400 thefts from teachers at school, as reported by teachers from both public and private schools.

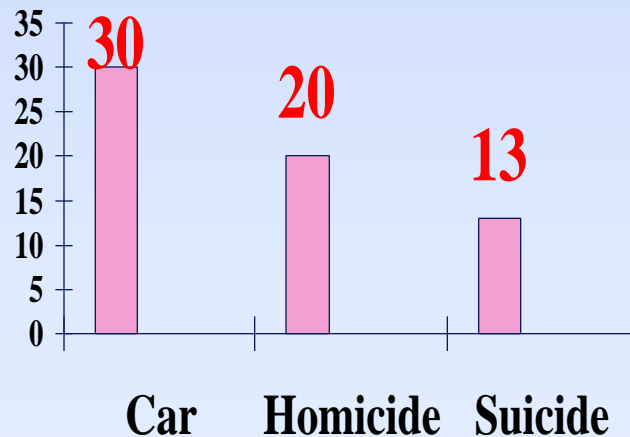
*Source: 2000 Annual Report on School Safety,  
Department of Education and Department of Justice, 2000*

*<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SDFS/annrept00.pdf>*

# LEADING CAUSES OF DEATH FOR CHILDREN

63% of all deaths among youths have 3 causes:

- ◆ ACCIDENTS
- ◆ HOMICIDE
- ◆ SUICIDE



## ■ ANNUAL INCIDENCE

- ◆ 1 IN 4000 ELEMENTARY
- ◆ 1 IN 3000 JUNIOR HIGH
- ◆ 1 IN 1000 HIGH SCHOOL

# Homicide, Suicide, Violence

- Homicide and suicide together are the leading cause of death for adolescents
- Adolescent suicide has increased 300% in the last 40 years (2.7 / 100,000 to 14 / 100,000)  
*(we will discuss this further tomorrow)*
- One in 16 adolescents is a victim of a violent crime
- Children who witness violence frequently show emotional, academic & behavioral problems



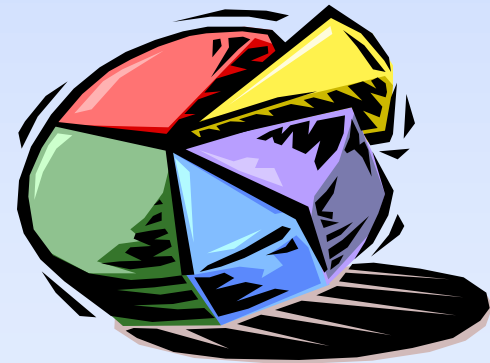
# Violent Death at School

- One child in 2 million dies violently in school yearly
- But one is too many!

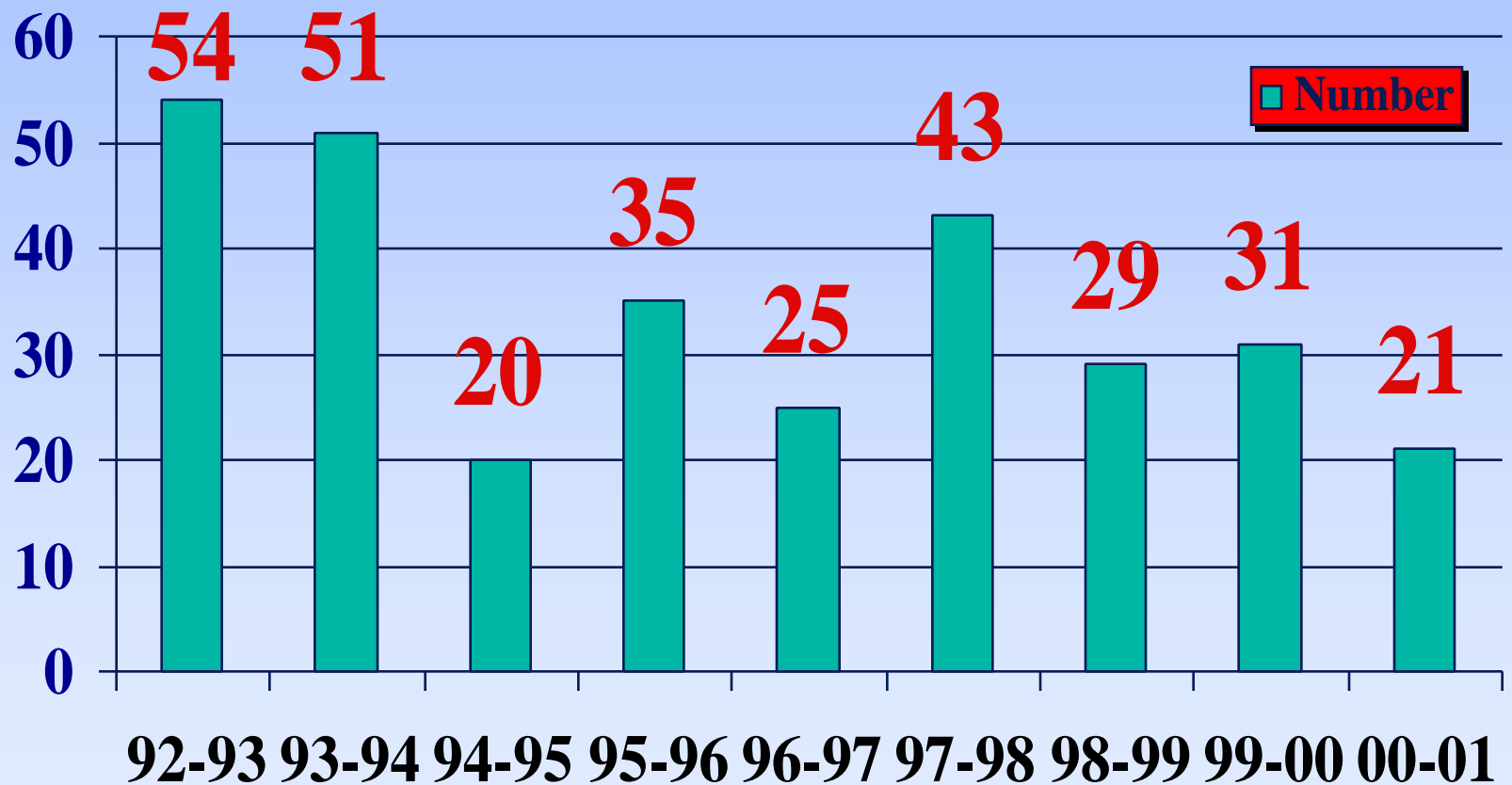


# School Associated Deaths

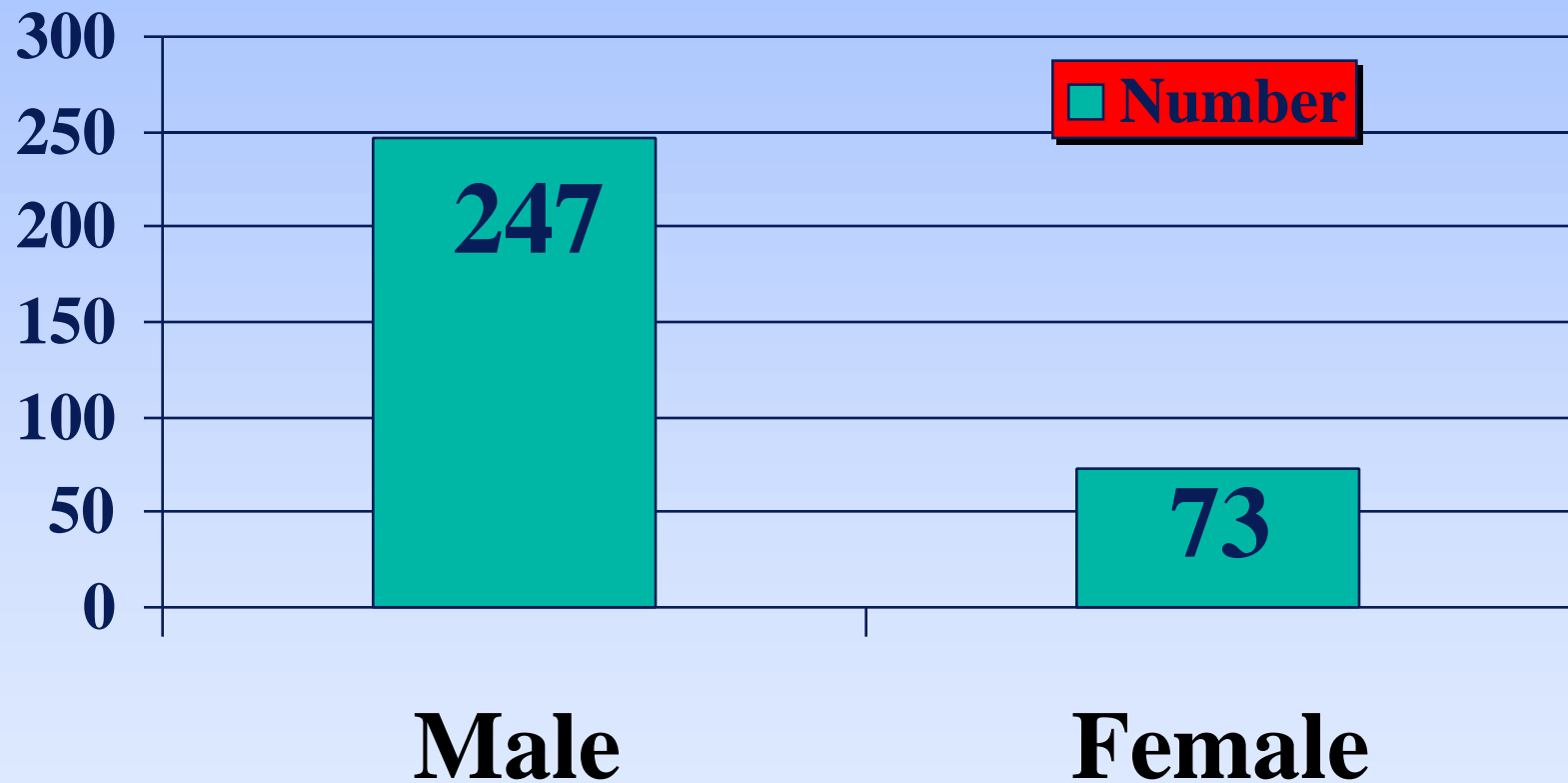
- Collected since 1992-93
- 320 Total
- What are the facts?



# Number Deaths by Year

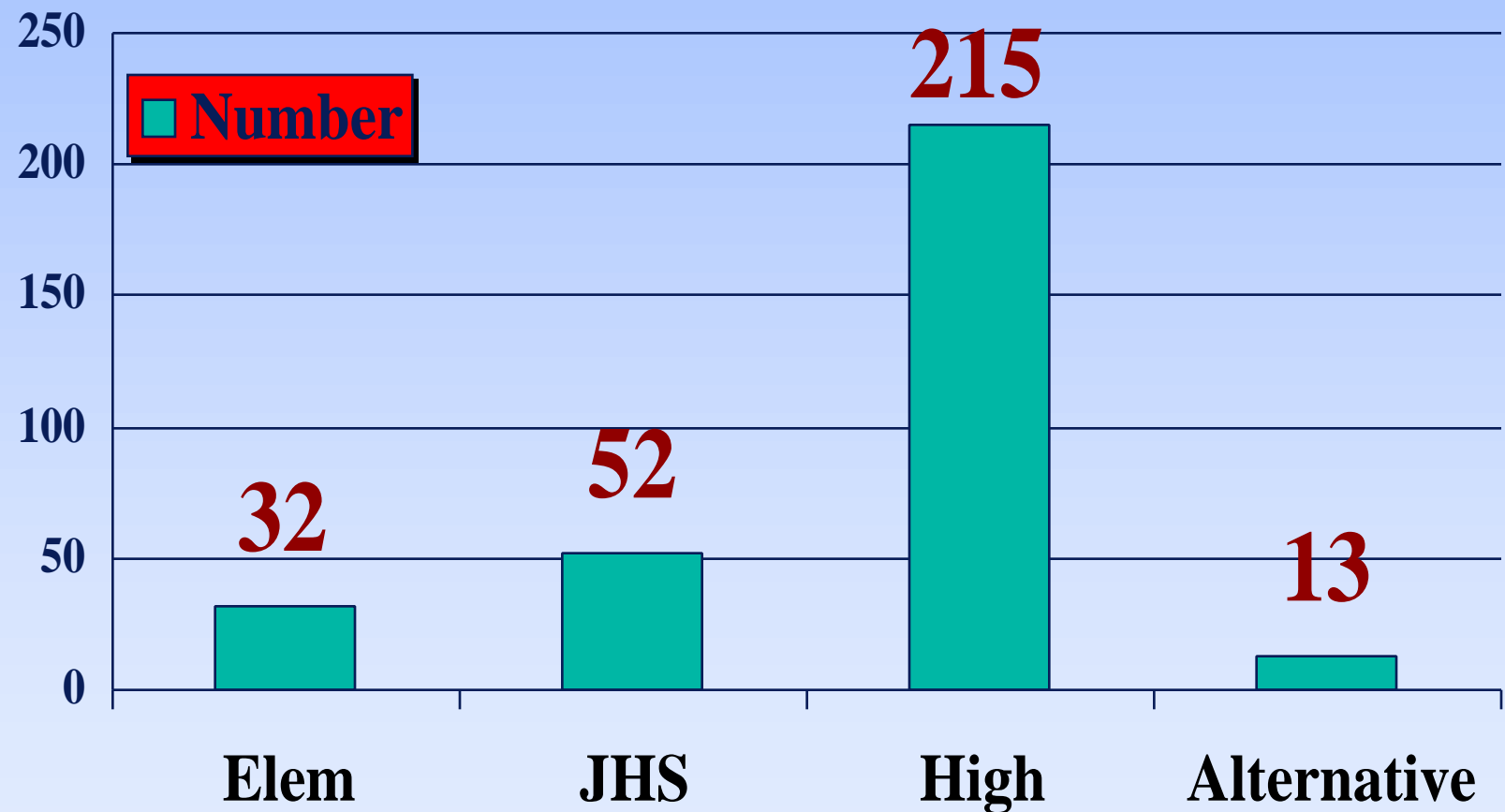


# Gender Patterns, Victims



**Nearly all male perpetrators**

# Deaths by Type of School



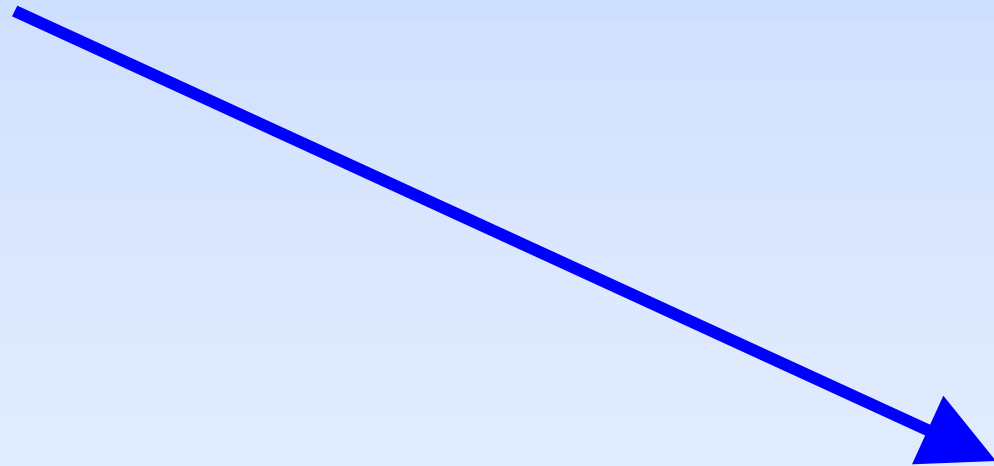
# Schools Deaths: Other Patterns

- Adults involved in about 20%
- Murder-Suicide pattern -- up
- 75% involved a gun
- “Unknown” #1 origin
- Interpersonal Dispute #2

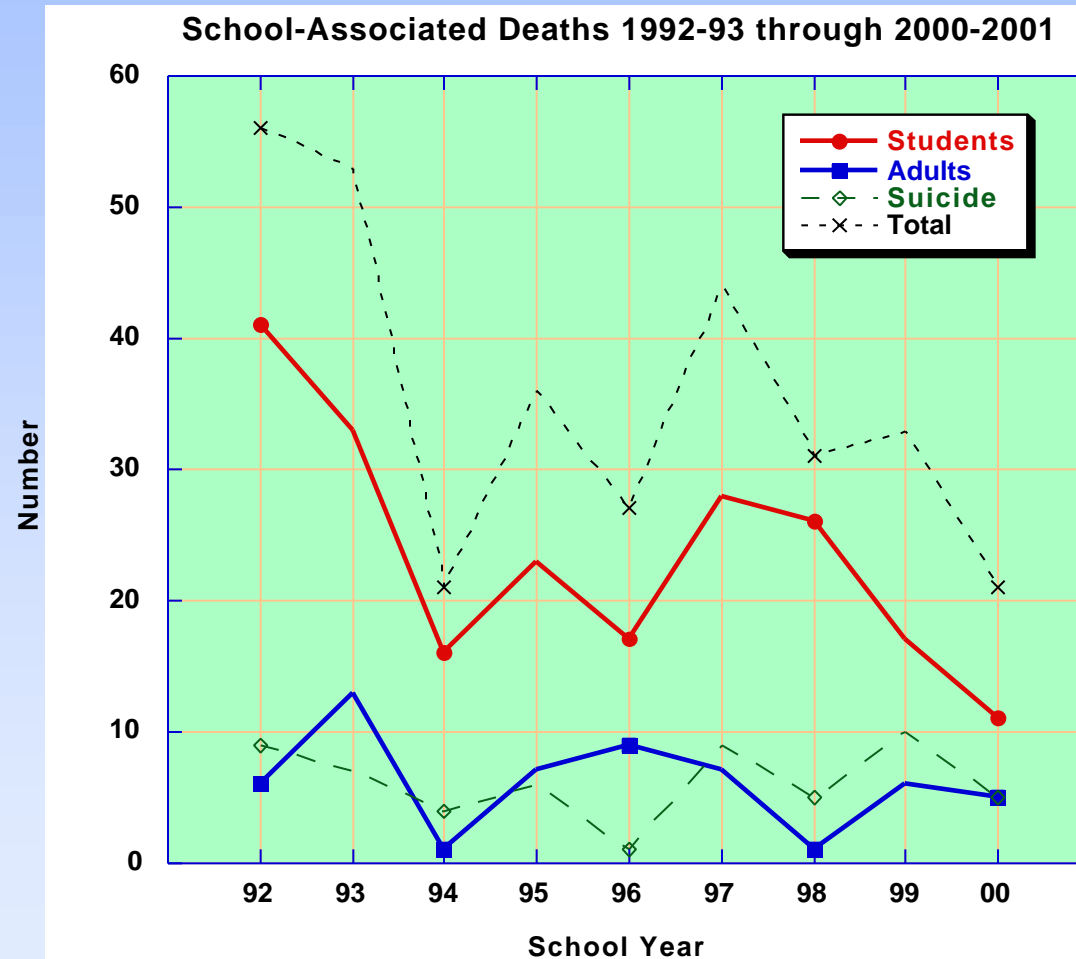
# School Associated Deaths

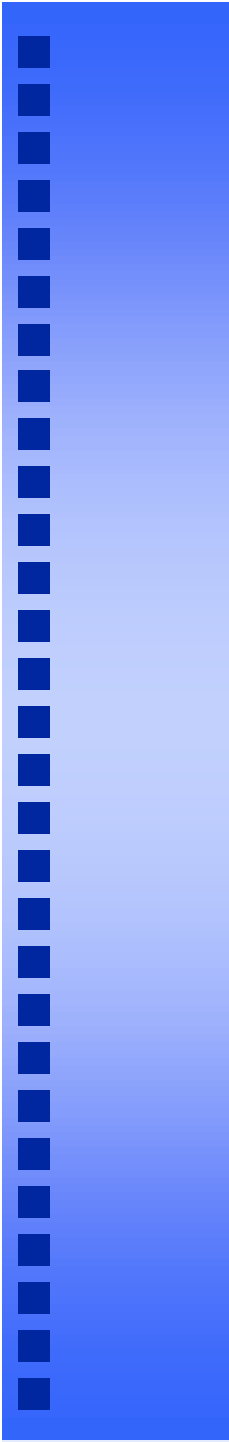
■ 63% DECREASE

Since 1992-93



# Not Just Students...





School's Have been  
Remarkably Successful in  
Reducing Dangers

Yet, all must be prepared.  
Many other types of harm occur



# Catch them Early?

- Secret Service
- Dallas Public Schools
- Threat Assessment
- Early Warning, Timely Response

# SECRET SERVICE REPORT: PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

- ① Incidents of targeted violence at school are rarely impulsive. The attacks are typically the end result of an understandable and often discernible process of thinking and behavior.
- ② Prior to most incidents, the attacker told someone about his idea or plan.
- ③ There is no accurate or useful profile of “the school shooter.”



# **SECRET SERVICE REPORT: PRELIMINARY FINDINGS**

- ④ Most attackers had previously used guns and had access to them.
- ⑤ Most shooting incidents were not resolved by law enforcement intervention.
- ⑥ In many cases, other students were involved in some capacity.



# **SECRET SERVICE REPORT: PRELIMINARY FINDINGS**

- ⑦ In a number of cases, having been bullied played a key role in the attack.
- ⑧ Most attackers engaged in some behavior, prior to the incident, that caused others concern or indicated a need for help.

# **SECRET SERVICE REPORT: SOME INVESTIGATIVE MISTAKES**

- ⑦ Ignoring behaviors**
- ⑦ Failing to get LE involved**
- ⑦ Disregarding established P&P**
- ⑦ Failure to notify targets**
- ⑦ Not conducting threat assessment**

# THREAT ASSESSMENT

- **“Threat or risk assessment is the process of assessing risks to a particular target, group of individuals, or individual, and designing and implementing intervention and management strategies to reduce that risk or threat.”** (Mohandie, 1999)

# THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAMS

- Educator
- Security/School police
- Community law enforcement
- Mental health
- Legal counsel

# THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAMS: *TASKS*

- Review information
- Advise decision making process
- Evaluate and recommend options with safety and individual rights considered
- Delegate tasks for follow up
- Document

# THREAT ASSESSMENT

- Warning signs/Clues
- Risk factors
- Precipitating events
- Stabilizing factors
- Threat assessment

# **THREAT ASSESSMENT**

**Is the person moving in a path towards violent action? Is there evidence?**

- Motivation?
- Has there been communication?
- Unusual interest in targeted violence?
- Evidence of attack-related behaviors/planning

# THREAT ASSESSMENT

- Mental illness?
- Level of cognitive sophistication/organization
- Any relevant losses?
- Level of consistency between communication and behaviors
- Concern by others?
- Environmental/Situational factors

# Dallas Public Schools: Violence Risk Assessment

- Details
- Time
- Access to weapons
- Viability of plan
- Discipline Record
- Academic Performance
- Exposure to Violence
- Previous Threats
- Victim of Violence or Abuse
- Cruelty to Animals
- Victim of discrimination
- Gang Membership
- Family Support
- Empathy
- Interpersonal Skills
- Preoccupation /weapons
- Drug/ Alcohol Use

# SCHOOL VIOLENCE WARNING SIGNS



# PREDICTORS OF YOUTH VIOLENCE

- Child abuse
- Ineffective parenting
- Violence in the home
- Media violence
- Poverty
- Loss
  - ◆ Rejection
  - ◆ Humiliation
  - ◆ Prejudice
- Substance abuse
- Gun access

# SCHOOL VIOLENCE WARNING SIGNS

## VERBAL CLUES

- Threats
- Violent plan
- Recurrent suicide threats
- Wish to kill, be killed and die  
(Menninger Triad)

# SCHOOL VIOLENCE WARNING SIGNS

## BIZZARE THOUGHTS

- Delusions
- Paranoia
- Command Hallucinations
- Thought disturbance

# SCHOOL VIOLENCE WARNING SIGNS

## BEHAVIORAL

- Fighting, assault
- Weapon possession
- Firesetting
- Drawings or writings with violent themes
- Cruelty to animals
- Attire
- Intimidation of younger children

# SCHOOL VIOLENCE WARNING SIGNS

## OBSESSIONS

- Self as victim
- Grudges/Resentments
- Object of desire
- Perceived injustices
- Thoughts of death or violence

# **THREAT ASSESSMENT: IMMINENT RISK**

- Arrest/Hospitalization: Possession of firearm, detailed threats of lethal violence, suicide threat.
- Monitor for release
- Increase security
- Re-entry program
- Set boundaries
- Monitor

# THREAT ASSESSMENT: HIGH RISK

- Security
- Consider removal & notifications
- Psychological evaluation/consult
- Re-entry criteria
- Monitor
  
- If criteria met: Return to school/work

# THREAT ASSESSMENT: MODERATE/LOW RISK

- Minimum security
- Removal versus limits: boundary probing
- Return to school agreement
- Psychological referral
- Upgrade criteria
- Monitor

# SAFETY SUGGESTIONS

- Increase security at arrival and dismissal times
- Provide ID cards for students
- Anonymous tip program
- Increase legislated penalties and treat schools like airports.
- Use parent volunteers

# SAFETY SUGGESTIONS

## (2)

- Limit access and have all visitors sign in
- School uniforms
- Use of metal detectors
- Target hardening
- Remove faculty restrooms

# SAFETY SUGGESTIONS

(3)

- Clear book bags
- Surveillance cameras
- Remove student lockers
- Re-entry program for the expelled
- Violence prevention curricula

# SAFE SCHOOL INITIATIVE

- AN INTERIM REPORT ON THE PREVENTION OF TARGETED VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS
- U.S Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center
  - Departments of Education/Justice
    - [www.treas.gov/usss](http://www.treas.gov/usss)



# **ANTI-VIOLENCE CURRIULUM PROGRAMS**

## **■ PROTHROW- STITH**

Violence Prevention  
Curriculum for  
Adolescents

Education Development  
Center

55 Chapel Street

Newton, MA 02160

(617) 969-7100

## **■ SECOND STEP**

COMMITTEE FOR  
CHILDREN

172 20th Avenue

Seattle, Washington  
98122

(800) 634-4449

# VIOLENCE PREVENTION

- Conflict resolution
- Anger management
- Peer helper programs
- Center for the Study and Prevention of  
Violence: University of Colorado  
(303) 492-8465



# **VIOLENCE PREVENTION**

**EARLY WARNING  
TIMELY RESPONSE**

■ **U.S. Department of Education**

**[www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov)**

■ **U.S. Department of Justice**

**[www.usdoj.gov](http://www.usdoj.gov)**

# Early Warning: Timely Response

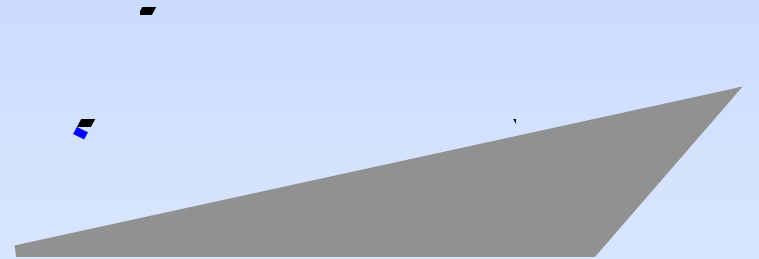
- Resource available online



Dwyer, Osher, & Warger, 1998  
Early warning, timely response: A guide to safe schools  
U.S. Department of Education  
U.S. Department of Justice

<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/OSEP/earlywrn.html>

# Action Guide Model



# Build a Schoolwide Foundation - Level 1

- Support positive discipline, academic success, and mental and emotional wellness through a caring school environment, teaching appropriate behaviors and problem solving skills, positive behavioral support and appropriate academic instruction.

*Many*

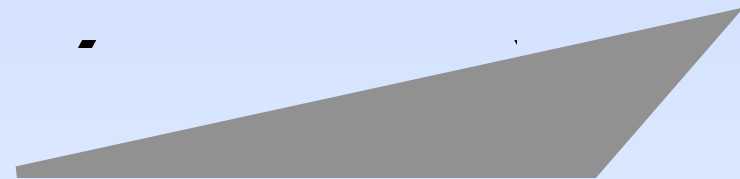


# Schoolwide, Level 1

- These approaches alone are sufficient for most students' needs, but they will not address fully the needs of all students. However, an effective foundation makes it easier to identify students who require additional interventions and increases the effectiveness of all interventions--both early and intensive.

# Action Guide Model

- Responding to Early Warning Signs
- Early Intervention
- Prevention
- Reconnecting Relationships



## Intervene Early, Level 2

- Create services and supports that address risk factors and build protective factors for students at risk for severe academic or behavioral difficulties.

10%

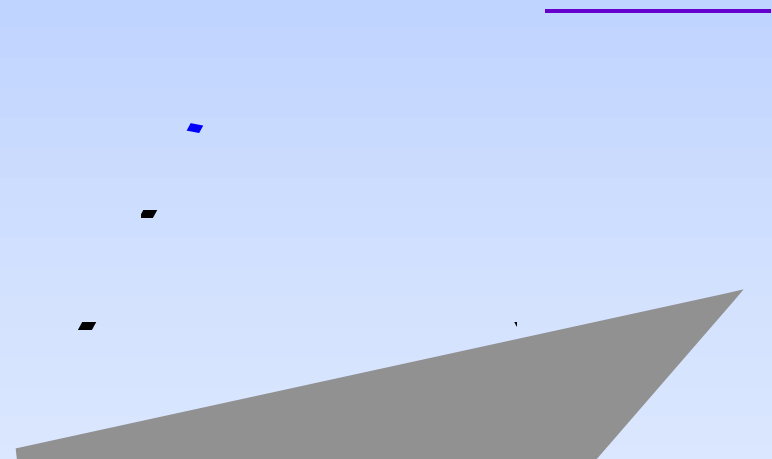


# Early Intervention, Level 2

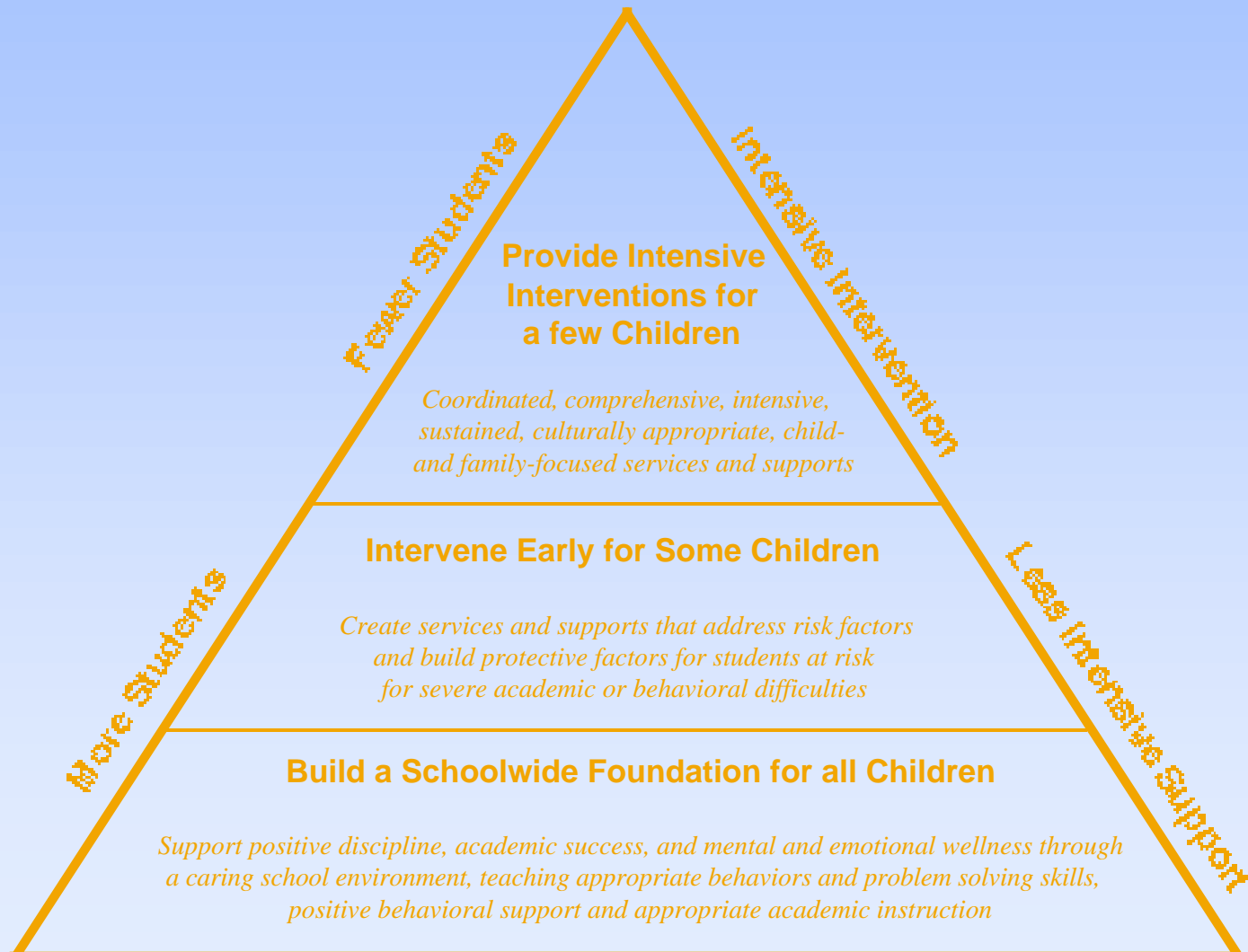
- Early intervention is necessary for those students who are at risk of academic failure or behavior problems. Early intervention, along with an appropriate foundation, is sufficient for almost all students.

# Action Guide Model

- Intensive Interventions
- Crisis Response
- Reconstructing Relationships



# Summary of Action Guide



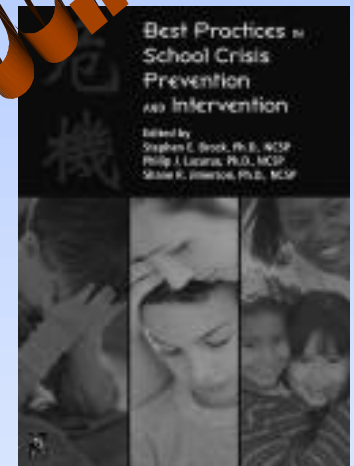
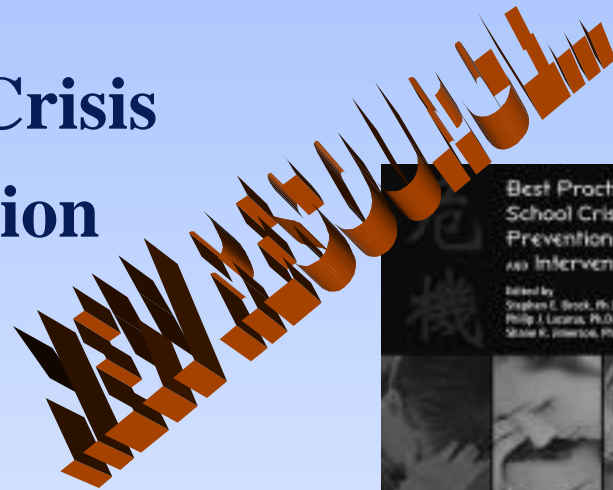
# VIOLENCE PREVENTION

## Best Practices in School Crisis Prevention and Intervention

Brock, Lazarus, & Jimerson (2002)

### *Related Chapters:*

2. Enabling Prevention Through Planning
7. The Prevention of School Violence
9. Bullying in Schools: A Review of Prevention Programs
12. Aggression Replacement Training
13. Identifying Troubled Youth





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