The Office of Infrastructure Protection

National Protection and Programs Directorate
Department of Homeland Security

Conducting Security Assessments:
A Guide for Schools and Houses of Worship

Office of Infrastructure Protection

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How To

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Welcome

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Primary Objectives

- To describe the importance of conducting a security assessment
- To describe the value of a team-based approach to conducting a security assessment
- To identify potential team members and their contributions
- To describe the process for conducting a comprehensive security assessment
- To identify common security vulnerabilities and potential protective measures
- To describe how to promote a security culture

Topic Overview

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Security Assessment

- Is an ongoing process
- Provides a basis for planning and implementing protective and mitigation measures
- Includes more than just the physical environment

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Assessment Team Functions

- Information gathering
- Interviewing key personnel
- Assessing security measures
- Identifying vulnerabilities
- Setting priorities
- Planning for enhanced measures

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Forming an Assessment Team

- Benefits of a team-based approach
- Considerations for selecting team members
- Lessons learned

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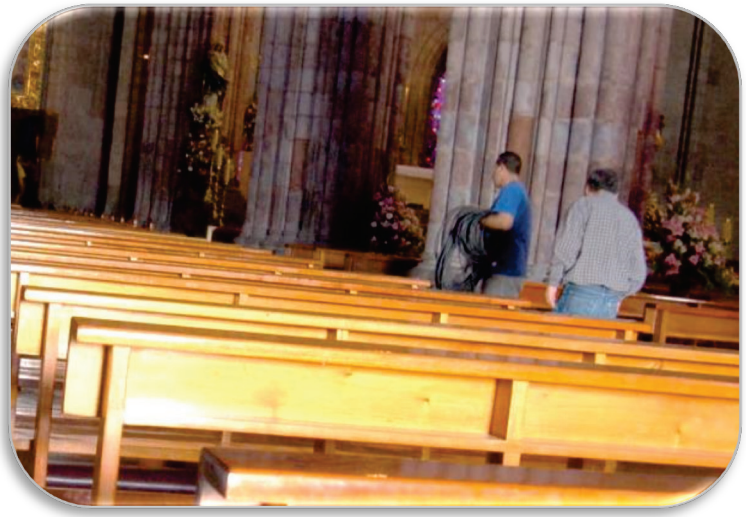
Conducting the Assessment: Overview

- Review past incidents and threat assessments
- Identify existing policy and procedures
- Consider the surrounding community
- Plan a detailed walk through
- Interview key personnel
- Identify existing resources
- Report on findings



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Inherent Vulnerability

Dynamic Environments

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Planning the Assessment

- Gather data about how your facility is used
- Prepare a sketch or graphic of the facility
- Develop a systematic assessment approach

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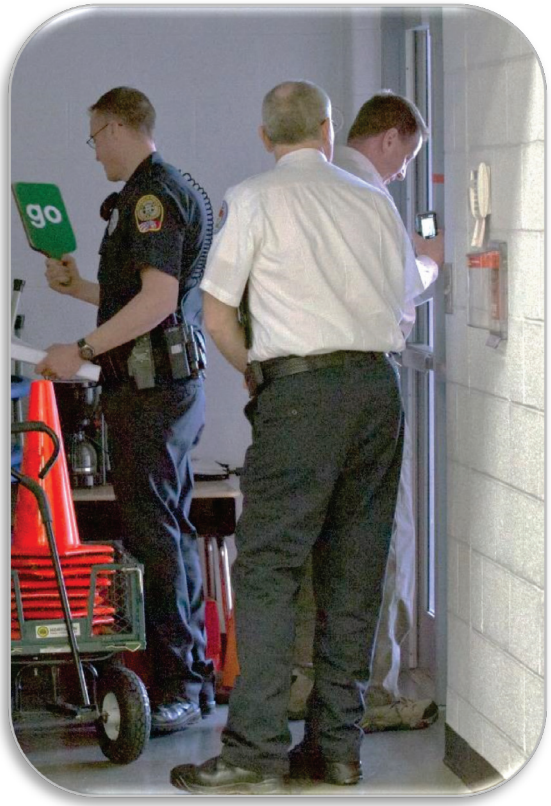
Conducting Your Assessment

- Consider each area both from the viewpoint of:
  - People who will be using the space
  - Potential perpetrators intending harm
- Stand or sit and thoroughly observe the area
- Make notes about each space
- Do not rush, even in familiar areas



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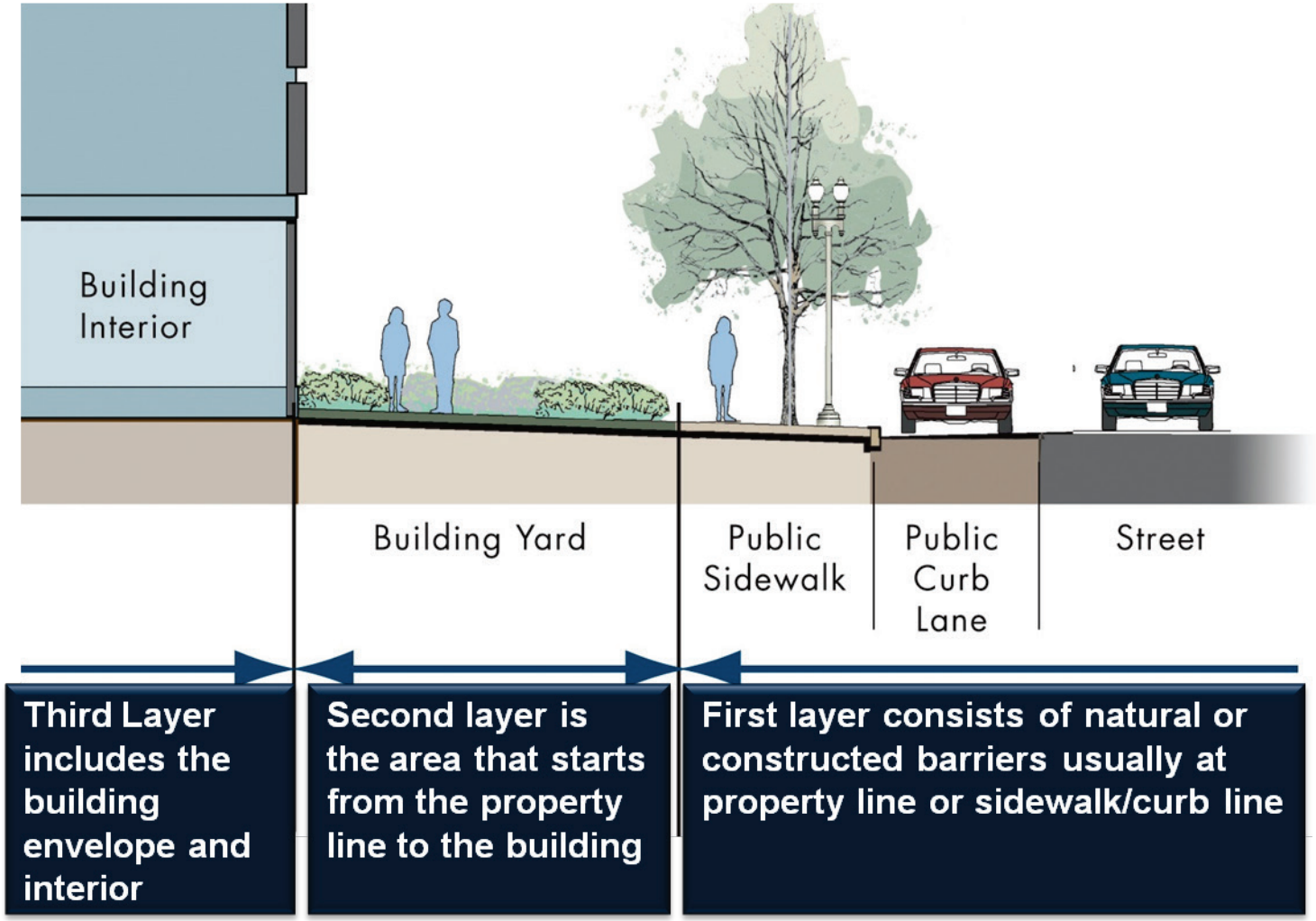
Layers of Security



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Source: Primer to Design Safe School Projects in Case of Terrorist Attacks and School Shootings

Neighborhood: Assessment

- Security threats and existing resources
- Clearly marked property lines
- Traffic patterns
- Hiding points

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Neighborhood Assessment: What Do You See?

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Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)

- Natural surveillance
- Natural access control
- Territorial maintenance

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Landscaping & Lighting: What Do You See?

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Vehicle and Parking Areas: Assessment

- Loading, drop off, and fire zones are clearly marked
- Parking lots are bordered by a physical barrier
- Parking lots are adequately lighted
- Parking lots can be viewed from the building or monitored by security

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Outdoor Recreation: Assessment

- Surveillance or supervision
- Unauthorized access restricted
- Vehicular access restricted
- Emergency vehicles access

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Open Events: Access Control Strategies

- Create temporary boundaries or perimeters for the event area
- Use staff or trained volunteers to greet and observe attendees
- Reduce chaos by controlling traffic and crowd movement
- Identify event personnel with name tags, vests, and t-shirts
- Request local law enforcement to patrol the area

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Entry and Access Control: Assessment

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Entry and Access Control: Assessment

- Signage to preferred entrances
- Alternative methods for control
- Controlling number of unlocked entrances
- Alarms or other notification systems
- High-tech (cameras) and low-tech (peepholes, intercoms)
- Locking, securing, and reinforcing windows

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Closed-Circuit Television

Advantages

- Deters criminal activities
- Improves safety
- Maintains records

Disadvantages

- Can only monitor limited areas
- Requires people to be vigilant for real-time monitoring
- May be expensive to install and maintain
- May create a perception of mistrust and privacy concerns

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Information and Cyber Security

- Controlling the release of sensitive information (e.g., building plans, response procedures, personal identifiable information)
- Protecting cyber systems from attack

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Communication Systems: Assessment

- Mass notification systems and procedures
- Communications system for staff and volunteers
- Communication systems testing
- Backup, redundant systems
- Communications plan and rumor control

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Emergency Procedures: Assessment

- Ease of implementing lockdown procedures
- Standard messages or commands – crowd control
- Clear marking of emergency exits and evacuation routes
- Designated individuals to coordinate evacuation
- Emergency kits with site and floor plans
- Procedure drills with law enforcement and first responders

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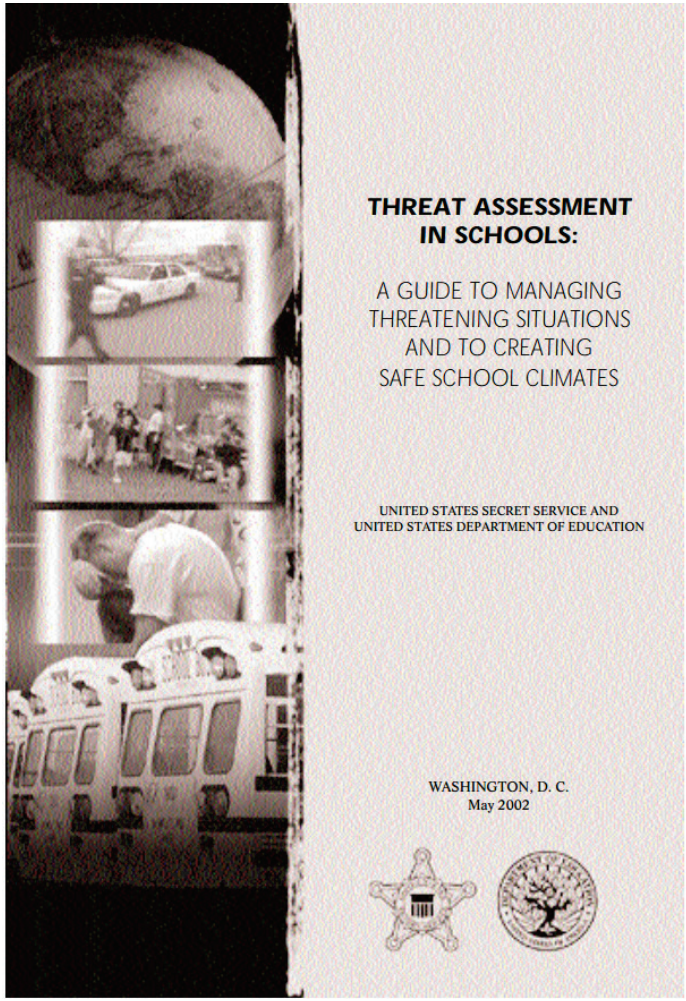
Threat Assessment Process



- Identify potential behavioral indicators
- Establish a threat assessment process
  - Conduct by interdisciplinary team of trained professionals
  - Requires clear policy and protocols
  - Depends on a climate of trust
  - Includes evaluating a threat and determining an effective response
  - Provides supportive interventions to potential offenders.

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Promoting a Security Culture

- Educate on detecting potential threats
- Establish procedures for reporting and investigating potential threats
- Encourage reporting security concerns
- Enlist volunteers

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"If You See Something, Say Something™"

- The campaign is a simple and effective program to raise public awareness to the potential indicators of terrorism and terrorism-related crime, and to emphasize the importance of reporting suspicious activity to the proper state and local law enforcement authorities
- Underscores the critical role that the public plays in keeping our nation safe
- To participate in the campaign at your facility contact DHS at 202-282-8010

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Questions and Answers

Do you have any questions?

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For more information visit:
www.dhs.gov/criticalinfrastructure