

SECURITY

**10 KEY FINDINGS FROM THE US
SECRET SERVICE'S TARGETED
SCHOOL FINDING REPORT**



Thomas Protective Service, Inc.

A National Security Service Provider

Office 972 | 972.3686
Email Info@ThomasProtective.com
Website ThomasProtective.com



The U.S. Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC) released a report on targeted school violence Thursday, concluding most of the school shootings that happened in the last decade were preventable.

The report, “[Protecting America’s Schools: A U.S. Secret Service Analysis of Targeted School Violence](#),” was based on the analysis of 41 incidents of targeted school violence that occurred at K-12 schools from 2008 to 2017 and found most of the shooters had displayed threatening or suspicious behavior that went unreported.

The report concluded that in 80% of the shootings, the attackers’ behavior was so alarming it “elicited concern from bystanders regarding the safety of the attacker or those around them.”

“These are not sudden, impulsive acts where a student suddenly gets disgruntled,” said NTAC Chief Lina Alathari. “The majority of these incidents are preventable.”

The organization said many of the tragedies could have been avoided if the school systems had implemented prevention measures to identify students of concern and assess their potential risk for engaging in violence or other harmful activities, according to [ABC News](#).

“The threshold for [intervention](#) should be low so that schools can identify students in distress before their behavior escalates to the level of eliciting concerns about safety,” the report said. “Because most of these attacks ended very quickly, law enforcement rarely had the opportunity to intervene before serious harm was caused to students or staff.”

The report also noted most of the schools (**80%**) where these violent incidents occurred had some type of physical security measure in place, further emphasizing the need to implement prevention strategies to manage the risk of school violence.

The report identified 10 key findings among the incidents, including:

1. There is no profile of a student attacker, nor is there a profile for the type of school that has been targeted
2. Attackers usually had multiple motives, most commonly involving grievances with classmates (**63%**)
3. Most attackers (**61%**) used firearms and those who did most often acquired the weapon from the home of a parent or other relative (**76%**)
4. Most attackers (**91%**) struggled with their **mental health**, exhibiting psychological (**69%**), behavioral (**57%**) and developmental (**20%**) symptoms
5. Half of the attackers had interests in violent topics
6. All attackers experienced social stressors involving their relationships with peers and/or romantic partners
7. Nearly every attacker (**94%**) experienced negative home life factors
8. Most attackers were victims of bullying (**80%**), which was often observed by others
9. Most attackers had a history of school disciplinary actions (**71%**) and many had prior contact with law enforcement (**49%**)
10. All attackers exhibited concerning behaviors; most elicited concern from others (**80%**) and most communicated their intent to attack (**66%**)

The report findings will be used to train school and law enforcement officials on how to better identify potential attackers and how to stop them.

Report authors place the responsibility of **student safety** not only on school staff and law enforcement officials but on mental health practitioners, government officials and the general public.

“School safety is our collective responsibility as a nation and we must remain one step ahead of tragedy,” Alathari said.

The signs all are urged to look out for include increased anger, displayed interest in weapons and violence, depression or isolation, self-harm or a sudden change in behavior.