



School Safety Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 4

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Suspicious Activity at Schools and Campuses: Why What Happens Locally is Important to the State, and How You Can Help

The Statewide Terrorism & Intelligence Center (STIC) is an information hub of suspicious activity throughout the state. Suspicious activity is reported to STIC by law enforcement and used to track trends within our state. The information is disseminated to those who need to know in order to protect our partners, including those involved in the School Safety Information Sharing program. Often, previous suspicious activity is reported to law enforcement only after something more suspicious happens or a crime has been committed.

In order to help prevent crime and protect the public, what is happening in your area matters in regards to protecting not only your school and campus but also to the state, and potentially the nation. Understanding what suspicious activity is and what should be reported to your local law enforcement is an important first step.

Below are the Seven Signs of Terrorism and their definitions as outlined by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Included are examples of suspicious activity at schools and campuses that should be reported to law enforcement. There are overlapping behaviors between the Seven Signs of Terrorism, the path to violence, the patterns and warning signs of a school shooter, and of a student becoming radicalized. These behaviors individually may not mean anything, but by reporting the suspicious activity, the information can be analyzed by your local law enforcement and STIC to get at-risk students help, prevent violence, and protect the public from all crimes and all hazards.

1. Surveillance – Someone recording or monitoring activities, including the use of cameras (both still and video), note taking, drawing diagrams, writing on maps, or using binoculars or any other vision enhancing device.
 - a. Person(s) with a hit list of students, staff, or a map of the school or campus.
 - b. Person(s) taking pictures of security cameras, entrances, or exits.
2. Elicitation – Anyone or any organization attempting to gain information by mail, e-mail, telephone, or in person about operations at a school or campus.
 - a. Questions regarding security guards or law enforcement present.
 - b. Inquiries by a person without a need to know about building plans or pictures of the building, where the boiler room is or other mechanical equipment within the school, or asking about the food vendor or where/when food is delivered.
 - c. Possession of instructions or reading material that could motivate criminal activity.
3. Tests of Security – Any attempts to measure reaction times to security breaches or to penetrating physical security barriers or procedures.
 - a. Entering school or campus to see how long it takes to be questioned or stopped.
 - b. Person(s) waiting to enter a locked building behind someone who has access (called ‘piggy backing’).

*Protecting our
future through
information
sharing*

In This Issue

- Suspicious Activity at Schools and Campuses: Why What Happens Locally is Important to the State, and How You Can Help
- How did ‘Good Girls’ from Colorado get recruited by ISIS?
- Next Monthly Webinar - December 3, 2014
- Types of Americans Joining Islamic Extremists Vary Greatly, FBI says.
- 11 Facts about Teen Dating Violence.
- Teenage Boy May Have Shot Up School Because Girlfriend Broke Up with Him.

Suspicious Activity at Schools and Campuses: Why What Happens Locally is Important to the State, and How You Can Help (continued)

4. Acquiring Supplies – Purchasing, acquiring, or stealing weapons, ammunition, uniforms, explosives, decals, money, passes or badges (or the equipment to manufacture them), and any other controlled items.
 - a. Sudden interest in talking about or collecting weapons.
 - b. Suddenly starting to give away, trade, or sell majority of personal belongings.
 - c. Recent increase in cash.
5. Suspicious Persons Out of Place – People who don't seem to belong to the school, campus, or neighborhood.
 - a. Vehicle with a person inside that appears to be watching or taking pictures for long periods of time.
 - b. Person(s) who is at a school or a campus that has no need to be there.
6. Dry Run – Someone getting into position and moving about without actually committing a crime, a school shooting, or a bombing. An element of this activity could also include mapping out routes and determining the timing of personnel schedules and routines.
 - a. Timing how long it takes to get somewhere on school or campus.
 - b. Trying to sneak a weapon into a building, placing objects in odd locations, or trying to enter a building in an unusual way.
7. Deploying Assets – People and supplies getting into position to commit the act. This is the last opportunity to alert authorities before the crime/act of violence occurs.
 - a. Person(s) appearing nervous or unusually suspicious for unknown reasons.
 - b. Previous communication to peers about something bad happening.

If you are law enforcement and are unfamiliar with STIC, please feel free reach out to me. schoolsafety@isp.state.il.us

How Did 'Good Girls' From Colorado Get Recruited by ISIS?

<http://www.npr.org/2014/10/22/358120443/how-did-good-girls-from-colorado-get-recruited-by-isis>

Three Denver-area teenaged girls were arrested after leaving the U.S. and seeking to join militants of the Islamic State in Syria. The teenagers were arrested in Germany over the weekend and returned home by the FBI on Monday. Robert Siegel talks to Megan Verlee of Colorado Public Radio.

ROBERT SIEGEL, HOST:

Three teenage girls from the Denver area apparently tried to join the so-called Islamic State. The girls, ages 15, 16 and 17, were reported missing by their parents on Friday. They were later stopped in Germany at the Frankfurt airport en route to Turkey. For more details, Colorado Public Radio's Megan Verlee joins us now. And Megan, walk us through the timeline of events here.

MEGAN VERLEE, BYLINE: Well, Robert, this started last Friday when the girls - they're two sisters and a friend - left the Denver area on a flight to Europe. And that night, their parents filed a missing persons report with local authorities and, at the time, it was treated as a fairly normal runaway case. When the girls arrived in Frankfurt that weekend, they were - or this past weekend - they were detained by German officials, who had been alerted to them by the U.S. according to the German Interior Ministry. And not too long after that, they were on a flight home to Colorado. Once the girls got back here, they did have some contact with the FBI, although the FBI is not saying what kind and they were returned to their parents.

SIEGEL: And what have you learned about these three young women?

VERLEE: Well, the sisters in this case are of Somali descent. Their friend is Sudanese. And as we've said before, they're aged 15, 16 and 17. They're all high school students. These young women did not tell their parents about their plans, but they did let their classmates know via Twitter about what they were doing, and some of those classmates actually went to school officials because they were quite worried. I spoke with Tustin Amole, who's a spokeswoman for the Cherry Creek School District where those girls attend high school, and she had this to say.

TUSTIN AMOLE: These are good girls. We've never had a history of issues with them. We've never seen indication of any propensity for violence.

**Monthly
Webinars!**

First
Wednesday
of Every
Month at 10
am.

**Next
Webinar -
December 3,
2014**

Each webinar
has a round
table discussion
at the end.
Questions are
always
welcome!

To participate, you
must be a vetted
member. For more
information please
email
[schoolsafety@isp.
state.il.us](mailto:schoolsafety@isp.state.il.us)

How Did ‘Good Girls’ From Colorado Get Recruited by ISIS? (continued)

VERLEE: As far as the school district is concerned, they seem to be treating these girls as victims. The spokesperson went on to describe the possibility that they might've been lured into this by what Amole describes as online predators.

SIEGEL: Now, there have been some other high-profile cases in Colorado of young people trying to aid radical Islamic groups. What about some of those other incidents?

VERLEE: Earlier this year, 19-year-old Shannon Conley was arrested at Denver International Airport as she was trying to make her way to Syria. Conley told FBI she'd recently converted to Islam and became radicalized online, and that's also where she met a purported ISIS fighter whom she had agreed to marry and was trying to travel to meet with. Conley pled guilty to one count of conspiracy to provide material support to a terrorist organization and she's due to be sentenced later this year.

And then back in 2009, Jamie Ramirez left Colorado to marry a member of an Islamic extremist group in Ireland. Authorities believe he planned to use her American citizenship to help him launch attacks. She's currently serving an 8-year sentence.

SIEGEL: And Megan, this is an unusual case, this most recent one, in that we have three girls, they're minors and the overt act that they took was to effectively to fly to Germany - I mean, to try to fly to Turkey. What kind of charges might they face for doing that, now that they're back with their parents?

VERLEE: Well, that's a big question and my understanding is that when it comes to federal courts, there are very strict rules about keeping juvenile cases sealed. So we might not learn what charges authorities are investigating or even if they eventually bring them.

And it's important to remember that one big thing we still don't know in all of this, as you just described there, is how far the girls actually got in their planning and how much contact they may have really had with anyone from the Islamic State. I think whatever investigators turn up on that will have a lot of bearing on how authorities end up handling this case.

Types of Americans Joining Islamic Extremists Vary Greatly, FBI Says

<http://online.wsj.com/articles/types-of-americans-joining-islamic-extremists-vary-greatly-fbi-says-1415032038>

Updated Nov. 3, 2014 7:18 p.m. ET

NEW YORK—The U.S. faces a tough hurdle in identifying Americans seeking to join Islamic extremists in part because there is “no typical profile” of those seeking to join the fight, Federal Bureau of Investigation Director James Comey said on Monday.

Federal law-enforcement officials have become increasingly concerned about the threat posed by Americans and other holders of Western passports who travel to join extremist groups in Syria, especially Islamic State.

Mr. Comey said such people range in age from teenagers to 63-year-olds and come from all ethnic groups and walks of life.

“The challenge of the traveler phenomenon is there’s no typical profile,” he said in response to an audience question after delivering a speech at Fordham Law School here. “As best we can determine, the common feature is they are troubled souls who are seeking some kind of meaning in their life.”

On Monday, the Department of Homeland Security said it would begin collecting more information from travelers coming to the U.S. from countries whose citizens don’t need visas. That includes many European countries, from which thousands of citizens have traveled to Syria. DHS Secretary Jeh Johnson said the U.S. would begin asking for more passport data, contact information and other names or aliases. Such information could be used to conduct more thorough checks against government watch lists.

People who try to join extremist groups overseas typically are influenced by online propaganda, meet someone on the Internet who pushes them toward violence and meet two or three like-minded people online, Mr. Comey said.

“Those three ingredients act together on the troubled mind to sort of lure them into thinking, ‘That’s where I’ll find some sort of meaning in my life,’ ” he said. “Finding a typical person, a physical being in which that troubled mind sits, is actually something that’s eluded us.”

The FBI has been trying to short-circuit that process. In a number of cases, the agency has arrested individuals who try to join terrorist groups after interacting with a person they thought was a fellow extremist. Instead, that person turned out to be working with the FBI.

More than 16,000 foreigners from more than 90 countries have traveled to join the fight in Syria, including more than 2,700 Westerners, said John Carlin, head of the Justice Department’s national security division. More than 100 Americans have traveled or attempted to travel to the region. But that number includes some who didn’t join extremist groups, he said. Officials believe a dozen or so Americans have joined Islamic State.

11 Facts About Teen Dating Violence

<https://www.dosomething.org/facts/11-facts-about-teen-dating-violence>

1. Roughly 1.5 million high school boys and girls in the U.S. admit to being intentionally hit or physically harmed in the last year by someone they are romantically involved with.
2. Teens who suffer dating abuse are subject to long-term consequences like alcoholism, eating disorders, promiscuity, thoughts of suicide, and violent behavior.
3. 1 in every 4 women will experience domestic violence in her lifetime. A lack of alternative housing often leads women to stay in or return to violent relationships.
4. 33% of adolescents in America are victim to sexual, physical, verbal, or emotional dating abuse.
5. In the U.S., 25% of high school girls have been abused physically or sexually. Teen girls who are abused this way are 6 times more likely to become pregnant or contract a sexually transmitted infection (STI).
6. Females between the ages of 16 and 24 are roughly 3 times more likely than the rest of the population to be abused by an intimate partner.
7. 8 States in the U.S. do not consider a violent dating relationship domestic abuse. Therefore, adolescents, teens, and 20-somethings are unable to apply for a restraining order for protection from the abuser.
8. Violent behavior often begins between 6th and 12th grade. 72% of 13 and 14-year-olds are "dating."
9. 50% of young people who experience rape or physical or sexual abuse will attempt to commit suicide.
10. A mere 1/3 of the teens who were involved in an abusive relationship confided in someone about the violence.
11. Teens who have been abused hesitate to seek help because they do not want to expose themselves or are unaware of the laws surrounding domestic violence.

Teenage Boy May Have Shot Up His School Because His Girlfriend Broke Up With Him

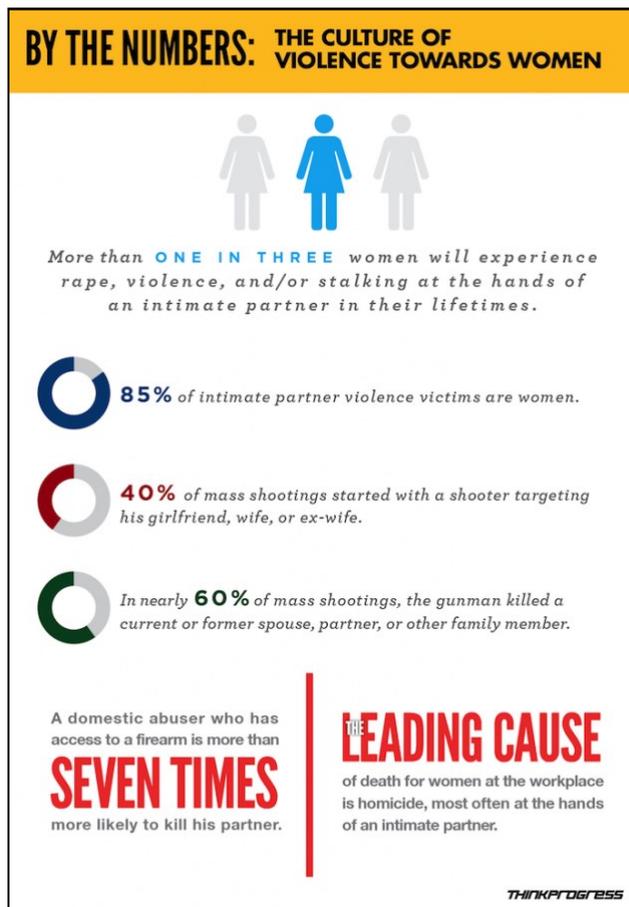
<http://thinkprogress.org/justice/2014/10/25/3584558/seattle-shooting-violence-against-women/>

Marysville-Pilchuck High School freshman Jaylen Fryberg shot three girls and two of his male cousins in the school cafeteria on October 24, 2014 in the morning before killing himself. One student told the Seattle Times that Fryberg was "angry about a romantic relationship he was involved in, and that the girl was one of the people shot." CNN reported that his girlfriend had just broken up with him.

If these early reports are accurate, Fryberg unfortunately joins a long list of men who commit violence against women who they feel have wronged them. Another young man, Elliott Rodger, opened fire on a Santa Barbara university campus earlier this year after becoming obsessed with punishing "every single blonde slut" who he felt had rejected him. Shortly after the Santa Barbara shooting, a website called "When Women Refuse" went viral, documenting how frequently women are targeted by men who feel slighted or rejected.

Forty percent of mass shootings start with the gunman targeting his wife, girlfriend, or ex. And access to firearms makes it seven times more likely that a domestic abuser will kill his partner.

Teenage girls are the most likely demographic to suffer at the hands of an abusive partner. While Fryberg's rampage took this violence to the extreme, a quarter of high school girls have been physically or sexually abused, sometimes starting as early as sixth grade. Many don't realize threats or violence is unusual, and therefore don't report it or try to get a restraining order.



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