

## CUBIT FORMATION GUIDE

### Second-generation (post Virginia Tech) Behavioral Intervention Team Best Practices

By: Brett A. Sokolow, JD

The post-Virginia Tech era shows a dramatic shift to proactive prevention as the majority of campuses move to implement or update behavioral intervention team practices. As these teams evolve and become more sophisticated, we must ask what best practices are evolving and what future transformations are in store?

CARE Teams and behavioral intervention functions existed on college campuses before Virginia Tech, but their nature, composition and function are changing dramatically as campuses adjust to new complexities of student mental illness and increasing violence. Revised models have evolved as a direct response to the Governor's Panel Report on the Virginia Tech shootings and other panel and internal review recommendations that have been made nationally. What sets second-generation models apart from prior intervention models can be explained in ten key elements:

1. Modern behavioral intervention teams use formalized protocols of explicit engagement techniques and strategies;
2. Modern behavioral intervention teams see their role as nominally to address threat, and primarily to support and provide resources to students;
3. Modern behavioral intervention teams utilize mandated psychological assessment and involuntary medical withdrawal policies;
4. Modern behavioral intervention teams are undergirded by sophisticated threat assessment capacity, beyond law enforcement and psychological assessment tools;
5. Modern behavioral intervention teams use risk rubrics to classify threats;
6. Modern behavioral intervention teams foster a comprehensive reporting culture within the institution;
7. Modern behavioral intervention teams train and educate the community on what to report and how;
8. Modern behavioral intervention teams are technologically advanced and are supported by comprehensive databases that allow the team to have a longitudinal view of a student's behavior patterns and trends;

9. Modern behavioral intervention teams focus not only on student-based risks, but on faculty and staff as well;
10. Modern behavioral intervention teams intentionally integrate with campus and community resources such as crisis management plans, emergency response procedures, CISDT protocols, and existing campus risk management programs addressing sex offenders, criminal background checks and admissions screenings.