AURORA UNIVERSITY

BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTION TEAM

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Aurora University

Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT)

Overview

Aurora University is committed to providing a safe and secure learning environment that is conducive for students to develop to their fullest potential. It is incumbent upon all members of our community --- students, faculty, staff, and administrators --- to assist the University in maintaining this commitment.

Aurora University cares about its students' success, not only academically, but emotionally and physically. Because of our commitment, we provide services across campus that respond to our students' unique needs. In an effort to proactively identify those students who are exhibiting behaviors of significant concern, Aurora University has created a team of professionals from across campus. The Behavioral Intervention Team is committed to a caring, confidential program of identification, intervention and response in order to provide our students with the greatest chance of success and to protect the safety of our community.

Mission

The mission of the Behavior Intervention Team (BIT) is to:

- Provide a systematic response to students whose behavior may be disturbing, dangerous or disruptive to themselves or other members of the university community.
- Assist in protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the students and other members of the Aurora University community.

Team Composition

The BIT for the Aurora University campus is chaired by the Vice President for Student Life. Other members of the team include:

Senior Vice President for Student Success
Vice President for Student Life
Dean of Students
Assistant Dean of Students/Director of Campus Life
Director of Counseling Services
Assistant Director of Campus Public Safety

Behavioral Intervention Team Case Manager
Athletics Representative
Faculty Representative

The BIT for the George Williams College campus is chaired by the Dean of Academic and Student Life. Other members of the team include:

Vice President for Academic and Student Life
Assistant Dean of Students/Director of Student Support Services – GWC
Director of Spiritual Programming

Team Purpose and Responsibilities

The purpose of the Behavioral Intervention Team is to:

- Receive reports of troubling student behavior
- Strive to understand a troubled student's life by gathering information from team members and other available resources
- Evaluate the facts to determine whether a student poses a risk of harm or is in need of additional assistance
- Recommend an intervention that connects the student to beneficial resources or de-escalates the threat posed, or both.

Specifically, the charge for this team is to:

- Assess situations involving a student who: poses a potential risk of harm to self, other persons, or property in the University community; is disruptive to University activities; or whose conduct seriously violates University standards or policies.

- Consult with administration, faculty, staff, and other students affected by the behaviors of a disruptive student in order to gather and assess information.

- Coordinate the University's response to a violent, threatening, or significantly disruptive student.

- Develop a specific strategy to manage the threatening or disruptive behavior of a student with regard to the safety and rights of others and to minimize the threat and/or disruption to the University community.

- Identify resources for disturbed, disturbing, or significantly troubled students and make referrals to appropriate campus and/or off-campus resources.

- Make recommendations to the Vice President for Student Life (Aurora) or Vice President of Academic and Student Life (GWC) on appropriate action consistent

with University policy and procedure statements and with applicable state and federal law.

Reporting Incidents to the Behavioral Intervention Team

Student Behavior Involving an Immediate Threat

For the Aurora campus, in cases where an imminent risk of violence to self or others exists or where safety is of immediate concern**,** the Department of Campus Public Safety should be contacted at **630-844-5450 or x555** (if calling from on campus). If Campus Public Safety Safety is not available, a call to 911 should be placed.

For the GWC campus, in cases where an imminent risk of violence to self or others exists or where safety is of immediate concern**,** a call to 9-911 should be placed. After calling 911, please follow up by calling 262-245-8509 and by contacting the Dean of Academic and Student Life.

Some examples of situations where the police should be contacted immediately:

- A student has access to weapons and is threatening to use them.
- A student is attempting suicide.
- A student otherwise indicates that he or she intends to do harm to self or others.

Student Behavior of Concern

Where the safety risk or threat of violence is not immediate, concerns about disturbed or disturbing behavior may be reported via the "Report It!" form, available on the Aurora University intranet. Reports will be forwarded to the appropriate individuals for response and intervention.

If you do not believe the student is an imminent threat, you should still report a student's behavior that is:

- Extremely unusual.
- Troubling or concerning.
- Disruptive to your environment (classroom, office, or other).
- Causing discomfort to you or others.
- Potentially threatening in any way.

Some specific examples of behavior that should be reported to the Behavioral Intervention Team include (but are not limited to) any student who:

- Threatens or engages in violent behavior.
- Writes or verbalizes a direct threat to another person.
- Talks about suicide or homicide.
- Exhibits behavior indicating suicidal tendencies.
- Engages in self-injurious behavior.

- Repeatedly disrupts class and refuses to stop.
- Is asked to leave the classroom pursuant to the Classroom Conduct Policy.
- Reflects seriously disturbing thoughts in written assignment, class discussion, or other communication.
- Exhibits behavior that seems bizarre or out of touch with reality.
- Displays anger, hostility or other negative emotions inappropriately, is overly aggressive, seems depressed, or displays persistent sadness or unexplained crying.
- Has impaired speech and/or disjointed thoughts.
- Has been out of contact with friends, family, and/or staff for an unusually long period of time or who may be missing.

Faculty, staff, and students should immediately report to the Behavioral Intervention Team any situation that could possibly result in harm to anyone at the University and/or may materially disrupt the University community. If a faculty or staff member becomes aware of a student's suicidal ideation and behaviors or of student behavior that is materially disrupting the University community, then the faculty or staff member must immediately report that information to the BIT.

In addition, any member of the campus community may become aware of a troubling person or situation that is causing serious anxiety, stress, or fear and, if so, this information should be forwarded to the Behavioral Intervention Team. Any actionable information received via e-mails, list serves, blogs, Moodle postings, and social on-line networking sources (e.g., Facebook or Twitter) also requires reporting.

NOTE: Faculty or staff members should NEVER make a promise of confidentiality to a student reporting problems or providing information. All information and reports will be handled by the BIT in a confidential manner with information released only on a need-to-know basis.

Procedure

All meetings of the Aurora campus BIT will be chaired by the Vice President for Student Life or his/her designee. In the event that the Vice President for Student Life or his/her designee is unavailable to chair a meeting, the meeting will be chaired by the Dean of Students. At GWC, the meetings will be chaired by the Vice President for Academic and Student Life or his or her designee. In the event that the Vice President/CAO or his/her designee is unavailable to chair a meeting, the meeting will be chaired by the Assistant Dean of Students/Director of Student Success.

Members of the BIT will meet regularly and will consider each report received on a case-by-case basis. In cases of time-sensitive high-risk situations, a special team meeting may be called by any member. In emergency situations the BIT will refer the case to Campus Public Safety or other emergency responders. In non-emergency situations, the BIT will use guidelines established by the National Behavior Intervention Team Association to assess the situation and determine if the student poses a threat or needs an intervention.

Response/Outcome

The desired outcome for each reported incident is a recommended course of action to the Vice President for Student Life or Dean of Academic and Student Life at GWC based upon the nature of the incident, the Student Code of Conduct, and/or other appropriate document(s), and implementation of the course of action once it is approved.

Possible outcomes include but are not limited to:

- Intervention by Student Life, potentially including mandated mental health or other assessments and/or notification of parents or guardians when permitted under applicable law.
- Referral of a student to the Counseling Services, Health Services, or other university office for assistance and education.
- Referral of a student for campus judicial action, potentially leading to suspension, expulsion, or other disciplinary action.
- Interim suspension of a student.
- Voluntary withdrawal by a student.
- Involuntary withdrawal of a student, in accordance with University policy on such action.
- Notification of law enforcement by Campus Public Safety, as a public safety measure and/or to initiate a criminal complaint, when appropriate.

Once notified by the BIT that a mandatory mental health assessment is required, a student may appeal the accuracy of the initial report to the BIT, in writing, within five business days after notification. If the BIT determines after this appeal that the professional assessment is still required, its decision is final. A student who wishes to appeal any other decision of the BIT may submit a written appeal to the Vice President for Student Life within five business days of the decision being appealed. The decision of the Vice President for Student Life is final.

A student who is permitted to continue at the University will be required to adhere to the recommendations of the assessing mental health professional(s), as well as those imposed by the Vice President for Student Life or designee. Students who fail to comply with the required assessment and/or to follow the recommendations from the assessment may be referred to the University's student conduct system and may summarily be removed from the University for "Failure to Comply" pursuant to University policy.

NaBITA Threat Assessment Tool

OVERALL SUMMARY

4 — CRITICAL

In this stage, there is a serious risk of suicide, life-threatening self-injury, dangerous risk taking (e.g. driving a motorcycle at top speed at night with the lights off) and/or inability to care for oneself. They may display racing thoughts, high risk substance dependence, intense anger, and/or perceived unfair treatment or grievance that has a major impact on the students' academic, social, and peer interactions. The individual has clear target for their threats and ultimatums, access to lethal means, and an attack plan to punish those they see as responsible for perceived wrongs. Without immediate intervention (such as law enforcement or psychiatric hospitalization), it is likely violence will occur. There may be leakage about the attack plan (social media posts that say "I'm going to be the next school shooter" or telling a friend to avoid coming to campus on a particular day). There may be stalking behavior and escalating predatory actions prior to violence such as intimidation, telegraphing, and "test-runs" such as causing a disruption to better understand reaction time of emergency response.

3 — ELEVATED

Behavior at the elevated stage is increasingly disruptive (with multiple incidents) and involves multiple offices such as student conduct, law enforcement, and counseling. The individual may engage in suicidal talk, self-injury, substance intoxication. Threats of violence and ultimatums may be vague but direct or specific but indirect. A fixation and focus on a target often emerge (person, place, or system) and the individual continues to attack the target's self-esteem, public image, and/or access to safety and support. Others may feel threatened around this individual, but any threat lacks depth, follow-through, or a narrowing against an individual, office, or community. More serious social, mental health, academic, and adjustment concerns occur, and the individual is in need of more timely support and resources to avoid further escalation. Conditional ultimatums such as "do this or else" may be made to instructors, peers, faculty, and staff.

2 — MODERATE

Prior to this stage, conflict with others has been fairly limited. The hallmark of moderate is an increase in conflict with others through aggressive speech, actions, and mannerisms. They may become frustrated and engage in non-verbal behaviors or begin to post things on social media, put up posters around campus, or storm away from conversations. Stress, illness, lack of friends, and support are now becoming an increasing concern. The individual may be tearful, sad, hopeless, anxious, or frustrated. This may be caused by difficulty adjusting, dating stress, failure in class assignments, and/or increasing social isolation. If there is a threat or physical violence such as carelessly pushing someone out of their way while storming off, the violence is typically limited and driven by adrenaline and impulsiveness, rather than any deeper plan to hurt others.

0/1 — MILD

The individual here may be struggling and not doing well. The impact of their difficulty is limited around others, with the occasional report being made to the BIT/CARE team out of an abundance of caution and concern rather than any direct behavior or threats. They may be having trouble fitting in, adjusting to college, making friends, or may rub people the wrong way. They alienate others with their thoughts or mannerisms, and there may be minor bullying and conflict. With support and resources, it is likely the individual will be successful adapting and overcoming obstacles. Without support, it is possible they will continue to escalate on the rubric.

BASELINE

E-SCALE

Hostility and Violence to Others

EMERGENCE OF VIOLENCE

- Behavior is moving towards a plan of targeted violence, sense of hopelessness, and/or desperation in the attack plan; locked into an all or nothing mentality
- Increasing use of military and tactical language; acquisition of costume for attack
- Clear fixation and focus on an individual target or group; feels justified in actions
- Attack plan is credible, repeated, and specific; may be shared, may be hidden
- Increased research on target and attack plan, employing counter-surveillance measures, access to lethal means; there is a sense of imminence to the plan
- Leakage of attack plan on social media or telling friends and others to avoid locations

ELABORATION OF THREAT

- Fixation and focus on a singular individual, group, or department; depersonalization of target, intimidating target to lessen their ability to advocate for safety
- Seeking others to support and empower future threatening action; may find extremists looking to exploit vulnerability; encouraging violence
- Threats and ultimatums may be vague or direct and are motivated by a hardened viewpoint; potential leakage around what should happen to fix grievances and injustices
- There is rarely physical violence here, but rather an escalation in the dangerousness and lethality in the threats; they are more specific, targeted, and repeated

ESCALATING BEHAVIORS

- Driven by hardened thoughts or a grievance concerning past wrongs or perceived past wrongs; increasingly adopts a singular, limited perspective
- When frustrated, storms off, disengaged, may create signs or troll on social media
- Argues with others with intent to embarrass, shame, or shut down
- Physical violence, if present, is impulsive, non-lethal, and brief; may seem similar to affective violence, but driven here by a hardened perspective rather than mental health and/or environmental stress

EMPOWERING THOUGHTS

- Passionate and hardened thoughts; typically related to religion, politics, academic status, money/power, social justice, or relationships
- Rejection of alternative perspectives, critical thinking, empathy, or perspective-taking
- Narrowing on consumption of news, social media, or friendships; seeking only those who share the same perspective
- No threats of violence

TRAJECTORY?

NaBITA Risk Rubric

D-SCALE

Life Stress and Emotional Health

DECOMPENSATING

- Behavior is severely disruptive, directly impacts others, and is actively dangerous. This may include life-threatening, self-injurious behaviors such as:
  - Suicidal ideations or attempts, an expressed lethal plan, and/or hospitalization
  - Extreme self-injury, life-threatening disordered eating, repeated DUIs
  - Repeated acute alcohol intoxication with medical or law enforcement involvement, chronic substance abuse
  - Profoundly disturbed, detached view of reality and at risk of grievous injury or death and/or inability to care for themselves (self-care/protection/judgment)
  - Actual affective, impulsive violence or serious threats of violence such as:
    - Repeated, severe attacks while intoxicated; brandishing a weapon
    - Making threats that are concrete, consistent, and plausible
    - Impulsive stalking behaviors that present a physical danger

DETERIORATING

- Destructive actions, screaming or aggressive/harassing communications, rapid/odd speech, extreme isolation, stark decrease in self-care
  - Responding to voices, extremely odd dress, high risk substance abuse; troubling thoughts with paranoid/delusional themes; increasingly medically dangerous binging/purging
  - Suicidal thoughts that are not lethal/imminent or non-life threatening self-injury
- Threats of affective, impulsive, poorly planned, and/or economically driven violence
  - Vague but direct threats or specific but indirect threat; explosive language
  - Stalking behaviors that do not harm, but are disruptive and concerning

DISTRESSED

- Distressed individuals engage in behavior that concerns others, and have an impaired ability to manage their emotions and actions. Possible presence of stressors such as:
  - Managing chronic mental illness, mild substance abuse/misuse, disordered eating
  - Situational stressors that cause disruption in mood, social, or academic areas
  - Difficulty coping/adapting to stressors/trauma; behavior may subside when stressor is removed, or trauma is addressed/processed
- If a threat is present, the threat is vague, indirect, implausible, and lacks detail or focus

DEVELOPING

- Experiencing situational stressors but demonstrating appropriate coping skills
- Often first contact or referral to the BIT/CARE team, etc.
- Behavior is appropriate given the circumstances and context
- No threat made or present

TRAJECTORY?

OVERALL SUMMARY

CRITICAL (4)

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ELEVATED (3)

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MODERATE (2)

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MILD (0/1)

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BASELINE

INTERVENTION OPTIONS TO ADDRESS RISK AS CLASSIFIED

CRITICAL (4)

- Initiate wellness check/evaluation for involuntary hold or police response for arrest
- Coordinate with necessary parties (student conduct, police, etc.) to create plan for safety, suspension, or other interim measures
- Obligatory parental/guardian/emergency contact notification unless contraindicated
- Evaluate need for emergency notification to community
- Issue mandated assessment once all involved are safe
- Evaluate the need for involuntary/voluntary withdrawal
- Coordinate with university police and/or local law enforcement
- Provide guidance, support, and safety plan to referral source/stakeholders

ELEVATED (3)

- Consider a welfare/safety check
- Provide guidance, support, and safety plan to referral source/stakeholders
- Deliver follow up and ongoing case management or support services
- Required assessment such as the SIVRA-35, ERIS, HCR-20, WAVR-20 or similar; assess social media posts
- Evaluate parental/guardian/emergency contact notification
- Coordinate referrals to appropriate resources and provide follow-up
- Likely referral to student conduct or disability support services
- Coordinate with university police/campus safety, student conduct, and other departments as necessary to mitigate ongoing risk

MODERATE (2)

- Provide guidance and education to referral source
- Reach out to student to encourage a meeting
- Develop and implement case management plan or support services
- Connect with offices, support resources, faculty, etc. who interact with student to enlist as support or to gather more information
- Possible referral to student conduct or disability support services
- Offer referrals to appropriate support resources
- Assess social media and other sources to gather more information
- Consider VRAW^2 for cases that have written elements
- Skill building in social interactions, emotional balance, and empathy; reinforcement of protective factors (social support, opportunities for positive involvement)

MILD (0/1)

- No formal intervention; document and monitor over time
- Provide guidance and education to referral source
- Reach out to student to offer a meeting or resources, if needed
- Connect with offices, support resources, faculty, etc. who interact with student to enlist as support or to gather more information

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