

Characteristics Of Youth Who Have Caused School-Associated Violent Deaths

After tracking and studying school-associated violent deaths in the United States from July 1992 to the present and common characteristics of youth who have caused such deaths, NSSC has identified the following behaviors, which could indicate a youth's potential for harming him/herself or others. Accounts of these tragic incidents repeatedly indicate that in most cases, a troubled youth has demonstrated or has talked to others about problems with bullying and feelings of isolation, anger, depression and frustration. While there is no foolproof system for identifying potentially dangerous students who may harm themselves and/or others, this checklist should provide you with a good starting point.

1. ___ Has a history of tantrums and uncontrollable angry outbursts.
2. ___ Characteristically resorts to name calling, cursing or abusive language.
3. ___ Habitually makes violent threats when angry.
4. ___ Has previously brought a weapon to school.
5. ___ Has a background of serious disciplinary problems at school and in the community.
6. ___ Has a background of drug, alcohol or other substance abuse or dependency.
7. ___ Is on the fringe of his/her peer group with few or no close friends.
8. ___ Is preoccupied with weapons, explosives or other incendiary devices.
9. ___ Has previously been truant, suspended or expelled from school.
10. ___ Displays cruelty to animals.
11. ___ Has little or no supervision and support from parents or a caring adult.
12. ___ Has witnessed or been a victim of abuse or neglect in the home.
13. ___ Has been bullied and/or bullies or intimidates peers or younger children.
14. ___ Tends to blame others for difficulties and problems s/he caused her/himself.
15. ___ Consistently prefers TV shows, movies or music expressing violent themes and acts
16. ___ Prefers reading materials dealing with violent themes, rituals and abuse.
17. ___ Reflects anger, frustration and the dark side of life in school essays or writing projects.
18. ___ Is involved with a gang or an antisocial group on the fringe of peer acceptance.
19. ___ Is often depressed and/or has significant mood swings.
20. ___ Has threatened or attempted suicide.