



# IDENTIFY AND EFFECTIVELY RESPOND TO EARLY WARNING

David Osher, Ph.D.  
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# Takeaways Regarding Safety and Warning Signs

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- Schools are relatively safe places that are well positioned to reduce the likelihood of aggression and violence.
- Schools can be made safer by developing a capacity to reduce the likelihood of aggression and violence while also addressing student and staff needs for emotional, physical, and identity safety.
- There are early warning signs, which when understood in context, can signal that a child or youth is troubled and needs support.
- These signs must be assessed and addressed in a culturally and developmentally appropriate in a manner that minimizes harm and maximizes benefit.

# Safety is Not Just Physical or Proximate

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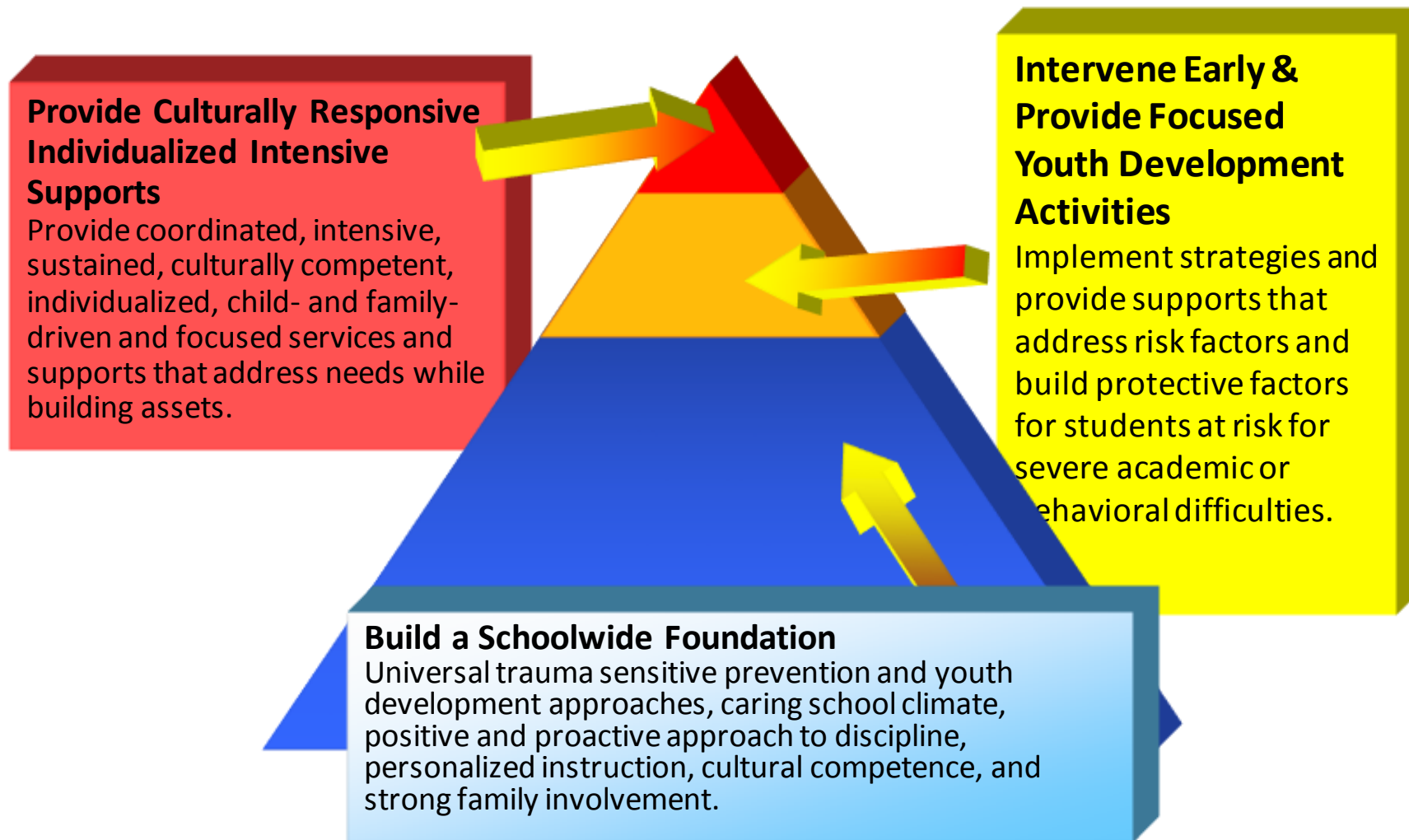
- Physical Safety
- Emotional Safety
- Psychological Safety
- Identity Safety
- Fair & Equitable Treatment
- Minimization of Toxic Conditions

# Takeaways Regarding A Systemic Approach that Uses Warning Signs to Prevent Violence

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- Schools should develop the capacity to identify, assess, and respond to the warning signs in a manner that reduces the incidence, amplification, and impact experiences and behaviors that contribute to violence
- This works best in a caring and supportive school environment that addresses school-created problems and addresses risk through:
  - universal promotion and prevention,
  - early and intensive interventions, and, when necessary,
  - threat assessment.

# Work at Three Levels



# Takeaways Regarding A Systemic Approach that Uses Warning Signs to Prevent Violence

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- This systemic approach it includes warning signs and threat assessment:
  - Can address other student needs
  - Is consistent with school’s role in developing the academic, social, and emotional skills of students
  - Can support learning and healthy development
  - Is now backed by extensive research and experience, such as:
    - » Safe Schools/ Healthy Students
    - » Safe and Supportive Schools
- When implemented well, it can avert or minimize the harmful effects of
  - Suspension and expulsion
  - Criminalization of school related services
  - Student alienation and “conspiracies of silence”
  - Wasted resources

# Early Warning Signs

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- Excessive feelings of isolation or being alone.
- Excessive feelings of rejection.
- Being a victim of violence.
- Feelings of being picked on and persecuted.
- Low school interest and poor academic performance.
- Expression of violence in writing and drawings.
- Uncontrolled anger.
- History of discipline problems.
- Patterns of impulsive and chronic hitting, intimidating, and bullying behaviors.
- History of violent and aggressive behavior.
- Intolerance for differences and prejudicial attitudes.
- Drug use and alcohol use.
- Affiliation with gangs.
- Inappropriate access to, possession of, and use of firearms.
- Serious threats of violence (also an imminent warning sign).

# Principals for Using Early Warning Signs

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- Do no harm.
- Do not stigmatize.
- Understand violence and aggression within a context.
- Avoid stereotypes and control for implicit bias.
- View warning signs within a developmental context.
- Understand that children typically exhibit multiple warning signs.
  - No one sign alone is sufficient for confidently predicting aggression or violence
- Assess before acting.
- Include mental health experts in the assessment.
- Do not use the signs as a check list.
- Do not confuse with Imminent Warning Signs

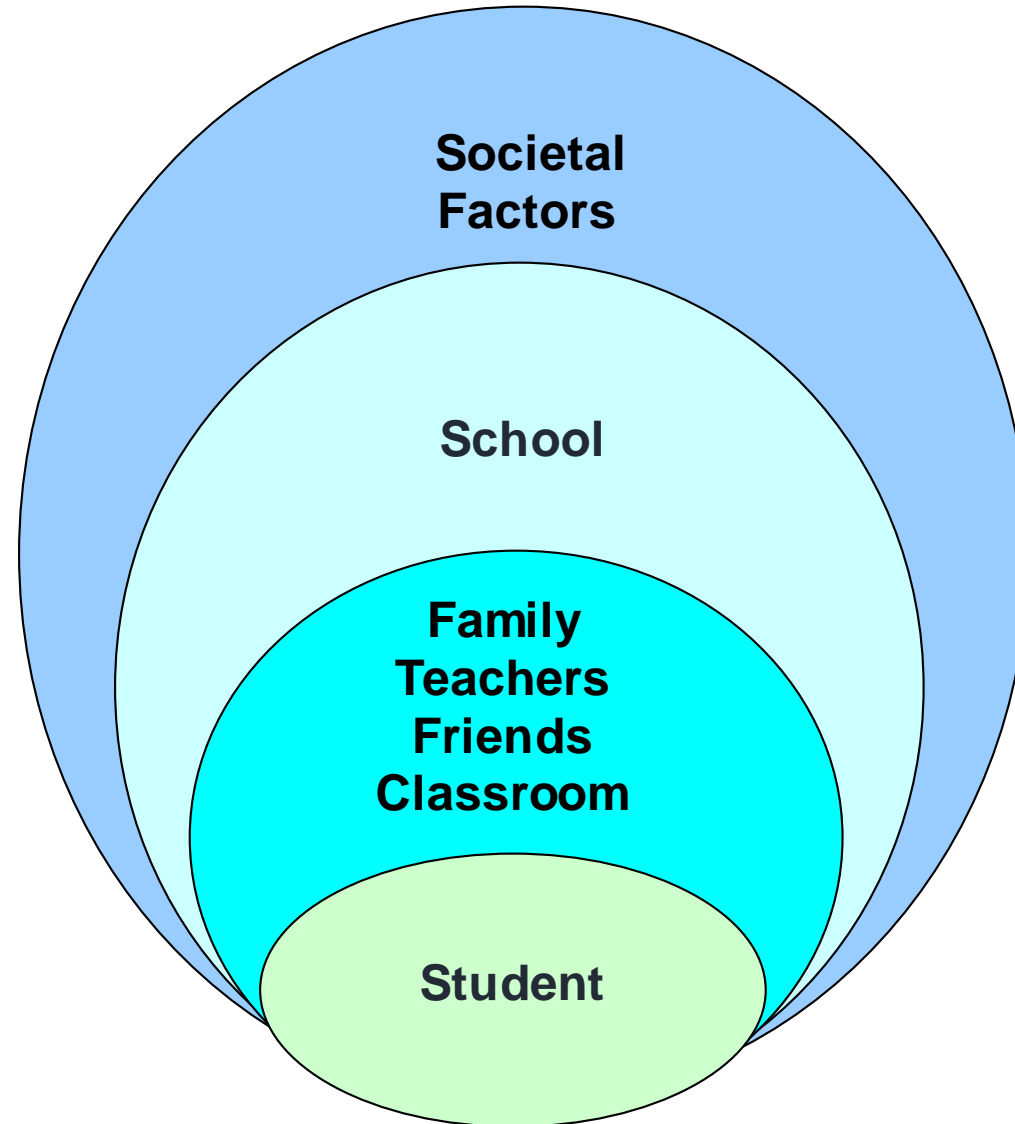


# Imminent Warning Signs

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- Indicate that a student is very close to behaving in a way that is potentially dangerous to self or others.
- These signs may warrant a threat assessment
- These signs include:
  - Serious threats of violence
  - Serious physical fighting with peers or family members.
  - Severe destruction of property.
  - Severe rage for seemingly minor reasons.
  - Detailed threats of lethal violence.
  - Possession and/or use of firearms and other weapons.
  - Other self-injurious behaviors or threats of suicide.

# Where To Intervene



# Safe & Supportive School Environments

