

K-12 Case Study Report

Field Trip: Darcy

D·PREP
SAFETY DIVISION

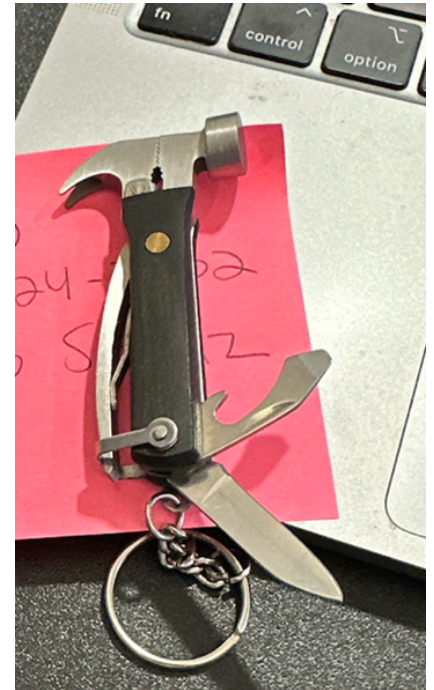
TRAINING
OUTPOST

Case Details

Darcy is an 8th-grade student who recently moved into the school district and has been having difficulties getting along with some of the girls in her class. They began teasing her at the start of the year because of her clothes (her family is not as well off as some in the school district, and she doesn't have as many nice outfits). This has also made it difficult for her to keep up academically, and Darcy has been feeling more and more depressed.

During a field trip with her classmates to Washington, DC., the class visited the International Spy Museum, and Darcy purchased a multi-tool in the gift shop (see photo). On the bus to the hotel that afternoon, the tensions increased, with subtle teasing directed at Darcy. She became upset and yelled at the girls who were teasing her, "Shut your mouths or else!" After they arrived at the hotel, one of the girls who was rooming with Darcy told a chaperone that Darcy had made a threat and that she had a knife.

The chaperone confronted Darcy and confiscated the multi-tool. Darcy was upset at the confrontation and expressed thoughts of being overwhelmed, wanting to go home, and thinking about killing herself.

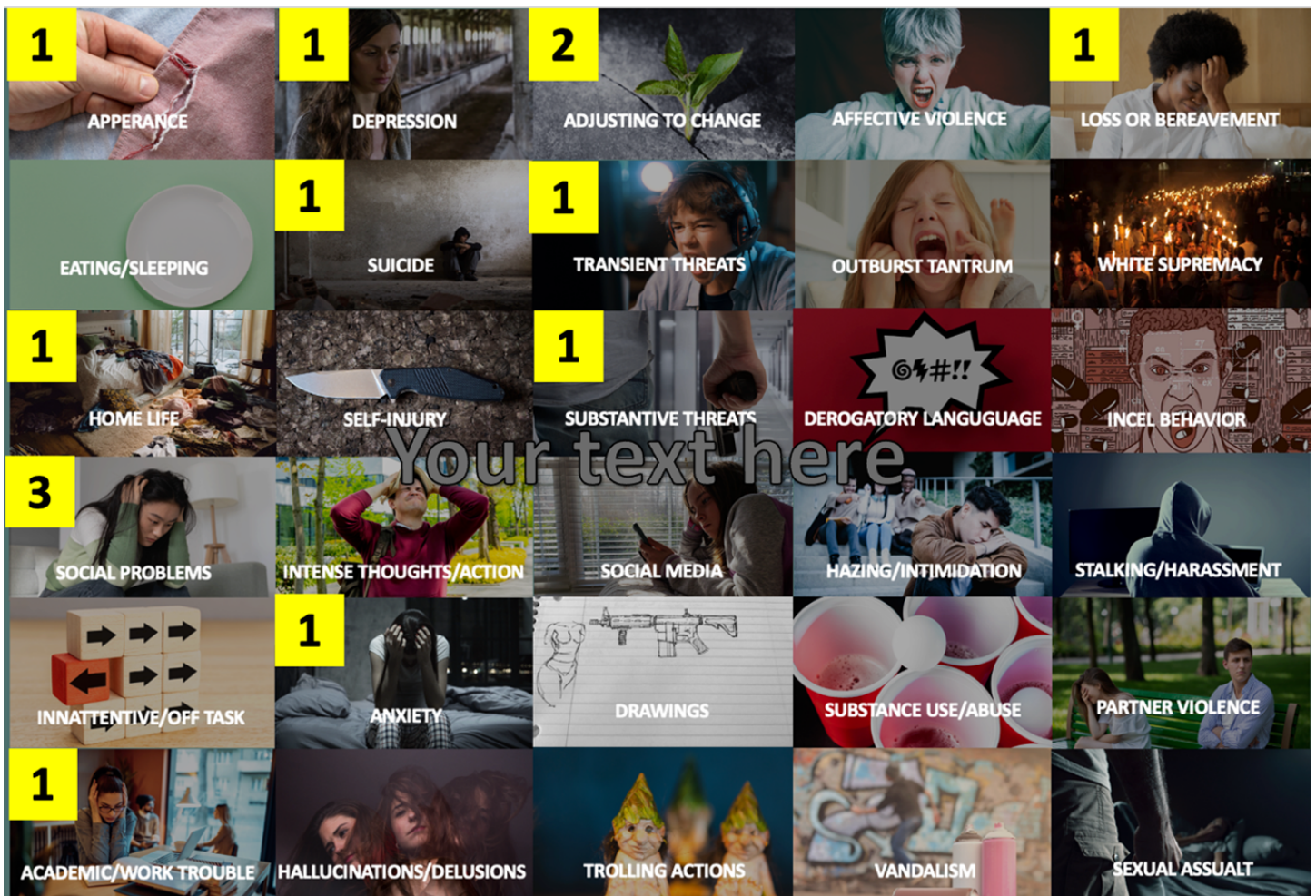


How would you characterize the threats in this case (transient, substantive, hunting, howling, affective, targeted violence)?

Given the caveat that further context is needed, our initial hypothesis is that the threat from Darcy to the other students was transient and howling in nature, driven by an immediate emotional, affective reaction coming from the teasing. Of note, the multi-tool is an interesting element in the case. One likely takeaway is for trip chaperones to better understand trip rules related to purchases and monitoring. Further context would need to be obtained to determine if the threat itself involved the tool or if this was an accidental correlation.

Score this case using the K-12 Pathways tool.

The overall risk rating on the Pathways tool was high. This is related more to the multiple risk factors scored rather than the severity of the threat made. Additional recommendations include using the Suicide WayFinder and conducting a full violence risk assessment. Further understanding of the history of the behavior, presence of mental illness, and duration and severity of the suicidal thoughts should all be explored further through more detailed assessments. Addressing the financial challenges and stress related to the recent move may help reduce the teasing and isolation of Darcy. Exploring a bystander empowerment program would also be useful to reduce future escalations. Involving Darcy's parents would also be essential, with consideration for the potential challenges related to attending school meetings given their work schedules. Identifying positive social connections and ways she may be able to maintain connections with previous friends would help establish further protective and stabilizing factors in the case. A referral to counseling and assessment for medication to assist with longer-term depression issues should also be considered. Setting clear expectations related to how Darcy should respond to teasing in the future should be part of a progressive discipline discussion through student conduct. Likewise, the students who were involved in the teasing should also be held accountable through the student conduct process.



What additional information would you find helpful in the case?

Information about the previous relationships between Darcy and classmates and the students involved in the teasing and potential bullying would be useful. Further context would be helpful related to Darcy's adjustment challenges coming to a new school, any existing supports in her home, her attempts at making friends, previous friends she is in contact with, and how she is doing with daily activities. Information about her mental health history related to depression and suicide would also be helpful (e.g., if her suicidal statement was more of a reaction to wanting to go home from the trip or was an escalation or repeat of previous behaviors?). Exploring potential supports related to financial challenges the family is facing and other social-emotional learning challenges that may be facing Darcy would be recommended. Reviewing communications on social media would also be a way to gain more insight into previous interactions and additional threats or conflicts.

Using the Pathways results, what are some of the next steps you would take in the case?

- Parental notification and conversations with Darcy's parents to develop a plan for moving forward. A central part of this will be deciding how to handle the immediate concerns on the trip. This will depend in part on the time remaining on the trip (e.g., if there was another week of travel vs. the entire group returning home tomorrow).
- Notification and conversations with any student who was threatened.
- Assessment for potential suicidality and determination of a level of care.
- Follow up through the school conduct policy to address the threatening behavior from a disciplinary stance.
- An exploration of the bullying problems that occurred prior to the trip. The school's bystander empowerment or intervention program should be evaluated and improved.
- Training for chaperons related to basic threat identification, crisis de-escalation, mediation, and a crucial conversation framework.
- A school-wide reminder about weapons, threats, and rules, and expectations for school trips. Avoid any specific, FERPA-protected information. Any statement should be crafted with crisis media considerations.



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Pathways K12

Your Responses

Appearance: 1	Depression: 1	Adjusting to Change: 2	Affective Violence: 1	Loss or Bereavement: 1
Eating/Sleeping:	Suicide: 1	Transient Threats: 1	Outburst/Tantrum:	White Supremacy:
Home Life: 1	Self-Injury:	Substantive Threats: 1	Derogatory Language:	Incel Behavior:
Social Problems: 3	Intense Thoughts/Action:	Social Media:	Hazing/Intimidation:	Stalking/Harrassment:
Inattentive/Off Task:	Anxiety: 1	Drawings:	Substance Use/Abuse:	Partner Violence:
Academic/Work Trouble: 1	Hallucinations/Delusions:	Trolling Actions:	Vandalism:	Sexual Assault:

Rating: HIGH

Based on the information shared, it is recommended to complete a suicide assessment using the [Suicide Wayfinder](#).

Based on the information shared, it is recommended to complete a full violence risk assessment. The [DarkFox Violence Risk Assessment Tool](#) is the recommended system to use. Please contact info@dpresafety.com to learn more about access.

Appearance

- Direct support for clothes; laundry access, showers
- Conversation with parents/guardians about rising concerns
- Identify teasing and address with community

Home Life

- Meet with parents/guardians about counseling
- Normalize and offer support and care
- Identify other supports and protective factors

Social Problems

- Clearly outline discipline and behavioral expectations
- Meet with parents/guardians to require counseling services
- Develop an action plan and/or IEP

Academic/Work Trouble

- Offer support, normalization, and advice/guidance
- Refer to tutoring or extra help
- Explore goals and strategies for improvement

Depression

- Meet with parents/guardians about counseling
- Explore stressors and identify source of depression
- Encourage healthy eating, exercise and social acts

Suicide

- Meet with parents/guardians about counseling
- Explore stressors and identify escalation triggers
- Connect to peer and social supports, inspire hope

Anxiety

- Normalize and offer support and care
- Identify triggers and comforts/reducers
- Meet with parents/guardians about counseling

Adjusting to Change

- Meet with parents/guardians about counseling
- Discuss interruption of academic, social and life skills
- Connect to peer and social supports, inspire hope

Transient Threats

- Explore stressors and identify escalation triggers
- Meet with parents/guardians about counseling

- Consider discipline to address disruptive behavior

Substantive Threats

- Explore stressors and identify escalation triggers
- Meet with parents/guardians about counseling
- Consider discipline to address disruptive behavior

Affective Violence

- Explore stressors and identify escalation triggers
- Consider discipline to address disruptive behavior
- Offer support, normalization, and advice/guidance

Loss or Bereavement

- Normalize and offer support and care
- Identify triggers and comforts/reducers
- Meet with parents/guardians about counseling

Print

Back to Answers

Reset Tool

No data is stored in this online system related to your entries. Users are encouraged to print and save the outcome to a PDF and maintain this according to your institution's data privacy standards.



For more information, contact brian@dprep.com

Pathways is an expert system that takes observations and user input and generates suggested interventions based on user input and research from psychology, criminology, threat, and law enforcement fields. Pathways provides support to threat teams and law enforcement in the summary and development of a risk mitigation plan. Information provided by Pathways should be used in conjunction within the context of the experience, research and expert judgement of law enforcement, counseling and threat assessment professionals.

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