

# School Shootings Fact Sheet

Not all school shootings are the same:

- A. Gang violence
- B. Drug disputes
- C. Homicides as a means to address disputes of any kind
- D. Rampage school shootings

Rampage School Shooters: what we know

- A. Data are qualitative, rather than quantitative:
  - Interviews
  - Media reports
  - Psychological autopsies
  - Retrospective case studies
  - Sample size is small; therefore it is essential to be very careful about drawing conclusions or making generalizations
  - No consistent, reliable profile of school shooters exists; therefore, predicting that someone might become one is not supportable
  - Threat assessments are more helpful; therefore schools can refer out for these to be made by qualified individuals
- B. Personal characteristics:
  - White males
  - Personal problems and/or family instability
- C. Psychological characteristics:
  - Has experienced a (possibly perceived) significant loss or injustice, including...
  - Loss of perceived social standing
  - Depressed; hopeless
  - Suspiciousness; resentment; deep anger
  - Feels persecuted/bullied/socially rejected/alienated
- D. Personality characteristics:
  - Lack of empathy; unattached; dehumanization of others
  - Difficulty coping with life's stressors; invested in resenting and blaming others
  - Narcissism
  - Moral disinhibition
  - Poor anger management
  - Fascination with violence and destruction; may associate these with increased stature
  - Typically loners; increasingly alienated, withdrawn and disconnected; may be socially incompetent; marginalized by peers as well as adults; "invisible" children as opposed to acting out children

Essential Antidotes:

- A. Improve school climate to support student achievement
- B. Foster resiliency in **all** students
- C. Ensure connectedness for **every** learner, both with peers and at least one caring adult
- D. Ensure the development of self-regulation and empathy<sup>i</sup>

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<sup>i</sup> Source: Flannery, Daniel J., Modzeleski, William, & Kretschmar, Jeff M. (2013). **Violence and School Shootings.** *Current Psychiatry Reports*, 15, 331-336.