

Targeted Violence and Terrorism Strengths, Needs, and Risks: Assessment & Management Tool (T-SAM)

Harm toward others is a known risk, yet mental health professionals working outside of forensic settings have few if any tools they can use to assess and manage violence risk to inform risk assessment and treatment planning. To fill an important gap in the field, the Trauma and Community Resilience Center (TCRC) at Boston Children's Hospital created the first risk assessment and management tool for targeted violence that can be used by mental health professionals working in generalist settings.

The Targeted Violence and Terrorism Strengths, needs, and risks: Assessment & Management Tool (T-SAM) offers mental health professionals a collaborative, client-centered approach to assessment and management of risk for both adults and children. T-SAM development was informed by an evidence-based suicide-focused treatment framework known as the Collaborative Assessment & Management of Suicidality, a thorough review of research on risk and protective factors for targeted violence, a review of existing violence risk assessment tools, and input from subject matter experts in the fields of both suicidology and violence prevention.

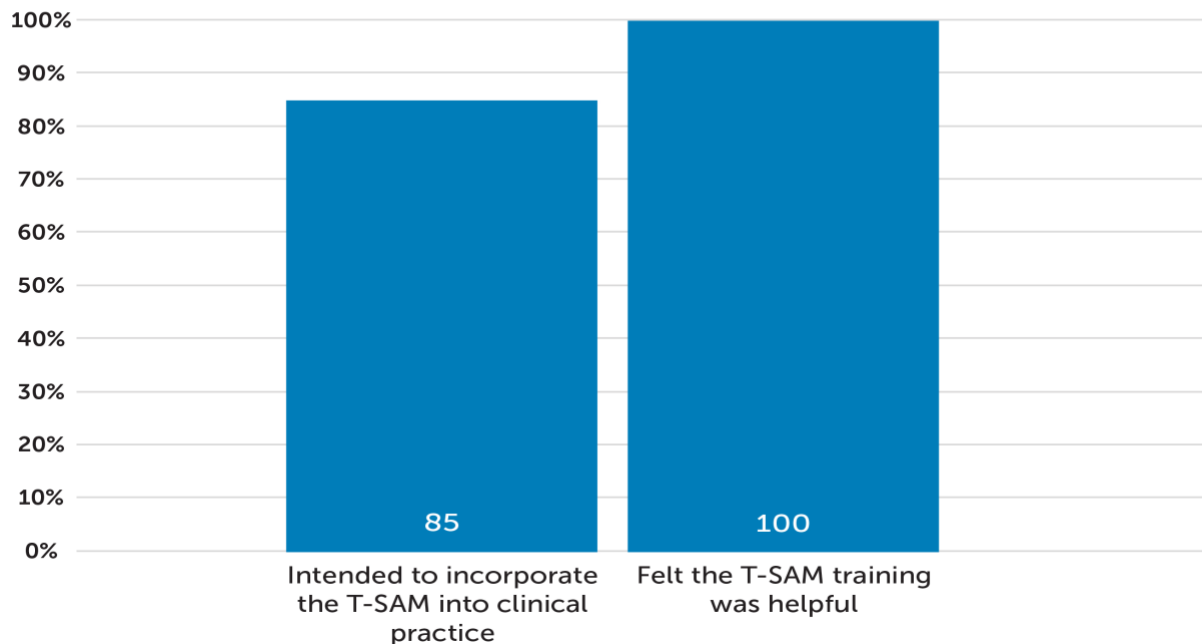
The T-SAM was then piloted in diverse child and adult serving clinical settings (e.g., schools, hospital clinics, social service non-profits focused on reducing hate-based violence, mobile crisis teams, forensic settings, Employee Assistance Programs) with a cohort of 47 mental health professionals across the country. Following their initial T-SAM training, this cohort reported marked increases in their confidence and competence with respect to identifying, assessing, and treating individuals at risk of targeted violence. In addition, preliminary findings from the pilot suggest that the T-SAM is helpful in clarifying someone's motivation for targeted violence, guides clinicians' understanding of what to ask when, and facilitates an individualized process for building treatment plans that are focused on preventing violence.

Features of the T-SAM

- Clarifies the role of the mental health provider in community-based, violence prevention efforts
- Comprehensively assesses strengths and needs in addition to risks
- Values clinical judgment and collateral information while centering the client's perspective
- Links assessment results directly to treatment planning and management
- Provides a framework for consultation with other providers from similar and distinct disciplines
- Provides a structured process for stabilization and treatment planning and re-evaluating risk at every client contact

Findings from T-SAM training indicate:

Percent of Participants Who



If you are a licensed mental health provider and would like to receive training on how to utilize the T-SAM in your own work, please consult the Boston Children's Hospital Trauma and Community Resilience Center Webpage dedicated to the T-SAM project, accessible here:

[Trauma and Community Resilience Center | TVT Strengths, Needs, and Risks: Assessment & Management Tool | Boston Children's Hospital \(childrenshospital.org\)](#)

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