

FBI Profile of an Active Shooter



According to the FBI, there is no single warning sign, checklist, or algorithm to identify a mass shooter before an attack.

However, a “complex combination of behaviors and interactions with bystanders” in the time leading up to an attack could identify potential shooters. The FBI has created a profile of a likely active shooter.

This profile includes characteristics such as:

- A young white male who feels entitled and has been bullied
- Access to guns in the home
- An honor roll student from a good community
- Intolerant attitudes toward racial or religious minorities
- Possesses a superiority attitude
- Poor coping skills
- Exhibits distorted thinking relative to the negativity he perceives from others

ACTIVE SHOOTER FACTS

An FBI study released in 2018 examined incidents between 2000 and 2013. The study explored pre-attack behaviors and characteristics of active shooters. Within that study:

- 94% of shooters were male.
- Most active shooters were also either single (57%) at the time of shooting, or divorced/separated (22%).
- Mass shooters are mostly white (63%), which is in line with the 60% of the U.S. population that identifies as white and non-Hispanic.
- One-third of mass shooters had been convicted of a crime as an adult (35%). Nearly two-thirds of active shooters (62%) had a history of acting in an “abusive, harassing, and oppressive way” or displayed “excessive bullying and workplace harassment” behaviors.
- About one in five shooters (16%) had engaged in “intimate partner violence,” and 11% exhibited behavior that could be considered “stalking.”
- Gunmen shot their intimate partner or family member in more than half the cases (54%).



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