

**Use and Perceived Effectiveness of Multidisciplinary
Teams to Address Problematic Student Behaviour to
Prevent Campus Violence in Canadian Higher
Education**

by

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Abstract

Case studies of high-profile occurrences of on-campus violence have resulted in recommendations for colleges and universities to implement multidisciplinary teams, called Behavioural Intervention Teams (BITs). These teams serve as a mechanism to collect, assess, and intervene when high-risk behaviours occur within an institution and prevent future violence (Deisinger, Randazzo, O'Neil, & Savage, 2008; Randazzo & Plummer, 2009; Sokolow, Lewis, Brunt, Schuster, & Swinton, 2014). BITs have been in operation in the United States for over a decade and, thus this study sought to understand to what degree Canadian institutions have implemented teams. Subsequently, this study was designed to understand the experience of those who serve on such teams and their perceptions of the effectiveness of the practice. This multi-staged mixed methods study distributed online surveys, adapted from previous American surveys (Gamm, Mardis, & Sullivan, 2011; Van Brunt, Sokolow, Lewis, & Schuster, 2012), to all English-speaking institutions in Canada as a means to identify those that had implemented multidisciplinary teams and to access the team members of institutions with a BIT. Finally, a representative sample of Canadian team members was interviewed to gain a deeper insight into their experience as team members. All results were analyzed using the social ecological model (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; McLeroy, Bibeau, Steckler, & Glanz, 1988), which is a recommended approach when conducting effective violence prevention work.

Nearly 75% of Canadian institutions have implemented teams, which had been in operation for an average of just over four years. It was found that the size of an institution's student body was a significant factor in whether an institution had a team, as institutions with more than 10,000 students were more likely to have implemented a BIT. The characteristics of Canadian teams did not differ drastically from the characteristics of United States teams with the exception of team function and meeting frequency as Canadian teams had adopted a practice of co-leadership.

Without question, team members described the BIT process as being an effective way to address problematic student behaviour as a method to prevent campus violence. Team members attribute the effectiveness to the inclusion of multidisciplinary perspectives within the membership of the team and how the backgrounds of each team member enhanced the ability of the team to appropriately assess and achieve a

successful outcome. Despite the process of behavioural intervention being described as effective, team members articulated substantial challenges they experience in conducting their work: (a) team issues, (b) institutional issues, (c) case complexity, and (d) legal/policy issues. Team members also described how participating on a BIT team can have negative impacts on the individual professionally as a result of the additional workload associated with participating on the team. Team members also described being negatively impacted personally as the work of BIT caused: (a) stress and fear, (b) interpersonal issues as a result of difficult team dynamics, and (c) negatively skewing their perceptions of the amount of distressed students within the institution. These negative impacts were countered by the overwhelming positive benefits that team members experienced as a result of their participation on a BIT team. Team members described how they benefited professionally as they gained: (a) trusted peers, (b) new skills, and (c) a greater sense of fulfilment within their role within the institution. Overall, team members described participating on a BIT team as enjoyable and held a strong belief that the work of BITs makes a difference within their campus community by maintaining a safe environment for others and most importantly how the work positively affects the student of concern and their ability to continue their studies.

Keywords: campus violence; behavioural intervention teams; threat assessment; violence risk assessment; social ecological model;

Dedication

For every tragic incident of violence that occurs on a campus of higher education, there are countless others grievous acts that never happened because of the care and dedication of those who give their time to assist the institution to intervene. I dedicate this work to those individuals and recognize the active roles they take within their institutions to conduct the challenging but imperative work of behaviour and threat assessment. The actions of these devoted individuals not only maintains safety within the community, but also serve to help those whose personal circumstances require the greatest amount of support to overcome the obstacles that are impacting their ability to achieve their academic pursuits.

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The journey to completing my doctorate was filled with new learning and professional opportunities, but most of all it was filled with so many cherished moments. When I began my studies, so very long ago, I was not fully aware of the scope of the adventure on which I was about to embark - one that I certainly did not take alone.

It is without question that I must first thank my beloved husband, John, for the years of encouragement, patience, and unbridled support. You gave me the strength when I most needed it and you were always my biggest cheerleader! Without your selfless commitment to this opportunity, I most certainly would not have been able to realize this achievement. Thank you for being my rock and constantly being by my side, rooting me on.

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List of Acronyms

AISP	Assessment Intervention of Student Problems
BIT	Behavioural Intervention Team
CACS	Clery Act Crime Statistics
CCTA	Canadian Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
HCR-20	Historical Clinical Risk Management
LAC	Library and Archives Canada
NaBITA	National Behavioral Intervention Team Association
NCHA	National College Health Assessment
NCVS	National Crime Victim Survey
PSB	Problematic Student Behaviour
SEM	Social-Ecological Model
SSAO	Senior Student Affairs Officer
VTRA	Violence Threat Risk Assessment

Glossary

Behavioural Intervention Team (BIT)	A multidisciplinary team whose function is to collect, assess, and intervene on behaviours of concern within an institution of higher education.
Multidisciplinary Team	A group of professionals from different internal and/or external departments who share and review information about students of concern to develop an institutional response.
National College Health Assessment	A comprehensive health assessment survey of the American College Health Association that has been conducted in the United States and Canada.
Problematic Student Behaviour (PSB)	Student actions or activities that pose a concern for the welfare of the individual or others.
Stage 1	Survey of the 143 Canadian Senior Student Affairs Officers on the use of multidisciplinary teams to address problematic student behaviour.
Stage 2	Survey of team members from 28 institutions in Canada on their experience of serving on a multidisciplinary team to address problematic student behaviour.
Stage 3	Interviews with eight members of multidisciplinary teams across Canada about their experience of serving on multidisciplinary teams to address problematic student behaviour.
Targeted Violence	Violence that is directed towards a chosen person (or people) prior to the act of violence occurring.
Threat Assessment	The process of assessing a person or situation for risk factors of potential violent acts and developing an action plan to prevent those acts.
Violence Risk Assessment	The process of gathering information about a person to understand their potential to be violent towards themselves and/or others and determining what can be done to prevent them from being violent.

Chapter 1. Introduction

Schools, from elementary to postsecondary, are considered to be safe havens for society's students, instructors, and staff. The perceived safety of such institutions is a precarious notion as a single tragic event, such as a school shooting, has the potential to cause fear and anxiety for an entire community, and even a nation. Institutions of higher education have grappled with such incidents of campus violence for the better part of a century (Agnich, 2015). It was a decade ago when the deadliest incidence of campus violence occurred in North America on the campus of Virginia Polytechnic Institute. In April 2007, 32 people were killed and another 17 were injured when a single student opened fire around campus (O'Neill, Fox, Depue, & Englander, 2008). This tragic and devastating event has forever changed the public's perception and requirements for campus safety at colleges and universities in North America.

Mere days following the tragedy, and in response to public pressure, the Governor of Virginia called for an immediate review of the incident. One of the key insights within the final report noted, that the prior to the incident, "numerous incidents occurred that were clear warning signs of mental instability" (Massengill, et al., 2007, p. 2) and were known by different people within the institution. This finding sparked a collaborative investigation between the United States Secret Service, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Department of Education to analyze 272 historic American occurrences of campus violence in order to better understand this growing phenomenon (Drysdale, Modzeleski, & Simons, 2010). This report revealed an important and worrisome insight that many, if not most, perpetrators had demonstrated some prior behaviour that was indicative of the future violence. This comprehensive report shed light on the possibility that perpetrators of campus violence present prior behaviours that if acted upon may create a window of opportunity to prevented future violence and tragedies, including on campus shootings and other forms of violence.

When the deadliest acts of campus violence occur, institutional officials, government agencies, the local community, and the general society demand to understand how such an incident could occur. For this reason, it is not surprising that

the Virginia Polytechnic Institute tragedy has been the subject of many reviews and reports (Allen, Cornell, Lorek, & Sheras, 2008; Deisinger, et al., 2008; Massengill, et al., 2009). Fox and Savage (2009) conducted a review of 20 such reports on the 2007 tragedy and summarized the key findings. The various reports collectively recommended that institutions develop multidisciplinary teams “whose purpose is to receive and assess all reports of threat and other alarming behaviours by any student or employee of the college or university” (Fox & Savage, 2009, p. 1471). This pervasive recommendation sparked the emergence of the term *threat assessment* into the vernacular of higher education administrators, as institutions responded to the pressure to implement teams as a method to maintain the safety of campuses.

Threat assessment is defined as the process of identifying a potential perpetrator, evaluating the level of risk, and establishing a mechanism to address the risk (Fein, Vossekuil, & Holden, 1995). While it was not a new process, it was a relatively new approach within the setting of higher education. Threat assessment, originally developed by the United States Secret Service as a method to assess the risk of violence to the President, is a process that looks at known behaviours to understand potential risk in order to implement an appropriate course of action (Randazzo & Cameron, 2012). The adaptation of threat assessment protocols within institutions of higher education have emerged to provide a process for institutions to intervene when a member of the institution, most often a student, behaves in a manner that poses a risk to the safety of others.

Fox and Savage (2009) suggested that the work of such multidisciplinary teams tasked with threat assess represents a unique operational challenge as they must assess and act upon bizarre or disturbing behaviour. Considering the diversity of individuals on campus of higher education, it is logical to expect college and university members to reflect the physical and mental health trends of the populations within which they operate. Institutions of higher education have many different groups that comprise their campus communities, including faculty, staff, administration, students, and visitors. Students represent the largest portion of any campus community, and it is for this reason that the behaviour of students can mirror the societal norms, expectations, and the positive and negative attributes of the society within which they operate.

Attending to concerning behaviours is paramount for institutions as research has shown that the majority of perpetrators of mass casualty gun violence that occurred on campuses exhibited some warning behaviours that could have been addressed prior to the act of violence (Meloy, Hoffmann, Guldemann, & James, 2012). What constitutes high-risk student behaviour can vary between institutions; therefore, the term *problematic student behaviour* (PSB) will be used to describe the behaviours that such teams review. The PSB is defined as “high-risk students who appear to be disturbed and are creating major disturbances in the university community” (Hollingsworth, Dunkle, & Douce, 2009, p. 44). An example of PSB student behaviour that disrupts the campus community would be an individual who threatens to hurt an instructor, due to the belief that the instructor is responsible for the student’s inability to register in a specific class. The student displays unusual behaviours that cause fear for the instructor and others. This is an example of the types of PSB that postsecondary institutions must assess to determine how to intervene to prevent potential violent acts from occurring.

The concept of assessing the risk for violence that an individual or situation poses through the process of threat assessment is not a new method for managing risk. In 1989, postsecondary counselling expert Ursula Delworth first proposed the assessment-intervention of student problems (AISP) model. In this model, Delworth proposed a collaborative response mechanism to respond to certain types of student behaviour that impact the educational environment of institutions of higher education (Delworth, 1989). Delworth’s AISP model has proved immensely relevant and appropriate; thus, it remains relevant years after its introduction (Dunkle, 2009).

Postsecondary institutions have experienced significant changes to the composition and demographics of enrolled students and by extension the diversity of communities from which they originate. In Canada, institutions enrol greater numbers of international students, are experiencing greater demands for mental health services, must support students taking distance education classes and often maintain satellite campuses (Hardy Cox & Strange, 2010; Strange & Hardy Cox, 2016). The ever-changing student body has resulted in student behaviours and stakeholder expectations that are multifaceted social problems that administrators must address. Student behaviours that cause concern within the institution involve an intricate web and intersection of the complex environmental, political, financial, and social realities

involved in delivering higher learning in Canada. Such concerning behaviours, or PSBs, are complicated and often include breaches of campus policy and/or potential criminal acts and are compounded when the person of concern has known mental health issues. The complexity of these behaviours requires an understanding of the mental health and wellness of the student population. The topic of student mental wellbeing has been well researched in Canada and the United States and has utilized national survey data such as the National College Health Assessment (NCHA) (American College Health Association, 2010; Schwartz, 2006) or the National Survey of Counselling Directors (Gallagher, 2008, 2009, 2010). These reports highlighted trend of increases in the number of students experiencing mental health issues, which has directly impacted how institutions address the growing concern of PSBs.

Campus administrators and government agencies have recognized the significance that mental health has on the ability for students to succeed in their postsecondary studies; thus student mental health has received greater attention and investment by institutions. A 2009 cross-border (Canada and the United States) study of those who used campus health facilities found that one in five students report having been the victim of violence or crime within the past 6 months (Saewyc, et al., 2009). The most recent Canadian reference group of the NCHA highlighted that Canadian postsecondary students are experiencing potentially violent situations, with 22% of respondents reporting they had been verbally threatened in the past year (American College Health Association, 2016). While troubling, unfortunately this finding supports other research indicating postsecondary students experience distress at higher rates than the general population (Stallman, 2010). These two factors on student mental wellbeing have been directly observed within the operational services of on-campus student counselling services as 70% of centre directors report an increase in students requiring immediate crisis psychiatric care (Gallagher, 2009, 2010).

The need for individuals enrolled and working at institutions of higher learning to feel and be safe is a topic of great interest for administrators and scholars. It is important to note that safety is a social construct and thus different individuals will have different requirements of their safety. For the purpose of this study, safety refers to the ability for students, staff, faculty, and visitors are able to participate within a campus of higher education without experiencing violence. The alarming trends in the increased

incidences of campus violence (Astor, Guerra, & Van Acker, 2010; Nolan, Ford, & Kress, 2005) provide incentive for institutions to consider how behaviours are addressed in an attempt to prevent violence from occurring. Studies on the impacts of campus violence in the United States have shown that such violence has detrimental effects on the learning environment (Hirschy & Braxton, 2004; Kaminski, Koons-Witt, Thompson, & Weiss, 2010), student wellbeing (Fallahi, Austad, Fallon, & Leishman, 2009; Waits & Lundberg-Love, 2008), and ultimately student academic success (Mengo & Black, 2016). Therefore, as a mechanism to increase campus safety and ultimately the experience of all campus community members, campuses have widely implemented multidisciplinary teams to aid in the prevention of such incidents of violence on their campuses.

Fox and Burstein (2010) estimated that over 80% of all institutions in the United States have implemented a team dedicated to addressing PSB on campuses. These teams are tasked with receiving reports of worrisome behaviours, gathering information about such behaviours, assessing the associated risks, and developing a course of action (Deisinger, et al., 2008; Randazzo & Plummer, 2009). These teams go by many different names such as: threat assessment team, care team, or red flag teams (Lipka, 2009). Despite the disparity in team names, the term *behavioural intervention team* (BIT) has been established a specific team who operates to gather, assess and intervene when cases of PSB within institutions of higher education (Sokolow, et al., 2014) and will be used in this study to refer to such multidisciplinary teams.

BIT teams are comprised of individuals with diverse roles within the institution to assess individuals and situations that may pose a risk of potential harm to others within the institution. In recent years, this operational practice has dominated the conversation of campus safety in higher education and has resulted in numerous workshops, presentations, and specialists working in the field to help institutions implement such a team. The use of multidisciplinary teams to assess student behaviour was not a new process after the tragedy of Virginia Polytechnic Institute, “but their nature, composition, and function are changing dramatically as campuses adjust to new complexities of student mental illness and increasing violence” (Sokolow & Lewis, 2009, p. 68). In fact, a professional association with over 2800 members, The National Behavior Intervention Team Association (NaBITA) has been established to help educate, train, and support

BITs in their difficult work of intervening in incidents of PSB (National Behavioral Intervention Team Association, n.d.). While the implementation of BITs seems to have become a common practice in the United States no research has been conducted to explore the implementation of BIT team processes within the Canadian postsecondary context.

1.1. Statement of Problem

Campus safety became a core issue for campus administrators after a series of high-profile campus tragedies in North America. Canadian institutions have not been immune to the effects of campus violence. In December of 1989, tragedy came to L'École Polytechnique when a person shot and killed 14 female students and injured numerous others (Lynn, 1989). At the time, the incident was reported to be the third worst occurrence of campus violence in North America (Julien, 1989). Less than 5 years later, a professor at Concordia University murdered four employees after the institution had attempted to address the faculty member's pattern of concerning behaviours.. While this tragedy was not at the hands of a student, the incident remains a notable reminder of potential violence on college and university campuses. While not all incidents of violence on postsecondary campuses have occurred in Québec, many of the renowned incidents have occurred in the province. For example, in September of 2006 on the campus of Dawson College a person killed one student and injured 19 others before shooting themselves (Payne, 2006). ~~While rare,~~ These Canadian tragedies have had a lasting affect on the individuals who were directly impacted by the incident (Boyer, et al., 2010) which has required the administration of institutions to take action and address the numerous impacts for the campus community as well as to adhere to legal obligations of institutions to provide a safe environment.

While campus violence occurs across the globe, the majority of incidents that have been studied have occurred in the United States (Langman, 2013) representing over 69.5% of global incidents of school based mass murders (Agnich, 2015). While the incidences of violence are most prevalent in the United States, the tragedies of campus shootings that occurred at Dawson College and L'École Polytechnique demonstrate that violence on higher education campuses is a Canadian reality that needs to be understood. Tragic incidences of campus violence have served as a catalyst for

institutions to implement BIT teams as a violence prevention strategy. The study of the use, operational practices, and experiences of BITs and those who serve on teams thus provides a method to understand campus violence.

The purpose and membership of BITs has been a subject explored within the American postsecondary system (Ambler, et al., 2008; Cornell, 2010; Deisinger, et al., 2008; Dunkle, Silverstein, & Warner, 2008; Reddy, et al., 2001) and in fact there are an estimated 1,600 teams in existence within the United States (Lipka, 2009). While the recommendations and requirements have been implemented in the United States, it is unknown how Canadian institutions are addressing such behaviours and to what extent have they adopted the use of BITs to mitigate problematic behaviour.

1.2. Purpose of the Research

This research was conducted to understand the use of BIT teams in Canadian institutions of higher education as a mechanism to assess and intervene in cases of PSB. This study examined research conducted in the United States (Gamm, et al., 2011; Van Brunt, Sokolow, Lewis, & Schuster, 2014) and adapted it to understand the composition, meeting processes, operational protocols, and training regimes for such teams.

Previous research on American BITs has focused mainly on the use of teams and has yet to explore the experience of team members. Greenstein (2013) analyzed four years of outcomes of an American BIT team and found there was a need for research that specifically investigated the overall effectiveness of BIT teams as a strategy for violence prevention. In an effort to address this gap in the research, this study was designed to understand a previously unexplored area of BIT use, the experience of those individuals conducting the work, and to specifically understand how team members perceive the effectiveness of the team as a method to address PSB to prevent potentially serious incidents of campus violence.

The majority of research in the field of campus violence in higher education seeks to understand the reason *why* incidents of campus violence occur (Ambler, et al., 2008; Baker & Boland, 2011; Gibbons, 2010; Whitaker & Pollard, 1994; Wood & Shearing, 1998). The prominence of research conducted from such a perspective has

precluded an understanding of *what* is occurring in the field of violence risk assessment and *how* is it meeting the needs of campus administrators. It is for this reason that a practical approach to research was employed for this study as it served to inform the principles and practices currently used within the field. The findings of this research first and foremost provide further understanding of a subject that has a lack of empirical scholarship and serves to provide an understanding of the Canadian landscape of campus violence prevention that has yet been widely researched.

1.3. Research Questions

This research proposed to answer the following question: What is the experience of members of behavioural intervention teams that address problematic student behaviour within Canadian higher education? The following sub-questions were also considered:

- 1- To what degree do institutions use behavioural intervention teams?
2. What institutional variables, such as size, location, provision of on-campus housing, or type of institution, influence the intervention practices?
3. What barriers and limitations do members of behavioural intervention teams believe exist for the success of interventions?
4. To what degree do members of behavioural intervention teams view their assessment system to be effective?

1.4. Research Design

To provide the Canadian context on this topic, a national study was needed to examine the use of BIT teams as a practice within Canada. This research sought to explore an operational practice within higher education in Canada that has yet been studied. The lack of Canadian research in this area meant that a national understanding was necessary to be able to provide a comparison to the United States research and to establish a context for future Canadian research. Had this project explored the experience of team members from one or a few institutions it would have been unclear to what extent the experiences were representative of the Canadian higher education context.

Having participated as a member of different BIT teams, the researcher was aware that many institutions with BITs do not overtly advertise their team and/or the membership. Therefore, it was evident that the first task of this research study required a national inquiry to identify and access institutions that had implemented multidisciplinary teams. In the United States, similar studies had used national surveys (Gamm, et al., 2011; Van Brunt, et al., 2012); therefore, this research adapted the survey instruments from the two American studies and replicated the research design to gain an understanding of the current operational practices being implemented in Canada. While a national survey provided general knowledge regarding the use of BITs, further methods were necessary to both identify and access team members. For this reason, this study used a multi-staged mixed methods approach.

The first stage used an electronic survey sent to the senior student affairs officer of all publically funded English-speaking colleges, universities, and postsecondary institutions in Canada asking participants to identify if their institution had a team used to address PSB. Institutions that had such a team were then asked to participate in the second stage of the study where team members were asked to provide more detail about the membership, functions, and processes used by their team. Participants in the second stage were then asked to volunteer to participate in the final stage of the research that involved one-on-one semi-structured interviews. A detailed outline of the research process is presented in Chapter 3.

1.5. Significance of the Research

The majority of research on campus violence has focused on the American system of higher education. While such research can serve to inform the Canadian context, there is little evidence-based research on the impact of campus violence or crime in Canada. A 2008 quantitative study investigated the types of violence Canadian college and university students in Ontario were experiencing (Tremblay, et al., 2008). The study found that “nearly two thirds of women and half of men have some experience of unwanted negative social incidents” (Tremblay, et al., 2008, p. 70) This research reinforces the need to understand how institutions can intervene to prevent large-scale incidents in order to maintain a safe, effective learning environment.

Creating safe campus communities for all members, students, staff, faculty, and the general public, represents a significant challenge for administrators to navigate the expectations of others within a complex set of legal and policy requirements. For example, in British Columbia a university student had expressed to a peer a desire to kill others that resulted in the student being arrested, this case gained media attention labelling the student as a “potential serial killer” (“Urge to kill: The story of a potential serial killer,” 2012). This disturbing case has reinforced the notion that high-risk student behaviour occurs within Canadian postsecondary colleges and universities and must be addressed to protect the safety of others within the institution. The general public has an expectation that institutions of higher learning are safe environments; as such, college and university administrators are expected to implement a system to be able to gather, assess, and act upon PSB cases in order to uphold the safety of the campus community members.

Education in Canada is a provincial jurisdiction that results in each province, and to some degree each institution, having unique operational mandates (Shanahan, Nilson, & Broshko, 2015). This is relevant when contrasting the report findings against data gathered in the federal educational system within the United States. The operational difference is most evident in the United States Clery Act (“Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act,” 1990), which mandates institutions to report their campus crime statistics in a standardized format. The difference between the Canadian and American educational structures has resulted in a lack of national data on campus crimes or violence across Canada. While there are numerous professional associations such as Canadian Association of College and University Student Services, there is no national Canadian standard when considering campus violence. The professional association NaBITA is primarily an American organization that has developed a collection of curated resources that focus on best practices within the post secondary education system of the United States. While Canadian institutions are members of NaBITA is unknown how many have purchased memberships. The absence of a Canadian organization focusing on the topic of campus violence has resulted in a complete absence of literature on the intervention practices of Canadian institutions to prevent campus tragedy.

The final and least studied yet most imperative aspect of this research is the focus on the experience of BIT team members. While numerous reports and an exhaustive list of policy recommendations are available to administrators (National Behavioral Intervention Team Association, n.d.), the same is not true for scholarly research of BITs, either quantitative or qualitative. At the time of this study, a review of the literature found very few research studies that investigated BITs within higher education. Some studies have sought to evaluate the effectiveness of training programs on the learning of team members (Allen, et al., 2008; Storey, Gibas, Reeves, & Hart, 2011) however, little research has been conducted on the effectiveness of BIT teams as a violence prevention strategy.

Not only does this research provide the first national study on the use of BITs in Canada, but it also investigates the effectiveness of the practice by considering the experiences of those conducting the work. Previous scholarship and reports have indicated that multidisciplinary teams are necessary to prevent campus violence; however, to date, no data have been able to prove this assertion. This research provides an account of the effectiveness of the BIT process through the experience of team members. This research equips Canadian student affairs professionals, and those tasked with mitigating student violence, with a understanding of BIT teams as an approach address PSB. The results offer a lens into the current BIT practices in Canada and a firsthand account of how those practices are perceived to help or hinder the work of BIT teams. This research provides guiding principles in BIT team membership, practices, and interventions that serve to offer evidence-based rationale for implementation of BITs.

1.6. Researcher's Professional Background

As the author of this dissertation was, and continues to be, employed in a professional role within the Canadian postsecondary system, it is important to outline my personal and professional experience in assessing and intervening in situations of PSB. I have worked in the field of student affairs for over 20 years with experience at several Canadian institutions and within different professional roles. The majority of my work has been in roles within operational units that have direct responsibility for the support the wellbeing of students in departments such as residence life, student development,

wellbeing services, judicial affairs, and case management. This breadth of experience has provided me with a consistent exposure and involvement in the institutional responses to situations of PSB. Over the decades, I have witnessed an increase in the complexity and frequency of cases of PSB that have caused greater levels of disruption throughout the campus community. The exponential growth of challenging student behaviour had resulted in increased opportunities for personal and professional development for student affairs professionals across the country to be able to prepare to address PSB. To enhance my ability to address complex and serious cases of PSB, I have participated in numerous professional training opportunities in violence risk assessment, judicial affairs, behavioural intervention, and threat assessment. As a seasoned student affairs practitioner, I have witnessed how Canadian institutions have gradually adapted the way in which they address PSB from an informal and insulated process involving a limited number of people to the current situation where institutions have implemented more formal and comprehensive multidisciplinary response strategies. Having worked at different institutions, I have served on such multidisciplinary teams with others who both have extensive training and experience in violence risk assessment and with others with minimal background in the area. My professional experience has meant that I have been exposed to the challenges and pressures campus leaders experience as they seek to implement effective strategies to address PSB.

The years of experience the researcher has addressing PSB within Canadian institutions highlighted the need for a greater understanding of the scope and authority of Canadian institutions to implement operational practices to address cases of concerning student behaviour in a way that maintains the safety and security of the entire campus community. My personal and professional experiences were a key motivator in completing this inquiry. I have noticed a greater propensity for institutions to participate in training opportunities provided by American organizations on the subjects of threat assessment and violence prevention. Having participated in numerous trainings and serving on teams that addressed serious cases of potential violence, I explored how peer institutions were managing similar cases in an effort to learn Canadian practices. While conducting this review, I noticed a disparity among how institutions were managing the work and a lack of Canadian research or reference documents.

1.7. Theoretical Framework

The implementation of BITs by postsecondary institutions is intended as a mechanism to prevent violence by members of a campus community towards others within the institution. Research has demonstrated that effective violence prevention activities use a social ecological approach as a method to consider the complex nature of violence (Krug, Dahlberg, Mercy, Zwi, & Lonzano, 2002). A social ecological approach emphasises how the behaviours of individuals are influenced by the various social systems within form the way individuals and groups of individuals act within given social structures (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; McLeroy, Bibeau, Steckler, & Glanz, 1988). A fundamental principle of BIT teams is importance of having a team comprised of members with diverse roles as it provides a greater ability for the team to assess the behaviour and deciding on a course of action that will prevent future violence or harm (Sokolow, et al., 2014; Van Brunt, 2012). This research used a social ecological approach to explore how the various social systems influence the work of BIT team members and conversely how BITs impact the various social systems. Chapter 2 and 3 provides a greater discussion of the social ecological model and its application within the research design and analysis.

1.8. Summary

This chapter has outlined that PSB is an operational reality on campuses of higher education in North America. Incidents of campus violence in the United States have spurred the implementation of BITs as an operational requirement of multidisciplinary teams on campuses; these BITs are being implemented as a best practice for institutions to address precipitating behaviours. While this operational requirement has been widely recommended and reviewed in the United States, a similar understanding is lacking for the operational practices in Canada. This research sought to better understand how Canadian institutions of higher education are addressing PSB through the use of BITs and to understand the experiences of team members.

The following chapter provides an overview of the relevant literature on the subjects of campus violence, historic incidents of campus violence, PSB, and the practice of student behaviour assessment. The second chapter also discusses the social ecological model that served as the theoretical foundation of this study. The third

chapter provides an overview of the methodology used to conduct this study and discusses the mixed method design of the study including an in-depth review of each stage of the research and a discussion regarding the trustworthiness of the study. Chapters 4 and 5 will present the findings of the research. Chapter 4 outlines the quantitative findings of the research that provide a summary of the use and functions of BIT teams in Canada. Chapter 5 describes the qualitative findings that describe the challenges team members' experiences, the perceptions of the effectiveness of BITs, and the overall experience of being a team member. Finally, chapter 6 and 7 discusses the findings of this research in the context of the existing literature. Chapter 6 contrasts the findings of the use and function of BIT teams in Canada to that of American teams, and chapter 7 uses the social ecological model to present how BIT teams are influenced and influence the various social systems in order to situate the relevance of the findings within the Canadian higher education landscape. The study concludes with recommendations and suggestions for further research.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

Higher education in Canada faces many complex and dynamic organizational challenges with some prevalent issues such as the limitation of funding, access to education, and the potential shortage of faculty (Beach, Boadway, & McInnis, 2005). However, one issue that is not discussed or researched extensively within Canadian institutions of higher education is the risk of campus violence and how colleges and universities are adapting their operational and administrative practices to address this concern. This chapter will draw upon the literature of campus violence, mostly conducted within the United States, in order to provide a context for understanding this Canadian research.

The chapter begins by establishing what is meant by the term campus violence. The relevance of campus violence will be described by comparing and contrasting significant incidents in the United States with those of Canadian institutions of higher education and describe the impact of these incidents. As it is assumed that colleges and universities have an ability to prevent incidents of violence, the chapter presents a discussion of the types of student behaviours that can pose a risk of violence resulting in a need for institutions to take actions to intervene and thus prevent future violence. To understand how institutions address such behaviours a review of the best practices of the implementation of multidisciplinary teams, called BITs, will be presented, with specific attention paid to the unique situational context that violence in higher education provides when conducting violence prevention work. Finally, an overview of the theoretical framework that was used to conduct this study will be outlined as it relates to a previously unexplored lens through which violence prevention in higher education can be understood.

Before introducing the literature surrounding this topic, I want to highlight that the names and other identifying information of any perpetrators of violence have intentionally not been included. This choice was made as using a person's name provides notoriety to the individual and can dilute the circumstance of the tragedy, which is counter to the purpose of this research. Additionally when referring to authors or research participants, gender-neutral language was purposefully used to respect that those individuals did not have an opportunity to inform the researcher of their preferred pronouns.

2.1. Campus Violence

College and university campuses can be viewed as microcosms of the greater society within which they operate. The size of the student bodies of many Canadian institutions is larger than the population of many cities that are home to smaller colleges or universities. Complex societal issues such as fiscal pressures, community infrastructure, health, and safety are challenges that must be addressed in the operation of institutions of higher education. Maintaining the safety of the campus community, made up of staff, faculty and students, involves operational pressures that include legal as well as moral obligations of the administrative leadership. Campuses must evaluate the presence, impact, and risk of violent and criminal acts of its members and take reasonable actions to prevent foreseeable acts of violence.

In 1998 in the United States adopted an amendment to the existing Student Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act (1990) that was titled the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (Janosik & Gehring, 2003) which is commonly referred to as the *Clery Act*. This piece of legislation created a wealth of data regarding crimes that occurred on college and university campuses throughout the United States resulting from a vast amount of research on the topic of campus crime (Baker & Boland, 2011; Bauer, Guerino, Nolle, Tang, & Chandler, 2008; Gregory & Janosik, 2003). In 2005, the American College Health Assessment team commissioned a comprehensive study of campus crime using the Clery Act data (Carr, 2005). This report found crime and violence was a pervasive issue on American college or university campuses.

Unlike the United States where education is a federal responsibility, within Canada each province has individual control over its respective institutions of higher education (Shanahan, 2015). This difference in governance structure establishes circumstance where there is a lack of national campus crime reporting, such as the Clery Act, resulting in the absence of an understanding about the prevalence and severity of campus crimes in Canada. In 2011, the overall number of police reported crimes in Canada was down by more than 6% (Brennan, 2012) however it is unknown to what degree these crimes occurred on campuses of higher education or whether or not the same percentage decline was reflected on college and university campuses. The lack of

higher education specific crime statistics makes it difficult to study campus violence or crime in Canada, as such, this inquiry, which considered American research in an attempt to apply it to the Canadian context, was needed.

2.1.1. Defining campus violence

The term violence congers up a variety of images and meanings depending on an individual's perspective, with some who think of a physical act, such as of hitting whereas others may consider more lethal circumstances that involve the use of weapons. The diversity of definitions of violence is evident when researching crimes and other violent acts that occur on campuses of higher education (Mayhew, Caldwell, & Goldman, 2011). For example in the article titled "Preventing Violence on College Campuses", Roark (1987) defined violence as "behaviour that is intended to hurt another person (p. 367). In contrast, in *An Educator's Guide to Violence in Schools* (Roher, 2010), violence was defined as "any act that results in victimization of a particular person or persons, irrespective of physical contact" (p. 2). The lack of a consistent definition across the published work reviewed was problematic; however much of the literature on campus violence referred to (Carr, 2005) article "Campus Violence White Paper," which used the World Health Organization's definition of violence:

The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation. (Krug, et al., 2002, p. 5)

While this definition is more complicated it provides a framework for the complexity and degrees of violence that can occur on campuses of higher education. This definition of *violence* has been adopted for the purposes of this research.

The World Health Organization's definition of violence is quite broad and it was for this reason that Carr (2005) contextualized the term *campus violence* to refer to violent acts that occur on campuses. The report outlined 10 different categories of campus violence: (a) sexual violence, including sexual assault and stalking; (b) discriminatory crimes; (c) hazing; (d) celebratory violence; (e) suicide and attempted suicide; (f) murder/suicide; (g) murder/non-negligent manslaughter; (h) aggravated assault; (i) arson; and (j) attacks on staff/faculty. These 10 categories have been used

to understand and research each of the categories of violence and crimes on campuses of higher. It was the desire to understand the statistics, severity, and frequency of crimes occurring on campuses of higher education that led to the introduction of the term *campus violence*.

It is important to note that the term *school violence* is most often used to refer to crimes and violence that occurs within elementary and secondary schools (Astor, et al., 2010; Barton, 2008; Roher, 2010). In contrast, the broad definition of campus violence refers to many forms of crime or violence that can occur on campuses of higher education. This research was specifically concerned with understanding student behaviours that pose a significant risk to others or the institution's reputation or properties and that would require intervention on behalf of the institution. For example, many of the large-scale incidents of campus tragedy have involved shootings (Borum, Cornell, Modzeleski, & Jimerson, 2010) that are directed towards a specific individual or individuals. Therefore, the term *targeted violence* refers to lethal actions, or those intended to be lethal, that are directed at a specific individual or individuals prior to the act occurring. This definition remains consistent with the terminology used in current research on serious campus violence (Drysdale, et al., 2010; Vossekuil, Fein, Reddy, Borum, & Modzeleski, 2004) and thus includes targeted violence within the definition.

2.1.2. Campus Violence Trends

American researchers have been able to use the data collected as a result of the Clery Act and other American reporting requirements to study the prevalence, impact, and incidents of violence within campus student populations, and they have exposed an alarming trend of increased exposure to crime, violence, and other unacceptable acts (Baum & Klaus, 2005; Holton, 1998; Waits & Lundberg-Love, 2008). The data collected as part of the Clery Act focus on crimes that pose a concern for the safety of those who attend a given institution. Crimes such as assault, sexual assault, murder, and robbery are tracked, as they are crimes against people or personal violence. Research within American institutions of higher education have found that approximately half a million students have experienced a form of personal crime (Carr, 2005). Carr's (2005) summary work on campus violence indicates that the most prevalent crimes reported by postsecondary students were incidents of violence or assault. These findings confirm

earlier research by Langford (2004), who identified that over 17% of American university students have experienced some form of violence or crime within the span of a year. However, these statistics alone do not paint the whole picture of campus violence. While access to Clery Act data has provided a source of information that can be analyzed there are limitations to the data collection. Nobles, Fox, Khey, and Lizotte (2013) suggested that Clery data alone do not offer a complete picture and that the information should be considered in relation to local community crime data as the Clery Act data do not provide a complete picture of victimization, as the data gathered focus solely on crimes that occur on campus and not incidents that occurred in close proximity to the campus.

Maintaining the safety of institutions of higher education is a priority for all stakeholders; thus, campus crime and violence are widely researched topics in the United States. In fact, in 2004, a keyword search of the term campus crime and violence in psychological journals revealed only 21 sources prior to 1993 and almost 300 in the following decade (Furlong, Morrison, Cornell, & Skiba, 2004). The prevalence of the topic in research journals shows that interest in the subject is exponentially increasing; however, a surge in the number of publications does not equate to increased evidence-based research. One of the key recommendations in this work was a warning that campus violence research must be critical and attentive to the methodologies as “the field moves beyond its origins in affirming the presence of a social problem towards understanding the dynamics that uniquely contribute to the occurrence and suppression of aggression and violence, in all of its forms, on school campuses” (Furlong, et al., 2004, p. 11). A recent study of 64 perpetrators of schools shootings in the United States over the past 50 years found that incidents of campus violence, in which 10 or more people were victimized increased from 11.1% to 41.6% (Langman, 2016). Langman’s (2016) study revealed that gun violence on campuses has drastically increased over the last 25 years and found a trend in the United States of an increase of immigrant perpetrators of such violence. Thus, the increase in incidents of lethal campus violence is a complex issue that must be understood to help reduce tragic incidents from occurring.

While the prevalence and discussion of acts of violence in the United States may be helpful to understand the greater trend, the information cannot be directly translated

to the Canadian context. In their review of crime and policing in Canadian higher education Gomme and Micucci (1997) found no rigorous study of crime, fear, or policing had been conducted in Canada; however, research did show few incidents of serious crimes occur on campuses. This trend remains to this day, with a gap in research in Canadian incidents of violence in postsecondary campuses. Given this gap in research the consideration of national crime data are relevant. According to a Statistics Canada report individuals between the ages of 20 and 24 years are the most likely to be the victims of violent crime and that approximately 20% of Canadians over the age of 15 report being victims of crime (Perreault, 2015). Postsecondary students would fall within these age ranges, which highlight the need to further understand the risk of violence on Canadian postsecondary campuses. Despite the student populations of Canadian postsecondary institutions being at a greater risk of exposure to violence, there remains a lack of Canadian research to understand the likelihood or incidents of campus violence.

When considering literature that examined occurrences of campus violence in the United States, researchers turn to two main sources of national data that are used: The National Crime Victim Survey (NCVS) or the Clery Act Crime Statistics (CACS). The NCVS is a national survey that was given to both individuals attending postsecondary and those who had not and was administered by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (Baum & Klaus, 2005). Consistently, the research using the NCVS data has shown a pattern in which overall violence and crime are declining on campuses despite increases in gun violence. Baum and Klaus (2005) reviewed the results from 1995-2002 and found that incidents of violence had decreased and that the student rates of violence had fallen by 54%, whereas non-students had only declined by 45%. This research was further supported in 2005, when students aged 12-18 indicated a similar decrease in incidents of violence (Bauer, et al., 2008). Researchers also found that 93% of all crimes experienced by students occurred off campus and mostly in the evening hours (Baum & Klaus, 2005). However, the research using the NCVS has shown that campuses are not immune to presence of violence (Fisher, Sloan, Cullen, & Lu, 1998).

The second source of data on campus violence comes from the CACS, Clery data, to which all postsecondary institutions in the United States must report. These annual reports are once again supporting the downward trend in reported incidents of

campus violence. A review of 3 years of data from 2000 – 2002 found reductions in the number of reported crimes such as aggravated assaults, which dropped by 62% (Keels, 2004). The same downward trend in campus crime was found in another review of 4 years of data from 2005-2008, and once again aggregated assaults reduced by 15% (Drysdale, et al., 2010). However, the use of CACS did reveal an alarming trend that the NCVS did not, which was an increase in murders/non-negligent manslaughter cases. Drysdale, et al. (2010) found that in 2005 there were 28 deaths as compared to 66 in 2007 and 55 in 2008. The fact that 174 people died on campuses in a violent act (Drysdale, et al., 2010) has resulted in increased attention to incidents of targeted violence. Agnich (2015) conducted a study that looked at 282 global incidents of possible mass casualty violence of two or more intended or realized victims within all levels of the education system and reported a sharp increase in the past 30 years in attempted and realized mass casualty violence. Furthermore, these incidents of violence are far more likely to occur in North American than the rest of the globe (Agnich, 2015).

As a result of a large scale incident of school violence at Columbine High School, the Safe Schools Initiative was established as a joint effort between the Secret Service and the Department of Education, as both parties sought to learn from past incidents of targeted violence to develop a better understanding the actions of the perpetrators in the hopes of preventing future tragedies (Vossekuil, et al., 2004). The research looked at incidents of both campus as well as school violence and found that over three quarters of all perpetrators had at least one target they planned to injure and that 46% of targets ultimately became victims (Vossekuil, et al., 2004). Of the victims in targeted violence cases, 41% were students and 54% were staff or faculty of the institution; in addition, 61% of perpetrators had revenge as the main motive for targeting violence (Vossekuil, et al., 2004). Unlike the NCVS data, which found that 93% of crime happened off campus, 60% of targeted violence occurred during school days and therefore on school property (Vossekuil, et al., 2004). Another key finding is that the majority of perpetrators developed a plan days prior to the incident and that more than 81% had informed at least one other person of their plans to commit violence (Phaneuf, 2009; Vossekuil, et al., 2004). The findings from the aforementioned studies highlights that the majority of targeted violence on campuses is premeditated and provides an opportunity for intervention by others to prevent the violent act from occurring.

Further research and analysis has been completed to look specifically at incidents of targeted violence in higher education as reported in *Targeted Violence: Targeted Violence Affecting Institutions of Higher Education* (Drysdale, et al., 2010). This report found a total of 272 cases of targeted violence since 1900 with over 75% of the incidents occurring in the past 3 decades. These 272 cases resulted in 281 deaths and 247 injuries to students and staff (Drysdale, et al., 2010, p. 11). The report provided a comprehensive overview of the locations of the incidents, the weapons used, the genders of the perpetrators and the victims, the rationales for the incidents and much more.

More recently, Langman (2013) conducted an analysis of 16 significant cases of global campus violence, including three Canadian incidents. The analysis categorized such incidents as either targeted or random, representing three different typologies of perpetrator; psychopathic, psychotic, or traumatized. The analysis found that campus violence incidents were more often random attacks, which are usually conducted by psychotic perpetrators as compared to targeted incidents, which are often caused, by psychopathic perpetrators. The three Canadian perpetrators included in the analysis reflected these findings as two were assessed as random attacks by psychotic perpetrators and one was categorized as a target incident by a psychopathic perpetrator. Both types of violence are possible on campuses, and considerable research illustrates that institutions of higher education have grappled with incidents of campus violence for the better part of a century (Langman, 2013).

The research on campus violence, specifically targeted violence, highlights the urgency for institutions to understand and prevent such incidents from occurring on their campuses and thus adversely impacting the campus community. The issue of campus safety has increasingly become a key issue for campus administration after a series of high profile campus tragedies occurred around the globe in the past decades. While acts of campus violence can range in scope and impact, large incidents of mass casualty targeted violence provide clarity on the important need for institutions of higher education to address the potential of campus violence. Tragic incidents provide not only the rationale but also case studies for institutions to learn from on how they can prevent, address, and respond to campus violence in an effort to keep the campus community safe.

2.1.3. Historic American Incidents of Campus Violence

A review of active shooter incidents in the United States between 2000 and 2013 found that there were an average of 11.4 incidents per year and over 1,000 people injured or killed in those incidents (Blair & Schweit, 2014). Of all 160 incidents studied almost 25% occurred within an educational environment, which was the second most common location for active shooter events, with a total of 60 individuals killed or injured and in which the student was most often the perpetrator of the violence. As of 2010, in the United States there had been almost 300 cases of targeted campus violence within the past century (Drysdale, et al., 2010). Reviewing all cases would be overwhelming; however, three key incidents in recent times can be used to illustrate the varying degrees of tragic actions that can occur. The following three main incidents will be reviewed: 1995 Harvard University, 2007 Virginia Polytechnic Institute, and 2008 Northern Illinois University.

Harvard University - 1995

In May of 1995 a pre-med student at Harvard University stabbed their roommate 45 times and later committed suicide in a dormitory bedroom (Hewitt & Longley, 1995). The deceased roommate's friend was also attacked but escaped with only minor injuries. It was reported that the perpetrator had been struggling academically and had not been getting along with their roommate (Hewitt & Longley, 1995). These two facts considered in isolation could describe many students on any given campus. What makes this incident important to consider was that after the incident it was discovered that the victim had received a letter from their roommate expressing extreme anger over the fact that the victim had made arrangements to live with someone else for the next term (Hewitt & Longley, 1995). Most peculiar was the fact that the school newspaper had received a picture of the murderous student 5 days before the event with a note indicating that soon the paper would need it for a very important story. In isolation, each incident does not reveal a cogent pattern, however, when viewed all together a concerning pattern emerged. This pattern incited the family of the deceased student to sue the university for failure to address the warning signs and prevent their loved one's violent death. Despite the fact that each event or action occurred between different people, the community held the perspective that the institution should have recognized the signs of a disturbed student and intervened prior to the tragic incident.

Virginia Polytechnic Institute - 2007

The second case is the most horrific and well known. It was a decade ago when the worst incidence of campus violence occurred in North America at Virginia Polytechnic Institute. On April 16, 2007, 32 people were killed and another 17 were injured when an international student opened fire around campus (O'Neill, et al., 2008). Immediately following this tragic incident the Governor of the state of Virginia commissioned a review of the incident, which was released 4 months later (Massengill, et al., 2007). This comprehensive review presented key facts in the tragedy as well as recommendations to help prevent similar incidents from occurring. Like other campus murders, the perpetrator had exhibited numerous concerning behaviours prior to the events leading up to the tragic day. Some of the pivotal points surround the fact that various members of the institution and community had concerns with the student's behaviour; however, these concerns were not reported to a central location. For example, prior to the campus violence occurring, the perpetrator: (a) submitted disturbing writing to faculty, which were reported to senior administrators, and the perpetrator was referred to professional assistance; (b) had inappropriate actions with fellow students that were reported and investigated by police; (c) had been referred to professional psychological support for their suicidal thoughts and possible psychosis; (d) had purchased weapons at a store directly across from the campus; and (e) had called in false bomb threats to the campus in what was believed to be a test of the response systems of the institution (Massengill, et al., 2007). This horrific tragedy has been the subject of numerous case studies and reports that have attempted to understand the incident and the impact it had (Agger & Luke, 2009; Amada, 2007; Chapman, 2008; Cornell & Allen, 2011; Fallahi, et al., 2009; Figley & Jones, 2008; Leavitt, Spellings, & Gonzalez, 2007; Song, 2008; Thrower, et al., 2008). The tragic and devastating events of April 2007 have forever changed the public's perception and requirements for campus safety.

Northern Illinois University - 2008

Unfortunately, there are more recent cases of campus tragedy that can be discussed; however, the final example chosen for this literature review was the second most deadliest in recent time and the fourth deadliest in the United States history (Kaminski, et al., 2010). On February 14, 2008, a former undergraduate student walked

into a large lecture hall on the campus of Northern Illinois University and killed five people and injured 21 (Northern Illinois University, 2008). The reason why the shooter chose this particular classroom still remains unclear; however, it is assumed that they were reacting to their concerns of the changes in their graduate program and the complacency of the students in the sociology tutorials they delivered (Northern Illinois University, 2008). A case study of this incident found that the shooter had a troubled past filled with police encounters including one involving a small Drano bomb, numerous suicide attempts, and a history of mental illness (Northern Illinois University, 2008). This tragic event had such a profound affect that the state introduced new legislation called the Campus Safety Enhancement Act (2008) that legislated the requirement of institutions to have comprehensive emergency response in place to prevent and address campus shootings.

Summary of American Incidents of Campus Violence

These and many other tragic events that have occurred in the United States have been widely publicized in the global media when they occur. A review of newspapers in 2004 found almost 1,300 articles on school violence in the previous two decades as compared to just 291 for the 13 prior years (Furlong, et al., 2004). This demonstrates that incidents of campus violence are newsworthy and receive a great deal of media attention not only in the United States but in Canada as well. Furthermore, American incidents are often reported in the Canadian media ("N.B. students stunned by Virginia campus shootings," 2007, April 17). These events have ripple affects that cause communities and institutions to examine the safety systems in place on their own campuses.

2.1.4. Historic Canadian Incidents of Campus Violence

Canada has not been without incidents of large-scale campus tragedy. Within the past 25 years there have been five core incidents of targeted violence on campuses of higher education in Canada. The following review of these five incidents demonstrates that occurrences of campus violence in Canada substantially differ from those in the United States in terms of the perpetrator's connection to the campus where the violence occurred.

L'École Polytechnique - 1989

The first and most significant incident occurred in 1989 on the campus of L'École Polytechnique in Québec, when on December 6th, a lone gunman shot and killed 14 female students and injured 13 other students and staff before taking their life (Lynn, 1989). At the time, the incident was reported to be the third worst incident of campus violence in North America (Julien, 1989). The gunman was not a student of the institution; however, it was later learned that the actions were politically motivated and they blamed feminism for their failures such as not being admitted into the military or L'École Polytechnique (Eglin & Hester, 2003). The shooter believed that women were claiming power they believed was traditionally reserved for men and witnesses of the tragic day recount the shooter taking aim at women and shouting that they hated feminists (Bradley, 2006). This horrific event has not only been memorialized as the worst case of campus violence in Canadian history, but also as a date of remembrance in order to bring attention towards the plight of the ongoing social issue of violence against women (Bradley, 2006; Rosenberg, 1996). It is common for campuses across Canada to hold events scheduled in December to remember the women who lost their lives as a result of Canada's largest incident of mass casualty gun violence on a postsecondary campus.

Concordia University - 1992

A few years later, and once again in Québec, another incident occurred on the campus of Concordia University; however, this time the tragedy involved faculty members. On August 24, 1992, an associate professor went to the Engineering Department and shot and killed four fellow faculty members, injuring a secretary in the process (Douglass, 1996). The gunman had been at the institution for over 12 years and had commented that colleagues were stealing their research and had acted in an abusive way towards others in the department (Bergman, 1994). A comprehensive review of this tragedy outlined a decade long history of serious issues and vitriolic actions that include allegations of rape, removal from classes, and even previous threats of violence (Cowan, 1994). The gunman was arrested and convicted for crimes, which were, according to the perpetrator, motivated by a belief of corruption within the department. This tragic event highlights that any member of the institution can commit violent acts.

British Columbia Institute of Technology - 1993

Little is known about the third case, as it did not receive much attention; however, it does bear mentioning. On January 24, 1993 the daughter of a prominent Hong Kong official was shot with a cross bow in a campus parking lot of British Columbia Institute of Technology and died as a result of her injuries (Young, 1993). To this day there has been no arrests in the case despite a large reward being offered by her family (Clark, 1993, April 8). It is not clear as to why little media attention was given to this case. It may be that this incident is not often researched or written about due to the murder being attributed to her family status as opposed to her schooling.

Dawson College - 2006.

In 2006, once again in the province of Québec, another significant tragedy occurred on the campus of Dawson College. On September 13, 2006, a person came to campus and killed one student and injured 19 others before taking their own life (Payne, 2006). The shooter was not a student of Dawson College and therefore little was known about the motives for the violent attack. The days following the incident more information came to light about who the shooter was however; to this day the perpetrator's motives remain unclear. The review of the online profiles of the shooter illustrated that they were a troubled person who was very angry with society as a whole ("Montreal gunman called himself 'an angel of death'," 2006). The campus of Dawson College is centrally located in the large metropolis of Montreal, which may be why its students were targeted, not because of any malicious intent towards the institution or its members themselves.

Simon Fraser University - 2011

Much like the tragedy of Dawson College, an incident of targeted violence in Canada was not the action of a student of the institution; rather, it occurred on the campus. In the early morning hours of September 28, 2011, a young female student was shot to death outside the entrance to the Surrey campus of Simon Fraser University (Scallan, 2011). This tragic murder went unsolved for years, and it was only recently that the victim's ex-boyfriend and an accomplice had been arrested and charged with her murder. They had originally pleaded not guilty (Zytaruk, 2012). In 2016 the perpetrator pleaded guilty and explained that his actions were motivated by his anger

that the victim was with another man (Talmazan, 2016, March 3). Like other incidents in Canada, the location of this tragedy of targeted violence was not associated with the institution.

Other Incidents of Campus Violence

There have been other notable incidents of violence on Canadian campuses that were not a result of targeted violence. In these cases, the campus is where the perpetrator committed the crime, but was not a student or staff member of the given institution. For example, in 2012, a robbery occurred on the University of Alberta campus in which four armoured guards were shot and three died by a non-student shooter ("3 dead, 1 in critical after University of Alberta shooting near Hub Mall," 2012). In 2014, a person entered the food court of York University in Ontario and shot two students, luckily no one died. The shooter was later identified as a 22 year old with a criminal history with no connection to the institution ("York University shooting leads to arrest of man, 22," 2014). Both incidents caused people to be concerned for their safety on campuses. In fact the victims of the shooting sued the institution for the lack of security services on the campus (Stark, 2014).

The national media has paid attention to incidents of violence that have occurred on campus that did not result in death as well as off-campus tragedies that were associated with the institution which resulted in the institutions having to take actions to respond as a result of the violent act. For example, in March 2011, an international student at Memorial University stabbed another student in a building on campus reportedly for speaking too loudly in class. Once the student was convicted of the crime, they were suspended from the institution for the period of a year ("Chinese student gets probation for stabbing: Memorial University may invite him back to campus," 2011). In another act of violence in April 2014 a student stabbed five other students to death at an off-campus party celebrating the end of the semester (Geddes, 2015). While this was not an example of on campus violence, as the incident did not occur on campus, the University of Calgary was in the media and the incident impacted the perceived safety of the campus community. The perpetrator was later found not responsible as a result of a mental illness ("Matthew de Good found not criminally responsible for stabbing five people to death at Calgary party," 2016). These incidents demonstrate that not all campus violence are a result of gun violence, and that violence against community

members by other community members has an impact on the institution and thus, institutions must attend to concerns of potential violence.

While these incidents represent unfortunate tragedies, there are minor incidents that have never been reported in the media, as the violence was prevented by the actions of the institution. In Canada there exists a well-publicized example in which a student was removed from campus after intervention by the institution as a result of potential violence. In 2012, a student at Simon Fraser University had discussed a desire to kill others. This ultimately led to the discovery of a “kill kit” (Maher, 2014, p. 151). While the student had not harmed anyone within the campus community, the incident brought to light the important role that institutions have in protecting the campus community from potentially violent individuals.

Summary of Canadian Incidents of Campus Violence

Contrasting the most notorious incidents of targeted violence of Canada and the United States, there exists a difference of the nature of the perpetrator. In the cases of the United States, the perpetrators were members of the campus community where there were clear warning signs that were known prior to the person intentionally targeting community members. In Canada, except for the case at Concordia in 1992, the incidents occurred by individuals not associated with the institution; as such, the warning signs were not necessarily available to members of the institution.

These incidents of violence on campuses in the United States and Canada are horrific examples tragedies that have had lasting adverse impacts. Agger and Luke (2009) described the importance of understanding these incidents as “campus killings have become viral. Thus, we need to dig deeply into what happened at Virginia Tech in order to short –circuit these seemingly self-reproducing horrors” (p. xi). Regardless of the respective circumstances of each tragedy, institutions have an obligation to prevent harm if at all possible as the devastating effects that occur as a result of an act of violence have lasting impact on those involved, the campus community, and society.

2.1.5. Impacts of Campus Violence

Unfortunately, campus crime and violence are a pervasive phenomenon throughout higher education. Incidents occur on campuses where academic

researchers and scientists conduct their work, and it would be reasonable to expect that the impact of campus violence on students have been widely studied; however, this is not the case. While some case study research has been presented (Biernat & Herkov, 1994; Fallahi, et al., 2009; Palus, Fang, & Prawitz, 2012; Song, 2008; Vicary & Fraley, 2010), there are not nearly as many as one would expect. The research and scholarship that does exist on the topic of harm caused as a result of campus violence indicates that incidents of campus violence impact a campus in numerous ways including increased fear, disruption of academic pursuits, and psychological effects.

When an institution experiences a tragic event such as a campus shooting resulting in death or serious injury, it is natural for members of the institution to be fearful. Much of the research on the impact of violence has sought to describe how the incident has manifested in students, staff, or faculties behaviour. Early case studies on campuses where a homicide occurred found that students reported feelings of being unsafe on campus or fear about the possibilities of future incidents (Asmussen & Creswell, 1995; Biernat & Herkov, 1994; Shelton & Sanders, 1973). This sense of fear has been reported among students on campuses that did not have an incident of violence but where an incident was reported in the media (Kaminski, et al., 2010). This demonstrated that minor increases in fear to be alone on campus were present in students despite not attending the campus where the incident occurred (Kaminski, et al., 2010). Students from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and Northern Illinois University who had used social media accounts were studied to understand how online support works in managing grief (Vicary & Fraley, 2010). As part of this research students were asked if they felt safe on campus and surprisingly the majority of students reported that they did feel safe on campus. This suggests that the level of student fear following incidents of campus violence may be shifting for reasons not yet explored.

The second way in which incidents of campus violence can impact is to disrupt the academic environment. Most institutions must close their campuses immediately following a major incident of violence in order to address immediate needs such as repairs, completing an investigation, increased security measures, and for compassionate reasons. These efforts are not without cost; a major disruption carries with it the financial burden associated with safety measures to prevent violence (Agron & Anderson, 2000). While physical disruptions can be expected, research has indicated

that students' academic performance can also suffer after the tragic incident (Caza & Cortina, 2007; Hirschy & Braxton, 2004; Paludi, 2008). Early campus violence research found that after a homicide on a campus, 70% of students contemplated temporarily leaving their studies one week after the incident (Shelton & Sanders, 1973). Vicary and Fraley (2010) researched over 200 students from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and Northern Illinois University two weeks after the tragedies occurred on their respective campuses, and their research has shown these earlier findings to have changed. When asked to what degree a student had thought about leaving the institution, that on a scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 was not at all and 5 was very much) the average response was 1.29 (Vicary & Fraley, 2010, p. 1559). This indicates that immediately following the two most deadly incidents of recent campus violence, most students did not consider leaving the institution. Despite this finding, it can be assumed that such an incident would cause an adverse impact to students' academic pursuits. Mengo and Black (2016) found that students who experienced physical, verbal, or sexual violence were more likely to experience diminished academic success. The adverse impact that exposure to violence has on the success of student and can be considered to be due to the adverse impact on their psychological wellbeing as a result of increases in anxiety, grief, or fear.

The final, and likely most pervasive, impact of campus violence is the adverse effects on the psychological health of individuals who were connected to the incident. Those who are directly or indirectly associated with a violent act often experience a "degradation of an individual's well-being" (Waits & Lundberg-Love, 2008, p. 51). In *The Impact of Campus Violence on College Students*, Waits and Lundberg-Love (2008) provided an extensive overview of the scholarship on the impact of various type of violence, such as sexual assault, dating violence, and sexual assault, however the research on the impacts of homicide was fairly sparse. Waits and Lundberg-Love (2008) referred to two older case studies of incidents of homicide on campus that found that students exposed to death on campus not only experience increased fear, but that fear manifests as lack of concentration, increased anxiety, and increases in other mental health issues (Biernat & Herkov, 1994; Shelton & Sanders, 1973, as cited in Waits & Lundberg-Love, 2008). The adverse impact that campus homicide has on the mental wellbeing of community members has been further demonstrated as having post-traumatic stressors that forever change the lives of those involved. Those personally affected by violence are impacted by reports of subsequent violent acts as they retrigger

the adverse memories and emotions from the original event (Asmussen & Creswell, 1995). Recently, 75% of those exposed to campus violence at the campuses of Virginia Polytechnic Institute or Northern Illinois University demonstrated symptoms of depression and post-traumatic stress disorder immediately following the incident (Vicary & Fraley, 2010). Conversely, the same study found that the same body of students were resilient and improved psychologically within a few weeks when using group supports such as online social media. More recent research has shown that the negative impacts to the mental health of students can be positively impacted by the use of appropriate coping strategies. In their study, Palus, et al. (2012) examined students; coping mechanisms immediately following and then again months after the mass shooting at Northern Illinois University. The research found students had employed positive coping strategies that had made a difference in their recovery. Overall, research has shown that incidents of campus violence can have adverse impacts of the wellbeing of students; however, institutions can mitigate such impacts with interventions that enhance students' coping strategies.

Campus violence in Canada has also been shown to have an impact on the psychological well being of postsecondary students. A 2008 quantitative study investigated the types of violence experienced by over 1,100 Canadian college and university students in Ontario (Tremblay, et al., 2008). The study found, of those exposed to interpersonal conflict or violence, "nearly two thirds of women and half of men have some experience of unwanted negative social incidents" (Tremblay, et al., 2008, p. 70). The research reported an unexpected finding that incidents of verbal or physical abuse, for the most part, did not have an adverse impact on a student's studies or social experience of learning. Important to note, however, is that severe incidents such as sexual assault did result in negative consequences for the student involved. As this Canadian study did not look at serious violence such as homicide, more research is needed to examine the impacts of such a violent act on Canadian postsecondary students.

Campus violence has become a societal issue that is driven by the vast amount of media reporting of incidents of school and campus violence (Furlong, et al., 2004). In fact, the greater exposure to media reports of campus violence has been shown to increase the fear in individuals who do not even live in the same city as in the incident

(Kaminski, et al., 2010). The instant and comprehensive media coverage of incidents of campus violence are far reaching and can impact the perceived safety of individuals on campuses in certain parts of the world, thereby impacting the reputation of the institution (Neidermeyer & Terjesen, 2008). The complex and far-reaching implications that campus violence can have on individuals and the public trust requires that institutions do all they can to prevent such incidents from happening. In order to prevent incidents of campus violence, it is important to understanding that problematic behaviours or PSBs are relevant and need to be addressed to prevent campus violence.

2.2. Problematic Student Behaviour

The national and international figures in higher education are showing trends towards increased diversification (Enders, 2004), which is resulting in a dynamic and ever-changing student population (McClellan & Larimore, 2009). Considering the diversity of campus enrolments, it is logical to expect that college and university populations must attend to the physical, social, and mental health realities of the population within which they operate. Students interact with the institutions in a myriad of ways ranging from attending classes, living on campus, using of social media, participating in fieldwork, conducting research, and working at the institution. The multi-faceted manner in which students engage with the institution poses a challenge for educational administrators to appropriately outline the behavioural expectations of students. Furthermore, the diverse ways that students can interact complicates the mechanisms available to campus administrators to be able to address the behaviours that cause a disruption to the institution and pose a significant risk to the campus community.

The behaviours that lead to incidents of campus violence or tragedy are a broad and varied topic with no common definition of the precipitating worrisome or troubling behaviours. However, the Safe Schools Initiative has clearly asserted that 93% of perpetrators of targeted school or campus violence exhibited behaviours that caused others concern prior to incident occurring (Phaneuf, 2009; Vossekui, et al., 2004). Examples of such behaviours include submitting disturbing writings, producing drawings, preoccupation with violent films, as well as many others. When such behaviours are witnessed or found to occur on campuses of higher education, this presents a risk for the

institution, and for this reason these types of behaviours have been labelled as PSB. For the purposes of this research, the term *problematic student behaviour* is used to describe “high risk students who appear to be disturbed and are creating major disturbances in the university community” (Hollingsworth, et al., 2009, p. 44). This wording clearly illustrates the immediacy of concern for the institution to address the behaviour causing disruption to the community; however, there remains a need to better understand the behaviours that are viewed to cause a disruption to the campus community and any legal obligations for institutions to address such behaviours.

What constitutes the disruptive nature of PSB is not universally agreed upon, as those researching disruptive student behaviour do not use a shared common term or definition. In 1996, Stuber and Dannells used the term disturbing students to refer to behaviourally disturbed and dysfunctional students. Since this time more direct understandings of disruptive behaviour have emerged. For example students behaviour referred to as rebellious or disruptive acts are those that “seem to be intentional, defiant, annoying, and disrespectful” (Hernández & Fister, 2001, p. 49). In order to best assess and address problematic behaviour effectively a system of categorization is needed.

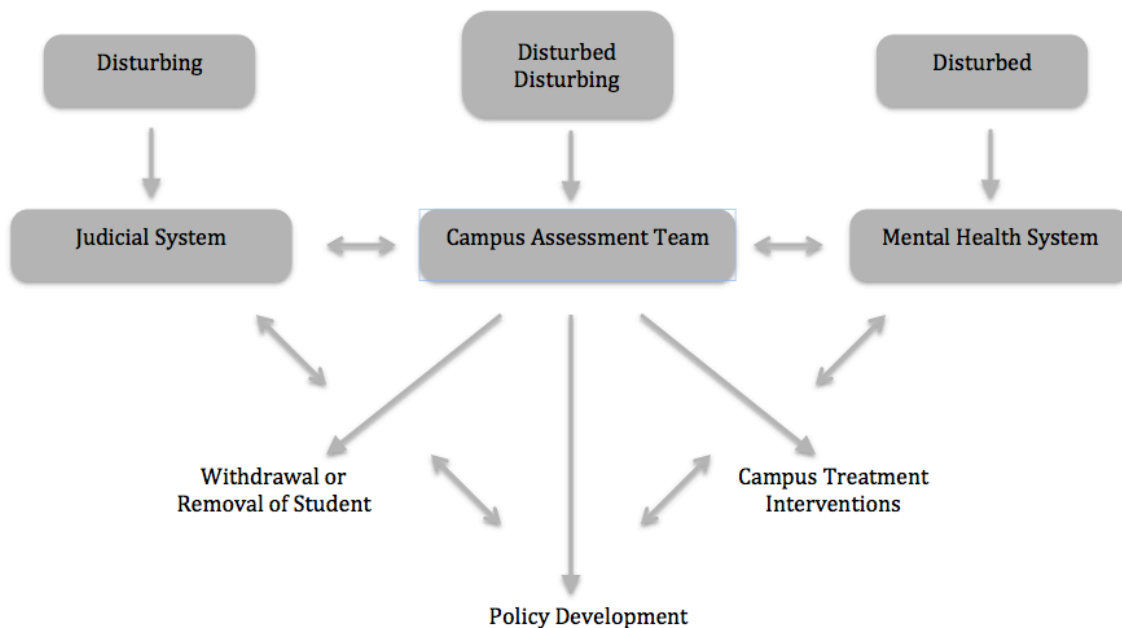
2.2.1. The Assessment Intervention of Student Problems Model

It is commonly understood that the division of student affairs is the unit responsible for managing the behaviour of postsecondary students (Dunkle & Presley, 2009). In the monograph *New Directions in Student Services* (Sandeem, 2009), current senior student affairs officers (SSAOs) have continued to endorse and recommend the use of the Assessment Intervention of Student Problems (AISP) model as proposed by Delworth (1989). Delworth developed this model as a result of the numerous requests received from academic administrators for advice on how to address dysfunctional behaviour of students. Delworth’s AISP model of student behaviour intervention has proved immensely relevant and appropriate and thus it remains used and researched some 20 years after its introduction (Dunkle, 2009).

Delworth (1989) AISP model, as outlined in Figure 2.1, provides a holistic framework to categorize student behaviour and recommends appropriate administrative processes to respond to these behaviours. The pillars of this model are the classification of PSB within three categories: disturbing students, disturbed students, and

disturbed/disturbing students. Each of these categories has a respective institutional intervention. According to the AISP model, those behaviours that are considered disturbed/disturbing are those complex behaviours that require team of individuals to address as compared to disturbed and disturbing that have existing systems in place to address the behaviours (Delworth, 1989). Therefore, PSB can be viewed as a form of disturbed/disturbing behaviours. The following sections will outline the each type of AISP behaviour and provide context of research on the specific behaviour and the respective institutional intervention strategy.

Figure 2.1 *The assessment intervention of student of student problems model.*



Adapted from “The AISP Model: Assessment-Intervention of Student Problems,” by U. Delworth, 1989, *New Directions for Student Services*, 1989(45), p. 11. Copyright 1989 by Delworth. Reprinted with Permission

2.2.2. Disturbing Student Behaviour

The first category of behaviour within the AISP model is behaviour exhibited by the *disturbing student* (Delworth, 1989). Disturbing students are viewed as those who lack the ability to engage in appropriate interpersonal relationships. Disturbing students are either Type A, immature reactions to aspects of student life, or Type B, a con artist

who manipulates others (Delworth, 1989). These students actions are often identified, as individuals who are “running afoul of the accepted standards of behavior in a university community both inside and outside the classroom” (Ragle & Justice, 1989, p. 23).

Many practitioners and scholars have discussed what constitutes behaviours that are disturbing to the institution without clear consensus. Amada (1994a, 1995, 1997, 2001), both a professional educational counsellor and researcher, offered various types of behaviour that he termed to be disruptive student behaviour. Through his work in the field, he provided five different types of disruptive behaviour (Amada, 1997). The first type he identified as *classroom misconduct*, described as student actions interpreted by others as uncivil. Incivility in the classroom manifests in such behaviours as speaking out, being rude, cheating, and not paying attention. Incivility within the classroom has been widely discussed in the literature (Appleby, 1990; Bjorklund & Rehling, 2009; Braxton & Jones, 2008; Caza & Cortina, 2007; Goodyear, Reynolds, & Gragg, 2010; Hirschy & Braxton, 2004; Martin, Linfoot, & Stephenson, 1999). The rationale and prevalence of academic misconduct, such as cheating and other dishonest practices, have also been widely researched (Bertram Gallant & Kalichman, 2011; Goodchild, 2011). The behaviours of classroom misconduct are widely researched and are most often dealt within existing campus policies and procedures.

The second type of disruptive behaviour involves student actions that are *physically intimidating*. These actions can occur in or out of the classroom and are not specific as to the target of the intimidation. Amada (1997) described actions of threat or bullying by a student against another member of the community. The third type of behaviour is a direct result of the changes in technology on campus. Amada uses the term *computer mischief* to describe the intentional and malicious use of technology. The examples of such behaviours include the deliberate sabotage of computer labs, the harassment of another, or stealing of others' materials. As the behaviours described within these categories can cause greater disruption to members of the campus community, these behaviours could be considered as PSB; however, they lack the additional requirement of *disturbed* that is necessary within the definition of PSB.

The final two types involve the more clear cases of inappropriate behaviour. The abuse and use of *alcohol and drugs* can lead to behaviours that are not permitted on campus. This includes Amada's (1997) final category of *criminal offenses*. The types of

be disruptive behaviour as defined by Amada (1997) have been used to explain various phenomenon of student behaviour on campuses (Amada, 1994b, 1995; Conklin & Robinson, 1994; Dobmeier & Moran, 2008; Harrell & Hollins, 2009; Hernández & Fister, 2001; Noonan-Day & Jennings, 2007). These typologies are helpful to understand disruptive behaviour, and they do provide a useful structure to understand clearly unwanted behaviours. Most often these behaviours are unwanted as they violate policy or campus expectations and therefore have a clear methods by which to be addressed by the institution.

The actions of disturbing students are most often reported to the student judicial system, at which point the clear guidelines of the code of conduct are employed to address and alter the unwanted behaviour (McClellan, Eklund-Leen, Gatti, & Kindle, 2009). Each campus has a set of policies and guidelines that specify behaviour expectations that inform and regulate student behaviour in a manner that is conducive to learning and acceptable for all campus community members (Consolvo & Dannells, 2000). The student codes of conduct on campuses provided the necessary guidelines for students to help them understand the limits of what is deemed appropriate behaviour at a given institution. There is no universal code or standard for code of conduct across all institutions; rather, they are developed to meet the individual and unique characteristics of each institution (Dannells, 1997). A vast amount of research has been undertaken on the evolution of conduct (Dannells, 1997; Grossi & Edwards, 1997; Schrage & Giacomini, 2009), effectiveness (Lancaster & Waryold, 2008; Lindsay, 2009), and best practices (Association for Student Conduct Administrators, n.d.; Dean, 2006; Moles, 1989). These conduct guides serve to establish known and accepted boundaries of student behaviour and the relevant consequences for subsequent breaches of conduct.

What constitutes a breach of student codes of conduct differs at each given institution for various reasons such as provincial legislation regarding legal drinking ages, institutional requirements like religious expectations, or institutional practices such as previous issues with hazing rituals. While each institution develops its own expectations for its student body, experts in the field have put forward suggestions to address the various types of disruptive behaviour (Lancaster & Waryold, 2008). Researchers have recommended that conduct policies address student behaviour in

terms of their academic integrity, interpersonal interactions, respect of property, discrimination and harassment, referencing other institutional policies, as well as legal requirements (Lowery, 2008; Stoner, 2008).

The administration of student conduct policies is often referred to as judicial affairs, as the process often mimics the justice system both through its policing as well as decision-making requirements. Throughout history the purpose of student conduct programs has evolved. In his comprehensive account of the historical background of student conduct programs, Dannels (1997) illustrated that in the infancy of higher education, student conduct was a punitive system of discipline for unacceptable behaviours. Over centuries of development, student conduct programs have emerged to include a primary function of “teaching in furtherance of the lawful missions of higher education” (Gehring, 2001, p. 467). Regardless philosophy or approach of student conduct programs, the duty of care remains with the institution to maintain a safe academic environment for its students, staff, faculty, and the greater community. This demand for safety has occurred in tandem with the “changing patterns of behavior, heightened attention to student misbehavior, and changing expectations on the part of parents and others” (Hoekema, 1994, p. 4). While it is appropriate to address misconduct through a judicial system, such student behaviours in context with other disruptive behaviours can present a concerning pattern of behaviour.

2.2.3. Disturbed Student Behaviour

The second type of student behaviour is that of the *disturbed student*, which represents actions or activities that are out of the norm for the rest of the student population. The actions of a disturbed student are further characterized by the focus of the disruption (Delworth, 1989). Type A student behaviour is inwardly focused and manifest as depression or anxiety, whereas Type B behaviour is outwardly focused resulting in unconventional emotional reactions to others. When considering the disturbed student, it is important to consider the rationale for the behaviour as resulting from situational, developmental, familial, or biological factors (McKinley & Dworkin, 1989); therefore, the majority of disturbed students are supported through campus health and counselling services.

Attending postsecondary studies represents an inter-social experience, as students must interact with people in personal and professional settings that establish a culture of expectation, responsibility, and behaviour. The culture of learning within the context of contemporary higher education simultaneously develops a culture of anxiety and stress for students. While students are reporting additional stresses they also have increased rates of mental health related issues (Dickstein & Christensen, 2008). Current findings from the Canadian administration of the National College Health Assessment (NCHA) from the American College Health Association have indicated that students are experiencing stress while being a student and that over 19% of respondents have sought treatment for mental health related-problems (American College Health Association, 2010, p. 18). These current findings indicate that issues related to mental health continue to be greater for students than the general population.

The prevalence and severity of mental health-related issues among the student population are cause for concern. It is important to note that the following review of the literature is not intended to suggest that those students who have mental health issues are violent. Rather, as previously discussed, the incidents of PSB that institutions must address are a combination of disturbed/disturbing behaviours that include mental health-related issues. The interconnectedness of mental health issues and the disruption to the campus community dictates the need to understand the mental health of the student overall student populations.

Data from North American surveys of campus counselling centres reported that more than 40% of all clients had severe psychological problems (Dickstein & Christensen, 2008). Severe cases of psychological distress have long been known to be an issue for a relatively minor percentage of the population, between 2-5% of the population experience psychosis (Brown & DeCoster, 1989). The increased rates of mental distress coupled with the incidents of crime and violence indicates the possibility for an increase in the disturb/disturbing types of student behaviours on campuses across North America.

When it comes to the topic of student mental wellbeing, researchers have gathered a fair amount of data. To explore the issues of mental wellness institutions of higher education most often consider aggregate access data from campus health services units to understand the physical and mental health issues present on their

campus (American College Health Association, 2010). A cross-border study of those who used campus health facilities found that one in five students reported having been the victim of a violence or crime within the past 6 months (Saewyc, et al., 2009). While troubling, unfortunately this finding coincides with other research on the psychological stressors of postsecondary students. In a study of over 6,500 university students from two Australian institutions, Stallman (2010) found that students experienced higher psychological distress than the average population. This trend is clearly being perceived on campuses when considering the findings of the annual *National Survey of Counseling Center Directors*. This survey consistently found that staff report a greater number of students experiencing extreme psychological distress (Gallagher, 2009, 2010). In 2009 and 2010 over 70% of directors reported an increase in students requiring immediate crisis psychiatric care. This body of literature has demonstrated that the postsecondary populations are experiencing increased rates of severe psychiatric illness, indicative of disturbed student behaviour, which requires that postsecondary mental health services to provide comprehensive and targeted support.

The prevalence and impact of mental health needs of university students has recently garnered the attention of the postsecondary sector in Canada. The Canadian Association of College and University Student Services (CACUSS) in conjunction with Canadian Mental Health Association of British Columbia have collaborated to establish an approach to mental health support for postsecondary students (Canadian Association of College and Universities Student Services, 2013). This collaborative approach to supporting the mental wellbeing of Canadian students is aimed at addressing the high levels of mental health issues that they are facing. For decades, institutions in the United States have conducted the comprehensive assessment that benchmarks student health behaviours within their institutions called the National College Health Assessment (NCHA). Recently many institutions in Canada have begun to conduct the NCHA as a mechanism to assess the physical and mental health of their student body. In 2013, over 34,000 students from 32 institutions (American College Health Association, 2013) completed the Canadian Version of the NCHA, and in 2016 more than 43,000 students from 41 Canadian institutions conducted the NCHA. Table 2.1 illustrates how students reported experiencing situations within a 12-month period that they report having impacted their mental health or safety. The comparison between surveys three years apart indicates why institutions may be experiencing increases in PSB. It is clear that

Canadian students are self-reporting greater incidences of mental health-related issues. The high levels of mental health related concerns experienced by students requires institutions to give greater attention to the mental wellbeing of students and also explains the increased demands for support services such as health and counselling services.

Table 2.1 *Percentage of Students Who Experienced Situations Within Last 12 Months that Impacted their Mental Health or Safety*

Mental Health Issue	2013	2016	Difference
Factors affecting academic performance			
- stress	38.6%	42.2%	+3.6%
- anxiety	28.4%	32.5%	+4.1%
- depression	17.3%	20.9%	+3.6%
- relationship difficulties	12.9%	13.0%	+0.1%
Experienced a mental health problem such as			
- overwhelmed by what they had to do	89.3%	89.5%	+0.2%
- feeling hopeless	53.8%	59.6%	+5.8%
- depression making it hard to function	37.5%	44.4%	+6.9%
- seriously considered suicide	9.5%	13.0%	+3.5%
Experienced violence, abusive relationship, and personal safety			
- verbal threat	20.1%	22.0%	+1.9%
- an emotionally abusive relationship	9.8%	10.5%	+0.7%

The increased demands on the campus mental health systems have continued to be a topic of concern and research. Seeking to explore and understand the rationale for the increases in the need for student mental health intervention, researchers have discovered that one of the largest contributions to student distress is self imposed pressure (Hamaideh, 2011). The pressures and psychological predispositions of this age group have resulted in drastic increases in challenges for the provision of campus mental health support (Kitzrow, 2009). Roher (2010) reported “About one in five Ontario children and youth experience a mental health or behavioural disorder requiring intervention, but roughly 80% of these individuals do not receive mental health services or support” (p. 24), which indicates that the mental health challenges of postsecondary students will continue to be an administrative challenge for years to come.

The psychological and societal experiences of the current student population have placed increased pressure on the institution to be both prepared as well as able to address the issues of students’ behaviour that is disruptive to the campus community, be it due to inappropriate conduct or mental illness. American legislative requirements,

legal statutes, and moral standards dictate that “institutions must find effective ways to provide the needed support or to remove these students from the campus” (Howard, 2008, p. 125). Those who work within the student counselling services have experienced this pressure, as their professional expertise is being called upon to help perform assessments on students’ wellbeing and potential mental health diagnoses. As a result, campus counsellors are viewed as a key part of the risk management practices of the institution (Davenport, 2009). The pressure to assess student behaviour has created a greater attention to problematic behaviour that can be viewed as presenting a potential for future violence.

2.2.4. Disturbed/Disturbing Student

The final category of student behaviour is the *disturbed/disturbing* student. Delworth (1989) simply defined these students as possessing combinations of both *disturbed* and *disturbing* student behaviours. This category is the least understood, as it has the greatest diversity of actions due to the inclusion of the of both categories problematic behaviours. Disturbed/disturbing student behaviour poses the most challenge to campus administrators, as “assessment considerations are complicated, and the subsequent possibilities for appropriate interventions are many” (Brown & DeCoster, 1989, p. 45). The disturbed/disturbing student behaviour has the potential to cause concern and fear for the campus community, and it is therefore, the subject of this dissertation as it represents the best classification of PSB that institutions must assess as part of their intervention strategies to prevent campus violence. However, the presence of disturbed/disturbing behaviour does not immediately indicate an impending act of violence. As such, an institution must be able to assess these complex behaviours in terms of the level of concern they pose to others and the institution.

Research that was completed on past cases of campus and school violence has given a clear indication that campus violence such as school shootings is not a spontaneous act; rather, it is a planned and thought-out act. Research has found that 93% of perpetrators had developed a plan at least a few days prior to carrying the incident and that surprisingly 81% had shared their plans with at least one other person (Drysdale, et al., 2010). The challenge for institutions is being able to collect and assess the information in a timely and effective manner in order to acquire sufficient information

to best understand and intervene as required to prevent any potential violence from occurring.

When institutional leaders are made aware of various incidents that occur that may be causing others concern, it is a challenging for them to immediately understand to what degree a singular incident has for potential future violence. Meloy, et al. (2012) used the term *warning behaviours* is a term that refers to “factors which constitute change, and which are evidence of increasing or accelerating risk” (p. 260). Meloy et al. (2012) proposed eight types of warning behaviours that pose various degrees of severity or concern. Therefore, when disturbed/disturbing student has been identified to/by an institution, the specific behaviour or actions can be reviewed for risk by what type of warning behaviour it falls under:

Pathway is a behaviour that involves the planning or preparation of an attack

Fixation is a behaviour that offers evidence of increased preoccupation with a person or event

Identification occurs when a person identifies themselves as a warrior for a cause or identifies with others who have done so

Novel Aggression is an act of violence that is not associated with the cause and usually is a result of the perpetrator testing their skills

Energy Burst marks an increase in minor behaviours associated with the cause and tends to increase shortly before an attack

Leakage is the communication, intended or unintended, of a plan to harm to others

Last Resort acts indicate desperation that express a sense of having ‘no other option’

Directly Communicated Threat is an expression to the target or authority of an intention to harm an individual or group of individuals

These eight warning behaviours (Meloy et al., 2012, p. 265) were studied in connection to nine school shooters and 30 students of concern in Germany (Meloy, Hoffmann, Roshdi, & Guldemann, 2014). This research showed the warning behaviours of: pathway, fixation, identification, and leakage were found in all shooters and 90% of students of concern demonstrated leakage warning behaviours. This highlights the importance for institutions to have mechanisms to collect and assess information regarding PSB.

Deciphering an incident or action as a warning requires the person or people to have familiarity with details of the incident and individual. A simplified way to understand warning behaviours is to consider if they are *primary* or *secondary* (Kropp, 2012). Primary warning signs are specific actions that can pose a risk as identified through reports or documentation of violent actions, ideations, or intents and the extent to which these incidents are recent or have been escalating (Kropp, 2012). Secondary warning signs are similar; however, they focus on the context for the individual in the form of reports of personal crisis, conflict, or acute mental distress and once again the extent to which this context is recent, serious for the individual, and if it has been escalating (Kropp, 2012). Once an institution is aware of such warning behaviours and the degree to which they pose a risk, the next challenge is how the institution will intervene.

Not all disturbed/disturbing student behaviour becomes violent. As Van Brunt (2014a) noted in their book *A Faculty Guide to Addressing Disruptive and Dangerous Behavior*, “There is no psychological test or expert computer system that will predict the campus shooting” (p. 11). Van Brunt emphasized the importance of understanding the context of the behaviour and the immediacy of the potential violence to best assess the situation and determine how to respond. The disturbed/disturbing student behaviour has the potential to cause concern and fear for the campus community and, therefore, requires multiple levels of expertise to help determine the best course of action. At the core of Delworth’s (1989) AISP model is the use of what she calls the campus intervention team to address disturbing/disturbed student behaviours.

2.3. Purpose of Multidisciplinary Team

The campus intervention team is responsible for assessment of PSB, deciding appropriate response, referral of student issues, and policy development (Delworth, 1989). While not universal in application (Shor, 2009), the model remains relevant and applicable to solving current-day complex campus behavioural issues. Within Delworth’s (1989) AISP model, campus intervention teams were recommended to have core membership from areas of responsibility such as: mental health services, security personnel, student services administration, legal counsel, and the student conduct officer (Delworth, 1989). The purpose of this membership is to bring together various skill sets from within the institution to work collaboratively to develop an appropriate

intervention based upon the complexity of the case presented. The assessment strategies presented within Delworth's (1989) AISP model are similar to other team assessment protocols (Deisinger, et al., 2008; Eells & Rockland-Miller, 2011; Hernández & Fister, 2001).

How an institution addresses unwanted and especially dangerous behaviour is under greater scrutiny as incidents of campus tragedy are highly publicized in the global media. The media coverage after an incident of campus violence often include references to the perception that institutions are not sufficiently prepared or effectively addressing issues to prevent the violent acts ("Schools ignoring student violence warning signs," 2010). One well-publicized finding of the review of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute tragedy reported that institutional staff had been aware of concerning behaviour of the gunman yet failed to adequately intervene (Massengill, et al., 2007). This, and other subsequent findings, have led to the establishment of numerous policies and reports that outline how institutions should respond to threats of campus violence (Deisinger, et al., 2008; Keller, Hughes, & Hertz, 2011; Randazzo & Plummer, 2009). At the core of these recommendations is the establishment of a team of institutional representatives who are tasked with reviewing and addressing potential threats of violence in order to intervene before a tragic event occurs.

Being aware of students who may be potentially planning serious actions of violence within postsecondary campuses is of great concern for higher education administrators because it is the responsibility and duty of institutions of higher education to protect and maintain a safe and effective academic environment (McClellan & Larimore, 2009). Institutions have legal and ethical requirements to intervene when PSB is present, as "the establishment of colonial colleges, postsecondary institutions have been granted authority to administer sanctions to control both academic and extracurricular activities and behavior" (Fitch & Murry, 2001, p. 191). In the United States, since the tragic shooting deaths at Virginia Polytechnic Institute, legislators and specialists have recommended, and in some states required institutions to have a team dedicated to reviewing and addressing behaviour that is poses a risk to the community. For example, the first recommendation in the National Association of Attorneys General Task Force on School and Campus Safety report's (2007) was as follows:

All schools and colleges should establish a system whereby disturbing behavior is reported to an individual or team of individuals with expertise and training that can assess the information received and take action, when appropriate, including referring students or school personnel for assistance, receiving information back from those evaluating the referred person, and/or making recommendations to administrators concerning continued enrollment, continued employment, or other issues. (pp. 3-4)

Canada's provincial government leaders have also made school safety a priority either in the messages they have delivered or in the provision of additional resources (Randazzo & Cameron, 2012). It is for this reason that multidisciplinary teams whose mandate it is to prevent campus violence are a key method by which institutions reduce campus violence.

The multidisciplinary approach was a key recommendation in numerous reports based upon the Virginia Polytechnic Institute campus tragedy (Allen, et al., 2008; Deisinger, et al., 2008; Massengill, et al., 2009). In 2010 a review of 20 such documents was compiled and reviewed (Fox & Savage, 2009) which formulated the basis of a key recommendation for institutions to establish multidisciplinary teams with an operational mandate to review, assess, and respond to possible threats and dangerous behaviour. Within all these reports one key element was for institutions to develop, a multidisciplinary teams "whose purpose is to receive and assess all reports of threat and other alarming behaviors by any student or employee of the college or university" (Fox & Savage, 2009, p. 1471). Forming multidisciplinary teams was not a new concept; rather, it was a practice adapted from workplace violence prevention and other risk management processes (Dunkle, et al., 2008; Turner, 2003) to address the fact that the risk that a person presents to the others will not be demonstrated to a single person or department within the institution and; therefore, collaboration is necessary to develop multilateral strategies (Lake, 2007).

The use of multidisciplinary teams to address concerning behaviour within higher education was not a new phenomenon prior to the tragedy of Virginia Polytechnic Institute, and since the tragic incidents of campus violence in the past decade they have become more common (Randazzo & Cameron, 2012). The scope of practice of multidisciplinary teams encompasses from *threat assessment* and *violence risk assessment* practices. While similar, each may have different goals and; therefore, different functions. While the field often uses the terms interchangeably, this section will

help distinguish the two different structures. Threat assessment in violence prevention is defined as “a set of investigative and operational techniques that can be used by law enforcement professionals to identify, assess, and manage the risks of targeted violence and its potential perpetrators” (Fein, et al., 1995, p. 5). Violence risk assessment is the process of gathering information about a person of concern to “understand their potential for engaging in violence against others in the future and determine what should be done to prevent them from doing so” (Hart, 2009, p. 148). In basic terms, threat assessment processes seek to protect the victim of the potential violence, where as violence risk assessment serves to address the potential of a person to become violent (Meloy, Hart, & Hoffmann, 2014).

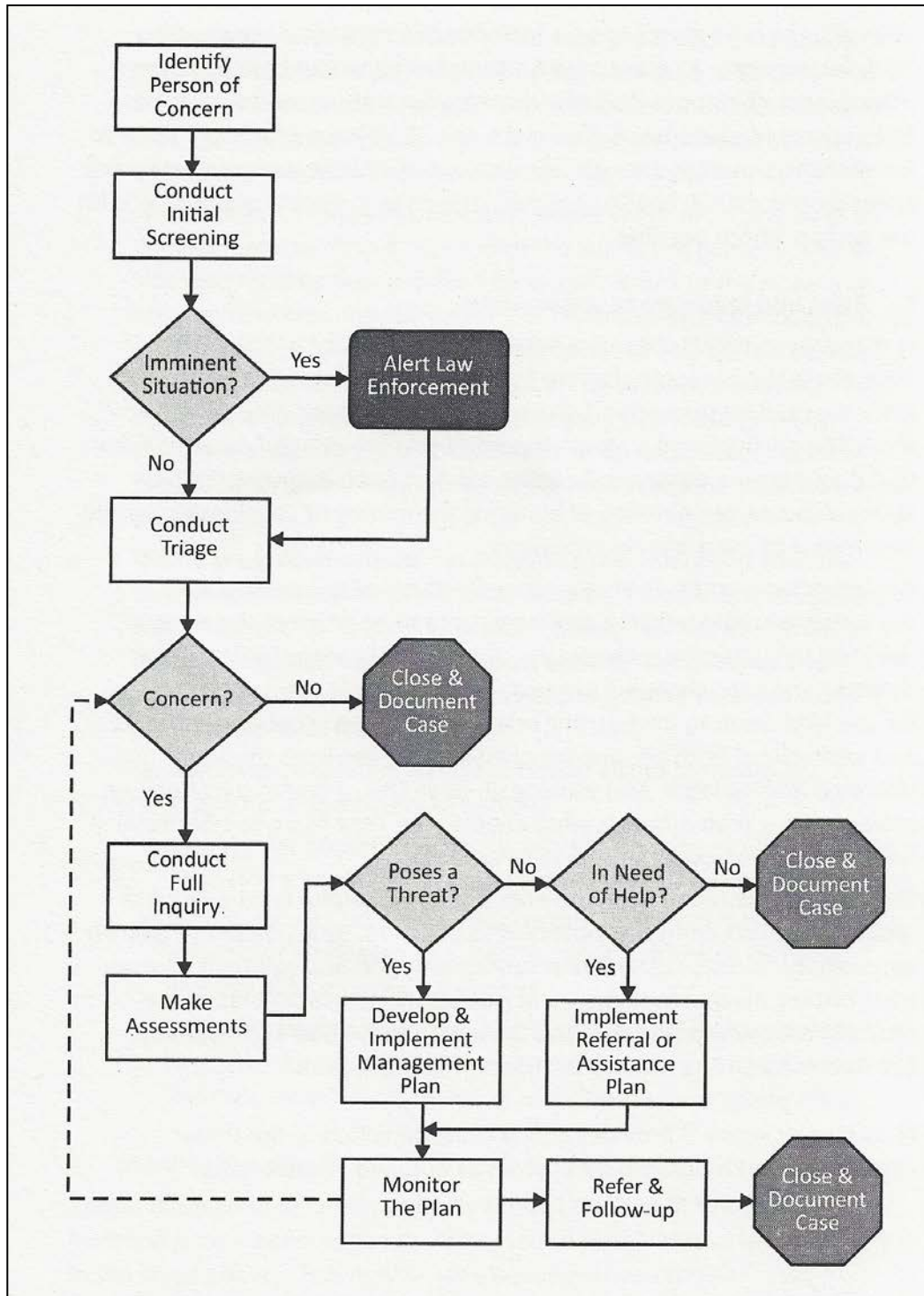
2.3.1. Threat Assessment

Threat assessment is a term that conjures up many visuals for those unfamiliar with the practice. Many people recall images from television of police agents reviewing pictures and evidence to develop a theory of characteristics of the potential perpetrator. This vision is more in line of the concept of profiling than threat assessment, which is “a fact-based method of assessment/investigation that does not rely on profiles, but focuses on an individual's patterns of thinking and behavior to determine whether, and to what extent, they are moving toward an attack” (Borum, Fein, Vossekuil, & Berglund, 1999, p. 335). Threat assessment was originated as a method for the United States Secret Service to protect the President from various threats (Borum, et al., 1999; Randazzo, et al., 2006; Reddy, et al., 2001). Therefore, the term threat assessment refers to a behaviour based process that seeks to gain knowledge about the existence of a potential perpetrator, gather information about that potential perpetrator, and evaluate the risk that the perpetrator's behaviour poses (Borum, et al., 1999; Fein & Vossekuil, 1998; Randazzo & Cameron, 2012). While the process of threat assessment is a relatively new development within the organizational structures of higher education, there already exist numerous threat assessment frameworks (Deisinger, et al., 2008; Keller, et al., 2011; Webster, Douglas, Eaves, & Hart, 1997) and a multitude of training workshops and seminars at various professional development conferences. Therefore, the process and procedures used to complete the task of threat assessment must be reviewed.

The process of threat assessment gives an institution a mechanism by which to review PSB and to determine the level of risk the perpetrator's behaviour poses to themselves or members of the institution. Therefore, threat assessment management is a collaborative effort that is responsible for the identification and evaluation of behaviours and the decision to intervene to prevent future harm (Deisinger, et al., 2008). In the *Handbook for Campus Threat Assessment and Management Teams* (Deisinger, et al., 2008), presents a flow chart that demonstrates that the team's purpose to intervene until the case is concluded (see Figure 2.2 on the next page). The flow chart illustrates how threat assessment management is an iterative process that involves key points of action for the team members.

While this model provides a clear flow for conducting threat assessment, additional models have been presented that more fully capture the full scope of the threat assessment management process. Keller, Hughes, and Hertz (2011) presented a model that not only incorporates the same basic tenets of threat assessment management but also brings to light the importance of crisis management as an option for those cases that present extreme risk. Regardless of the model, the key to all processes is to have a diverse group of people responsible for the threat assessment management. Drawing upon the emergence of threat assessment teams in the elementary and secondary school systems, members were recommended to "constitute an experienced, knowledgeable group that could review threats, consult with outside experts, and provide recommendations and advice to the coordinator and to the school administration" (O'Toole, 2000, p. 26). Threat assessment in postsecondary settings involves the centralized reporting of problematic behaviour to be assessed by a multidisciplinary team who implements and monitors an integrated case management plan (Deisinger, Randazzo, & Nolan, 2014). While designed as a mechanism to address targeted violence, the goal of threat assessment teams has broadened its mandate to "help campuses use all the information at their disposal to create a safer campus community" (Pollard, Nolan, & Deisinger, 2012, p. 265).

Figure 2.2 *Threat assessment management flow chart*



From "The Handbook for Campus Threat Assessment & Management Teams" G. Deisinger, M. Randazzo, D. O'Neill, & J. Savage, 2008, MA: Applied Risk Management, p. 78. Copyright 2008 by Deisinger et al. Reprinted with permission.

At all stages the team is assessing information in order to determine an appropriate action to mitigate the risk. As the flow chart illustrates, a final action that a team takes is the closing and documenting of the case. What information is recorded is a process informed by institutional policies that must comply with the legal obligations of the institution, which are discussed later in this chapter.

2.3.2. Violence Risk Assessment

As previously noted, the recommendation to include multidisciplinary teams for threat assessment arose as a mechanism to prevent campus violence; however, violence can take several forms, including those that may not be as immediate or lethal as shootings. While threat assessment derives from the need to make quick decisions with limited information to respond to a violent situation, the foundation of multidisciplinary teams can be viewed to have roots in violence risk assessment. Risk assessment is derived from clinical psychology and assess the potential of violence of an individual as a function of a series of historical and situational risk variables (Meloy, et al., 2012). The outcomes of a risk assessment help the assessor develop a threat management plan, which is a part of the risk assessment process. It is a task in which violence risk assessment work is integral; it represents “a process, not an event, and is repeated following interventions in order to assess its efficacy and in response to changed circumstances” (James, Farnham, & Wilson, 2014, p. 305).

As PSB cases include features of disturbed behaviour, or mental health issues, it is not surprising that elements of clinical assessment are a part of the process of multidisciplinary teams tasked with preventing campus violence. Violence risk assessment is not about predicting whether or not someone is going to be violent; rather, it involves the mitigation of risk for someone of concern. It is therefore a decision making process (James, et al., 2014). This decision making process is “informed, but not necessarily dictated, by structured considerations of the presence or absence in a given case of factors which have been found through research to be statistically associated with violence” (Meloy, et al., 2012, p. 257). While violence risk assessment is derived from clinical psychology practices, there has been an emergence of literature on the effectiveness of multidisciplinary teams of non-health care professionals conducting violence risk assessments.

One method of violence risk assessment that does not rely upon clinical expertise alone uses the structured professional judgement approach. Structured professional judgement tools for violence risk assessment “are evidence-based guidelines or practice parameters, founded on a systematic review of the relevant scientific, professional, and legal literatures” (Cook, Murray, Amat, & Hart, 2014, p. 68). The tools provide guidance on the type of information that is necessary and the weighting of such information in the development of a response based upon risk factors. Research in both the clinical setting (Guy, Packer, & Warnken, 2012) and educational setting (McGowan, Horn, & Mellott, 2011) have demonstrated structured professional tools to be an effective method to identify and manage violence risk. While such tools can be used to identify potential violent risk, there are challenges that impinge the actions of an institution as a factor of the scope of the authority of the institution based upon legal jurisdictions.

As institutions seek to implement processes to address violence, it is understandable why violence risk assessment is an added component to the work of multidisciplinary teams. As the foundations of threat assessment teams have been in targeted violence, there has been a call for institutions to expand behaviours of concern to include more generalized forms of violence such as bullying, intimate partner violence, and other forms of victimization (Hollister & Scalora, 2015). When seeking to enhance the violence risk assessment work conducted by teams, evidence from recent research exists that institutions can benefit from partnering with mental health professionals who specialize in the work to serve as forensic experts (Regehr, Glancy, Carter, & Ramshaw, 2017). Violence risk assessment practices provide a process through which to consider PSB in a manner that informs interventions for the team. This enables current multidisciplinary teams to conduct their work in contemporary ways that “encourage the community to report at-risk behaviors to be reviewed by a group of professionals trained in various areas of expertise” (Van Brunt, 2012, p. 51). Using a team of professionals to identify at risk behaviours as a strategy for violence prevention has given rise to a specialized type of multidisciplinary teams called *Behavioural Intervention Teams* (BIT). The following section outlines the characteristics and functions of BIT teams as outlined within the literature.

2.4. Behavioural Intervention Teams (BIT)

Threat and violence risk assessment are complementary, and for this reason multidisciplinary teams have blended the functions within their mandates. In the book *College in the Crosshairs: An Administrative Perspective on Prevention of Gun Violence* LaBanc and Hemphill (2015) discussed this change in function. Dunkle and Mistler (2014) also wrote about threat and risk assessment as:

in the field of assessment as a whole, approaches have evolved to a violence threat/risk assessment. This approach understands violence risk as a function of the threat presented by a particular person in a particular context and sees violence risk as dynamic and varied, requiring iterative approaches to assessment and monitoring, with an ultimate goal of dual threat/risk management. (Dunkle & Mistler, 2014, p. 125)

The method in which institutions are conducting the important task of threat assessment management is important to the overall understanding how potential violence and disruption is managed within institutions of higher education. Higher education has implemented the recommendations for combined threat and risk management teams, which are often referred to as BITs. *The Book on Behavioral Intervention Teams (BIT)* (Sokolow, et al., 2014) describes a BIT's purpose as "caring, preventive, early intervention with students whose behaviour is disruptive or concerning" (p. 3) and recommend BITs conduct this work by gathering information, analyzing the information using standards, and enacting an intervention plan.

The adoption of BITs as an operational practice has created an emerging field with an international association called the National Behavioral Intervention Team Association (NaBITA) (Lipka, 2009). The entire purpose of the association is to provide resources, training, and collective knowledge for members of campus intervention teams (National Behavioral Intervention Team Association, n.d.). According to NaBITA documents there have been two generations of BITs (Sokolow & Lewis, 2009). The first generation of teams existed before the recommendations that occurred as a result of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute tragedy. The first-generation teams were more adhoc in nature and lacked a clear scope. Comparatively, second-generation teams are more formalized and use updated systems and protocols to comprehensively address potentially violent behaviour. The best practices for BITs suggest that institutional teams have 10 key functions (Sokolow, et al., 2014). These functions are summarized in Table

2.2 on the next page and highlight the comprehensive role that BITs take in the identification, assessment, intervention, and monitoring of PSB.

NaBITA (2014) extended their best practices in a model termed *Core-Q10* (National Behavioral Intervention Team Association, 2014) that represents the 10 core principles that BIT teams should include in order to be aligned with best practices. The 10 principles are: (1) policy, (2) team traits, (3) silo prevention, (4) education, (5) referral, (6) data collecting, (7) records, (8) training, (9) risk rubric, and (10) quality (p. 6). Each of the different areas will be discussed further within the next sections, which look at the research regarding BITs as it relates to the use of such teams, the names, membership, leadership, how meetings are conducted, functions, information collection, as well as training. It is important to note that all information on BITs derives from literature from the United States as no studies have been conducted to date in Canada on the use of BITs in higher education.

Table 2.2 *Behavioural Intervention Team Functions*

No	Function	Description
1	Educate institutional members regarding behaviours of concern and reporting.	To establish an informed culture of reporting so that the campus community can identify and appropriately report behaviours.
2	Serve as supportive consultant to the campus community.	To problem solve and offer advice to those experiencing the behaviours of concern.
3	Act as central contact for all problematic behaviour.	Regardless of how minor, BITs should serve as a central point of knowledge regarding all behaviours that deviate from the norm.
4	Triage information.	As the central clearinghouse of information, the BIT can triage and look for emerging patterns and/or needs for intervention.
5	Assess risks and/or threats.	Conduct a comprehensive investigation based upon information gathered.
6	Assess available resources.	Once information is gathered, assemble all necessary resources that can provide assistance in developing interventions on a case-by-case basis.
7	Follow protocols.	Use established protocols and standards to ensure that all cases are managed in a consistent basis.
8	Coordinate follow up.	Once an intervention is developed, the BIT is responsible for orchestrating and following up with all planned courses of action.
9	Monitor ongoing cases.	The BIT is responsible for long-term follow up with those involved post-intervention to ensure the safety of all community members.

10 Assess long-term success.

To maintain effectiveness, the team monitors the success of interventions as well as the processes followed by the team.

Adapted From "The Book on Behavioral Intervention Teams (BIT)" B. Sokolow, W. S. Lewis, B. Van Brunt, S. Schuster, & D. Swinton, 2014.

2.4.1. Team Use

According to research conducted in 2009, there is evidence that an estimated 1,600 BIT teams are in existence within the United States (Lipka, 2009). Within the past decade there have been numerous attempts to investigate the use of multidisciplinary teams across the United States. In order to better understand this operational phenomenon Gamm et al. (2011) completed a review of the use of BITs in the United States that provided some data on the use, membership, and functionality of BITs. The survey was sent to over 1,000 institutions and received 181 responses, of which 175 (96.7%) had at least one team in operation on their campus (Gamm, et al., 2011). This high percentage indicates the practice has grown exponentially as only 2 years earlier it was estimated that only 80% of schools had implemented BIT teams (Fox & Savage, 2009). The NaBITA organization has also conducted a biannual survey to explore the use of BITs across the United States where it was found that multidisciplinary team usage is growing year over year: 92% in 2012 (Van Brunt, et al., 2012), 94% in 2014 (Van Brunt, et al., 2014), and 97% in 2016 (Van Brunt, 2016). These studies demonstrate that BIT teams are becoming a standard approach to addressing campus violence prevention in the United States, and provide the most relevant comparison that can be made for Canadian institutions.

While the NaBITA surveys demonstrated that BIT use has grown in popularity, research also sought to understand how long the institutions had been using BITs. Gamm, et al. (2011) research found that the median length of time these teams have been in place was only 3 years. In the NaBITA 2012 survey of over 800 institutions found that 54% of teams had been in operation for less than 5 years with only 7% of teams being in operation for more than 10 years (Van Brunt, et al., 2012). This demonstrates that multidisciplinary teams such as BITs are a relatively new operational practice that American institutions have been quick to adopt.

2.4.2. Team Name

While most institutions have adopted the multidisciplinary team approach, there remains inconsistency in how they are named. Some researchers have conducted secondary data analyzes of nation-wide surveys and discovered that American institutions are in fact implementing such campus intervention teams (Student Affairs Leadership Council, 2008). The analysis has shown that while such teams may exist there is little agreement upon team name. Various studies have found that team names differ between institutions: Students of Concern Committee, Campus Assessment and Response, Behavioural Intervention Team, Campus Assessment Team, Threat Assessment, Violence Risk Assessment Team, and many others (Dunkle, et al., 2008; Eells & Rockland-Miller, 2011; Keels, 2004). A 2016 survey of 313 institutions conducted by NaBITA found that the most common name of teams was: Behavioral Intervention Team (n=99), CARE Team (n=75), and Students of Concern Team (n=25) (Van Brunt, 2016). These findings matched those from previous research, which reported that the most common name of a team was Behavioral Intervention Team (Gamm, et al., 2011).

Does the name of the multidisciplinary team really make a difference? The quick answer is yes, as the name influences how the institutional community perceives the work of the team. According to the Jed Foundation, the name should have meaning and purpose within the given institution as compared to adopting a particular name for the team (Higher Education Mental Health Alliance, 2012). The *Implementing Behavioral Threat Assessment on Campus* resource (Randazzo & Plummer, 2009) suggested that an inappropriate team name is a pitfall for implementation of a multidisciplinary team. For example, the term *threat* in the team name can “inadvertently give the impression that the team’s work narrowly focuses on threats and not more broadly on a wide array of concerning behaviours” (Randazzo & Plummer, 2009, p. 57). The best advice for naming of a team is to “choose a name that reflects the campus team’s mission and purpose” (Dunkle & Mistler, 2014, p. 133). Therefore, the purposes or functions of the team play a key role in determining the name of the team.

2.4.3. Team Functions

Institutions of higher education have implemented the practice of multidisciplinary teams that serve to prevent harm to campus community members through reviewing of information to formally assess and develop an intervention strategy. Fox and Savage (2009) suggested that the work of BITs represents a unique operational challenge to interpret, as they act upon bizarre or disturbing behaviour. In *The Handbook for Campus Threat Assessment & Management Teams* (Deisinger, et al., 2008) an entire chapter of the book is dedicated to the suggested mission and guiding principles for multidisciplinary teams. These recommendations can be distilled down to the main purpose of teams as “not only to prevent people from harming others, but also from harming themselves or disrupting their own ability to succeed” (Deisinger, et al., 2008, p. 25). *The Book on Behavioral Intervention Teams (BIT)* (Sokolow, et al., 2014) further expands this concept for BIT teams to include four key operational assumptions: (a) targeted violence is preventable; (b) the focus of BITs should be on early prevention; (c) threat assessment functions exist within BIT teamwork; and (d) BIT team work is efficient and effective way to save lives.

Documents that recommended the best practices for BIT teams have focused on the operational practices and membership of BITs (Ambler, et al., 2008; Cornell, 2010; Deisinger, et al., 2008; Dunkle, et al., 2008; Reddy, et al., 2001). While there is an abundance of literature on the rationale for such teams, there exists little research on the team’s implementation and operational practices. The Gamm et al. (2011) research attempted to gauge the work that these teams conduct as they asked participants what behaviours the teams were addressing and found the five main categories including threats of violence, emotional distress, suicide, inappropriate communication, and classroom disruption. The types of behaviours that BITs focus on is consistent with those that best practices recommend teams address (Dunkle, et al., 2008; Eells & Rockland-Miller, 2011; Randazzo & Plummer, 2009). It is important for teams to remain within their mandate as investigating cases beyond their scope has the potential to affect the trust of the campus community (Higher Education Mental Health Alliance, 2012).

The original recommendation for threat assessment and management teams was to have a single team to address concerning behaviour of students as well as staff and faculty (Deisinger, et al., 2008). This was to avoid the potential pitfall of operating in silos

which would prevent the team from forming a comprehensive picture to conduct a robust assessment (Randazzo & Plummer, 2009). Despite the recommendation of a single team, the 2016 NaBITA survey found that more than half of institutions apply different approaches for students versus staff concerns (Van Brunt, 2016). A case study of a team that addressed the concerns of all community members found that 21.5% of the cases addressed by the multidisciplinary team focused on a staff member of the institution as the person of concern and 18.3% involved campus visitors (Cao, Yang, Ramirez, & Peek-Asa, 2013). This research highlighted the importance of ensuring that there is a team tasked with gathering and addressing the problematic behaviour of all campus members, not just students. While institutions have been adopting multidisciplinary teams they have adjusted implementation of these teams to suit the needs of their campuses, and little is known as to why specific implementation decisions are made.

Gamm et al. (2011) also asked to what degree the teams are confident that they are effective in their assessment practices, to which 78% reported being confident or very confident. This is an important perception considering that a review of three institutions by the Education Advisory Board found that BIT workload had grown over 274% in 3 years from 2008-2011 for large institutions and by 285% in small institutions (The Student Affairs Forum, 2012). These findings demonstrate the pivotal role that these teams are playing within campuses of higher education and only within the last decade.

2.4.4. Team Membership

A core aspect of multidisciplinary teams such as BITs is the diverse representation in membership. For this reason, membership plays a crucial role in the work. Team membership is largely dependent upon the mission of the team and specific needs given the culture of the institution, such as satellite campus operations (Deisinger, et al., 2008). Eells and Rockland-Miller (2011) suggested that the team be “small for better functionality” (p. 21) which aligns with other literature on the team membership (Higher Education Mental Health Alliance, 2012; Randazzo & Plummer, 2009). While total team membership varied between three and 16 members, the most common team consisted of eight people (The Student Affairs Forum, 2012). For the team to be

effective, a core minimal group is recommended which Van Brunt (2012) called the “id, ego and superego of the BIT” (p. 53). This core group consists of representation from student affairs, campus security, and mental health services and can serve as the minimum core representation for BIT to be effective. However, the core group can be supplemented with others such as institutional members from housing, academic affairs, disability services, health services, student conduct, and legal departments (Deisinger, et al., 2008; Randazzo & Plummer, 2009; Sokolow, et al., 2014; Van Brunt, 2013).

Gamm, Mardis, and Sullivan (2011) surveyed 175 institutions and asked about membership of these teams; they found that the most common members were directors of counselling services, directors of campus safety services, housing directors, and SSAOs. The surveys conducted by NaBITA in 2012, 2014, and 2016 showed a similar pattern of core membership, including institutional members from the counselling, housing, security, student affairs, and academic affairs units (Van Brunt, 2016; Van Brunt, et al., 2012, 2014). While many other team members were identified, these represent a common core group that most teams have as members. Each team member plays a specific role based upon the expertise the individual brings based upon the given role they occupy within the institution. According to the surveys completed by NaBITA, on average, teams have between eight and nine members (Van Brunt, 2016; Van Brunt, et al., 2014). The main difference between recommendations for core BIT membership from NaBITA and threat assessment team is the inclusion of legal representation (Deisinger, et al., 2008). This may be due to the fact that many institutions may not have on campus legal counsel to serve in this role, which once again reinforces that membership, is predicated upon the mandate and institutional culture. Members are appointed in part based upon their roles within the institution; however, individuals must also be a good fit for the work on teams. In *The Handbook for Campus Threat Assessment and Management Teams* (Deisinger, et al., 2008) listed 22 qualities of a team member. Although the qualities focus on training and knowledge around threat assessment work or institutional policies, a large portion of qualities represent soft skills such as communication, decision making, problem-solving and sensitivity to diverse situations (Deisinger, et al., 2008, p. 42). The literature described an inner core of positional roles that the institution should have on the team; however there is a need for diversity in other members who depend upon the needs of the institution as well as the qualities of those participating.

2.4.5. Team Leadership

Much like organizational and sports teams, having a well-functioning BIT team requires quality leadership. As BITs involve multidisciplinary individuals from diverse backgrounds within the institution, the operational practices of the team could differ depending on the knowledge and skills of the leader. The team leader serves to facilitate the work of the team and ensure that the processes followed by the team are accurate, appropriate, and within scope of authority (Deisinger, et al., 2014). Who should take the leadership role depends upon the mission of the team. Early proponents of the threat assessment model suggested the leader be from the campus safety division as members of this division are mandated to work across the entire campus and have the respect necessary to conduct the work (Randazzo & Plummer, 2009). With the growth of teams that focus on threat and risk assessment practices, Dunkle and Mistler (2014) recommended that if the team addresses all community members that the safety division should take leadership for a team addressing issues related to all community members; however, for a team that focuses solely on students, the leadership should be from the student affairs division. Dunkle and Mistler advised that members of the counselling department should never serve in as the leader of the team, as it places them in a professional ethical dilemma that may impact potential clients. In deciding on the leader of the team, Van Brunt (2012) suggested that the most important consideration is the authority to act in the implementation of decisions of the team. Considering this requirement, it is not surprising that a senior member of the student affairs division is recommended to have a leadership role, as this division plays an important part in setting the terms of reference and policy framework for the team, ensuring adequate training, and liaising with senior administrators about the mandate of the team that most often works with student behaviours (Dunkle, et al., 2008).

Based on the literature reviewed, senior staff representing divisions responsible for student affairs or campus safety are viewed as the most appropriate leaders of team. The reviews of operational practices overwhelmingly demonstrated the preference for a member of the student affairs division to serve in the important role of team chair. Surprisingly, three of the studies reviewed reported almost identical percentages of approximately 66% of teams were led by a senior student affairs leader (Gamm, et al., 2011; Van Brunt, et al., 2012, 2014). According to Sokolow, et al. (2014), a senior

student affairs leader should be in the leader role, as members of this division most often have the responsibility for student support services and student conduct. As BITs mainly focus on student behaviours, it is not surprising that student affairs professionals are now recommended to lead the team.

2.4.6. Team Meeting Processes

BITs have become an expectation and a reality for campus administrators in the United States and most likely across the globe. As such, it is important to ask, how are such teams achieving their mandates to receive reports, gather information, assess risk and decide a course of action? The best practices documentation has indicated that in order to do this institutions must have multidisciplinary teams that: have the authority to act, a clear mission, standard procedures, and a method to maintain records (Deisinger, et al., 2008; Randazzo & Cameron, 2012). To be effective, BITs must have a mechanism by which they receive sufficient and timely information of potential behaviours of concern, or the institution must have a “culture of referrals” (The Student Affairs Forum, 2012, p. 40). In their updated model, Keller et al. (2011) highlighted the pivotal role that reporting PSB plays in threat assessment management and asserted that the source of the data and the mediums by which information can be received are key barriers to effective threat assessment. According to the 2016 NaBITA (Van Brunt, 2016) the majority of case information is derived from online or phone reports (85%), direct reports to the chair (64%), and to the department responsible for the oversight of the team (33%). Teams, according to Gamm, Mardis, and Sullivan (2011), are doing their best to address the importance of reporting through employing efforts such as electronic notification, departmental visits, websites, or quick reference guides. This will continue to be an operational efficiency that must be considered in order for BITs to be able to accomplish their work.

Gathering a team of professionals whom have a busy portfolio within the institution can be challenging. As such, it is recommended that teams meet regularly to discuss cases or to build trust and skills by conducting mock assessments (Dunkle & Mistler, 2014). Several sources stress the importance of regular meetings and accurate record keeping, both of which are key activities in the threat assessment work of BITs (Deisinger, et al., 2008; Sokolow, Lewis, Wolf, Van Brunt, & Byrnes, 2009). Gamm et al.

(2011) found that BITs met with varying frequency, ranging from weekly (31%), twice monthly (24%), monthly (10%) to as needed (29%). The frequency of meetings increased slightly in 2016, with 41% of teams meeting weekly and only 12% as needed (Van Brunt, 2016).

Maintaining records of what the team has done as part of their work is an important part of the team process. These records are mostly kept using online record keeping tools to help manage and maintain the volume of complex information (Van Brunt, 2012, 2016). It is recommended that teams keep comprehensive records that “states the rationale for the team’s decisions and summarizes the factual bases for those decisions can memorialize the team’s thinking if its decisions are ever questioned” (Nolan, Randazzo, & Deisinger, 2011, p. 116). Gamm, et al. (2011) found that 94% of teams (n=175) keep records on students discussed, but only 79% record meeting minutes. These results are similar to the NaBITA surveys that found that 91% of teams kept centralized records, which was an increase from 85% in 2014 (Van Brunt, 2016). Therefore, the importance of record keeping is noted, with the majority of teams keeping records; however, it is unknown the fullness of the records or why some institutions are not maintaining records.

2.4.7. Training

As the literature has outlined, the work of BIT teams is complex and requires team members to have extensive knowledge in many areas, such as campus policies, laws, violence risk factors, decision-making processes, and risk assessment standards. With the expansive nature of BIT work, it is not surprising that it is recommended that “Whatever the makeup of a campus team, training and professional development in threat assessment are essential and must be done on an ongoing basis” (Dunkle & Mistler, 2014, p. 137). Ensuring the team members have the necessary skills and training to complete their work is a common recommendation for teams (Sokolow & Lewis, 2009; Sokolow, et al., 2014; Van Brunt, 2012). With training being an important requirement for team functioning, it is surprising that only 67% of teams report are receiving training (Gamm, et al., 2011) and even more surprising is that the majority of training received is reported to be done in house or through short-term lessons such as webinars. The reliance on informal training such as webinars (54%), books (33%), or

conferences (30%) were found to be the top training methods utilized with only 31% of survey respondents reporting that they received professional training (Van Brunt, et al., 2012) This is concerning because the process of threat assessment is complex, and while members bring their own expertise to the team, training will serve to enhance their understanding of their unique role on a BIT.

Training plays a pivotal role in teams being able to meet their mandates. Two studies on the use of training for BITs found that attending training improved the skill and confidence of BIT members (Allen, et al., 2008; Storey, et al., 2011). Both studies employed a quantitative approach to test the pre and post levels of knowledge of a given training instrument. This indicates that training is a key component of the effectiveness of BIT teams. Additionally, recent Canadian research studied 704 participants from 74 higher education institutions in Canada who had attended professional violence risk assessment training (Watt, 2017). The evaluations of these participants were analyzed and the researcher found four common themes of needs as identified by team members: team implementation, team training, team procedures, and team support. This highlights the need for comprehensive training not only in violence risk assessment but also in team practices as well.

2.4.8. Threat and Risk Assessment Tools

Many tools and measures can be used as part of a threat and violence risk assessment process. These tools can range from very simplified questions to series of complex reviews of people and incidents. The focus of most threat assessment instruments is to assess the level of risk using the information known to those completing the assessment. Presented as an innovative approach, the Federal Bureau of Investigation suggested that in order to assess the threat of a school shooter, a team required a four-prong assessment approach that considers (a) the personality of the student, (b) the family dynamics, (c) the school dynamics, and (d) the social dynamics (O'Toole, 2000). Since this time new tools have emerged that range from simplified question, such as the *School Threat Assessment Guide* (Cameron & Woods, 2001), and a series of scales of behaviour and the corresponding risk such as the *NaBITA Threat Assessment Tool* (Sokolow, et al., 2009), which the uses three scales- risk, disruption, and aggression-, and depending upon the findings on each scale will determine the

intervention necessary. There are also more complex violence risk assessment instruments, such as the *HCR-20* (Webster, et al., 1997), that use exhaustive and comprehensive tools and include a personal series of questions. Other comprehensive tools include the Structured Interview of Violence Risk Assessment -SIVRA-35 (National Behavior Intervention Team Association, n.d.), and the Workplace Assessment of Violence Risk- WAVR-21 (White & Meloy, 2007). In 2013, Van Brunt published a comparative analysis of the various tools used to conduct the threat and violence risk assessment work of BIT teams and found that all provided similar results. While strengths and weaknesses existed for each instrument, they each provided similar results when used to assess the same three scenarios. Therefore, training in the use of a formal rubric provides a structure to teams to assess the potential of violence for an individual. Each instrument has its own merit; as such, no single tool can be used for threat assessment across all campuses. This reinforces that intervention is not an act implemented by a singular unit; rather it requires the collaborative efforts of the institutional community because “managing an educational environment is a team effort, calling for collaboration and multilateral solutions” (Lake, 2007, p. ara 22).

2.5. Context of Teams

In the preface of the book titled *Creating and Maintaining Safe College Campuses*, the Executive Director of the American College Personnel Association Gregory Roberts, stated “We are all at risk” (Jackson & Terrell, 2007, p. xiii). Roberts was referring to the appalling trend that more and more deaths are happening on college and university campuses in North America. This statement was correct, as no campus is immune to crime or violence; however, campuses can mitigate the risks they face. Managing these risks requires teams to have knowledge of their legal requirements as well as an understanding of their institutional context.

As PSBs most often involves a level of potential risk to a student or others, it is often important to act quickly to prevent any potential violence or harm. The most common source of rules-in-use for BITs is the internal policies and procedures that exist to govern student behaviour and dictate the use of institutional power. The members of the campus intervention teams can have clear and defined purpose as outlined in documents that recommend practices for teams. Keller et al. (2011) suggested that

such teams are necessary to identify the acts and behaviours of students who are of concern for the institution and to take action in accordance with institutional policy and the overall legal requirements.

2.5.1. Legal Requirements

While it is clear that there is a moral obligation for institutions of higher education to do everything within their means to prevent harm, there exists a legal obligation as well. Within the United States, the expectation is that the institution has taken reasonable care to implement actions against foreseeable violence or violent persons (Eells & Rockland-Miller, 2011; Higher Education Mental Health Alliance, 2012). The legal system can often be slow and onerous to navigate, therefore the first course of action for any BIT is to investigate or enact its own policies (Noonan-Day & Jennings, 2007). Over two decades ago it was noted that within higher education administration legal demands have occurred in tandem with the “changing patterns of behavior, heightened attention to student misbehavior, and changing expectations on the part of parents and others” (Hoekema, 1994, p. 4). The behaviour of students can affect many other campus members, such as roommates, classmates, faculty members, service workers, and other staff. When problematic behaviours results in harm to the individual or others there is the potential for legal action against the institution and its members (Kitzrow, 2009). As Eells and Rockland-Miller (2011) stated “legal issues are related to disability law, laws that govern student privacy and confidentiality, and concerns about liability for student suicide and violence” (p. 10). These are important concepts that teams must be familiar with complex legal issues and how the institution’s legal obligations inform the decisions and interventions of the team. It is for this reason that there are many external rules, laws and legislation or internal rules, policies and protocols that guide the actions of BIT teams.

The disruptive actions of a student intersect with the Canadian legal requirements of postsecondary institutions in numerous ways. Pochini (2008) presented a clear outline of the Canadian legal context, which is important for campus administrators to consider when managing the risk of PSB. Considering a single case of a mentally unwell individual threatening to harm peers while on campus requires the institution to adhere to its duty to prevent harm to those who attend their premises.

Institutional policies and procedures are a function of how institutions address PSB in a manner that satisfies the legal obligations for operating a safe premise, maintaining a safe workplace, and adhering mental health legislations (Pochini, 2008). There are also legal rights of the student that must be upheld, such as human rights, rights and freedoms, and judicial procedural fairness, while simultaneously balancing the institution's legal obligations such as workplace safety and institutional liability (Hannah & Stack, 2015). Balancing complex and competing legal obligations that when not addressed pose a significant financial risk to the institution only serves to increase the challenging nature of the work of BIT teams. The newly published book, the *Handbook of Canadian Higher Education Law* (Shanahan, et al., 2015) explained the complex combination of laws that serve to define the relationship between the student and the institution. The legal relationship that exists between a student and the institution was described as “complex, multifaceted, comprising elements of constitutional, statutory, administrative, contract, and tort law” (Hannah & Stack, 2015, p. 164). It is evident that addressing PSB is rife with legal rules that must guide the actions of the intervention team.

Immediately following an incident of campus violence, there often is public outcry demanding an institution explain the rationale for not informing others of a known concern for people's safety. This criticism of campus action was raised as a result of the mass shootings at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute campus (Figley & Jones, 2008) where administrators involved with the incident discussed the legal requirements to protect the privacy of the students involved. The same concerns exist in Canada when considering the legal requirements of student privacy and conduct. Campus administrators had publically expressed confusion in the interpretations of the legal requirements of breaching privacy regulations when addressing students in crisis which led to Privacy Commissioners of Ontario and British Columbia releasing a toolkit on how to exercise discretion with regards to emergency disclosure of student information (Loukidelis & Cavoukian, 2008). The intersection of privacy regulations with the work of violence prevention remains a complicated space in which to make decisions regarding safety and violence prevention activities.

2.5.2. Institutional Context

There exists little research into the culture of the academy in relation to campus safety. Boyer (1990) studied how institutions of higher education can impact the sense of community and identified six key principles necessary for a positive campus community to thrive within higher education. Boyer's model suggests that campuses must be educationally purposeful, open, just, disciplined, caring and celebrative. Boyer's principles are reinforced by the need for the campus culture to care for and respect students (Spano, 2008). It is evident through policy and practice that the "make up our campus communities interact with, respect, and include one another in various ways" (Giacomini & Schrage, 2009, p. 13). It is, therefore, indisputable that campus culture involves an attention to the safety and security of its members.

When considering problematic behaviour intervention by institutions of higher education, the likely organizational unit of analysis is the division of student affairs. Within an institution of higher education, the student affairs units are organizationally and legally responsible for all students throughout their academic career (Culp, 1995). Under the leadership of the SSAO, the various organizational units within the division are mandated to deliver support, management, and policy development of all aspects of the students actions associated with their academic study (Kuk & Banning, 2009). It is for this reason that addressing PSB often falls to the SSAO. It is commonly understood that the division of student affairs is responsible for managing the behaviour of all students, both well and unwell (Dunkle & Presley, 2009).

The entire profession of student services is rooted in the belief that higher education plays a pivotal role in the maturation and development of postsecondary students. Theories of student development explain the interconnectedness between the social environment of education and the maturation of students' abilities beyond their academic curriculum. It is a common understanding among student affairs staff and faculty that students develop psychosocially (Chickering & Reisser, 1993), cognitively (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005), or morally (Bruess & Pearson, 2000). Therefore, it is understood that students are learning how to interact with their surroundings while simultaneously completing their academic learning. It is, therefore, evident that "when ethics of membership, and care characterize a college, students are more likely to

perceive that the institution is concerned with their welfare and committed to their success” (Kuh, 2009, p. 61).

2.6. Theoretical Framework

The foundation of this research study was to understand the experiences of BIT team members as they conduct their work assessing PSBs, thus, this study was approached with a constructivist epistemological approach. This style of inquiry serves to counter the traditional research approach that considers the topic from the perspective of the researcher as compared to the constructivist approach that person “emphasized the importance of the participant’s view, stressed the setting or context (e.g., a classroom) in which the participants expressed their views” (Creswell, 2008, p. 50). An imperative tenet of this research was to explore the use of BIT teams from the point of view of those conducting the work. Exploring the topic from this perspective aligns with a social constructivist view that “individuals seek to understanding of the world in which they live and work” (Creswell, 2003, p. 8). Morgan and Smircich (1980) offered three core paradigms or orientations by which social science research perceive how reality is constructed: as a projection of human imagination; as a social construction; and/or as symbolic discourse (p. 494). This study considered how participation in BIT teams shapes the experiences of postsecondary professionals which aligns with the belief that reality is socially constructed, or that individuals create meaning through their experiences they have with others within their changing social environments (Andrews, 2012). This research assumes that participation in BIT teams can impact one’s personal experience and therefore represents a social constructionist perspective that “places great emphasis on everyday interactions between people and how they use language to construct their reality” (Andrews, 2012, p. 44).

When an incident of campus violence occurs, there is a public outcry that demands action to improve safety within educational institutions (“N.B. students stunned by Virginia campus shootings,” 2007, April 17; “Schools ignoring student violence warning signs,” 2010; Stark, 2014). The pressure that such high-profile incidents of violence put on administrators to act and therefore implement a multi-disciplinary team is clear indication such teams is a socially created phenomenon. Considering campus violence as a social problem, a social constructionist perspective is a reasonable

research paradigm in violence prevention research (Muschert, 2007; O'Grady, Parnaby, & Schickschneit, 2010). Thibodeaux (2014) explains that social constructionist research "investigates the political, social, and economic conditions which influence claims-making activities, and thus the timing of the prominence of social problems" (p. 835). In her book, *An Introduction to Social Constructionism*, Burr (1995) outlines four key tenets of social constructionism: (a) critical on knowledge that is assumed, (b) considers the historical influences on knowledge, (c) knowledge is maintained through social processes, and (d) knowledge and social action are interconnected. These principles have a direct link to this study of the BIT processes, which have clear roots as a social response to the social problem of campus violence. The relevance of using a social constructivist approach is derived from the core principle of BIT teams, the use of multidisciplinary perspectives as an essential requirement for effective violence prevention. Team assessment is rooted in the belief that it is imperative that individuals with different perspectives, socially constructed realities, as they provide a diverse and therefore comprehensive view of the case before the team.

Another reason for choosing a social constructivist paradigm is in that the use of BITs as a mechanism to identify and assess student behaviour in order to intervene prior to any acts of violence or harm occurring, which represents a violence prevention strategy. Violence and violence prevention, as constructs, have been studied using a variety of theoretical approaches and for this reason there is little consistency regarding approaches to campus violence research. It is not surprising that models used to research violence would differ significantly, as one could be researching specific violent acts once they have occurred or the prevention of types of violence. In order to better understand violence in academic settings researchers have called for multi-approached research that takes into account the whole context of education (Astor, et al., 2010) and specifically to use theoretically informed research of the phenomenon from an ecological approach (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005).

Violence prevention, and by extension the work of BIT teams, serves to prevent harm or injury from occurring as a result of violence. While there exist numerous ways to study violence prevention, the approach taken for this research was informed by how the researcher understood the problem as caused by violence. One such approach looks at violence prevention as an issue impacting the health of individuals, and

specifically that school and youth violence is a public health problem (Gielen, Sleet, & DiClemente, 2006). Addressing and preventing violence as a public health matter has been adopted by the World Health Organization (Krug, et al., 2002), which is appropriate when considering campus violence prevention. As previously noted, exposure to incidents of violence on campus has been shown to impact the wellbeing of students; and therefore, it was appropriate to frame this research by using a model that addresses violence as a health issue. The World Health Organization has specifically suggested a social-ecological model as a framework through which to conduct violence prevention work (Krug, et al., 2002); this model was, therefore, adopted as a theoretical framework through which this research was conducted.

2.6.1. Social-Ecological Model

The foundation of the Social-Ecological Model (SEM) is rooted in the early work of Bronfenbrenner (1977) on their research on human development. Bronfenbrenner's (1977) ecological framework posited that to understand human development is not served by a single observation of behaviour but rather involves "examination of multiperson systems of interaction not limited to a single setting and must take into account aspects of the environment beyond the immediate situation containing the subject" (p. 514). This original theory considered that human development was influenced by reciprocal interactions between individuals and their environments, which were categorized into four systems of influence: micro, meso, exo, and macrosystems. Table 2.3 provides an overview of the ecological systems that Bronfenbrenner described as being processes of changing environments where the individual and the setting are impacted by the context within which they are imbedded.

Table 2.3 *Bronfenbrenner's ecological environments*

System	Description	Example
Microsystem	The interaction between the individual and their immediate setting where they have a given role	Family, work, school
Mesosystem	The interactions between multiple settings at a given time.	School Peer Group, church group

Exosystem	The formal and informal social systems that establish rules that govern the individuals behaviours	Neighbourhoods, media, workplace rules
Macrosystem	Overarching cultures or ideologies that govern systems	Laws, educational system

Note. Adapted from “Toward an Experimental Ecology of Human Development,” by U. Bronfenbrenner, 1977, *American Psychologist*, 32(7), 513-531.

The social-ecological relationship between the individuals and their environment was recognized as an important approach to consider the health of communities; and thus, was adopted within the health promotion field. The SEM was adapted to further explain how their environment influences an individual’s health and how the behaviours of individuals impacted the health of greater systems. This was represented in a new nested model expanding Bronfenbrenner’s (1977) original systems include the terms intrapersonal, interpersonal, institutional, community, and public policy (McLeroy, et al., 1988). Table 2.4 provides an overview of each of the social-ecological sphere of influence on the health of individuals and to illustrate how the SEM spheres apply to this research examples from institutional multidisciplinary teams are used to provide context to the various systems.

Table 2.4 *Social-Ecological Model for Health Promotion*

System	Description	Example
Intrapersonal	The individual being considered and includes their knowledge, behaviours, and self-concepts	Individual Team Member
Interpersonal	The interactions between social groups of the individual	BIT Team members, department team member is working
Institutional	The organization of groups that are guided by operational regulations	Institution, professional bodies (ie physicians)
Community	The cluster of relationships between institutional systems	Local community, community mental health,
Public Policy	Overarching cultures that govern behaviours	Laws, statutes

Note. Adapted from “An Ecological Perspective on Health Promotion Programs,” by K. R. McLeroy, D. Bibeau, A. Steckler, & K. Glanz, 1988, *Health Education Quarterly*, 15(4), p. 335

The SEM provides a framework by which to consider a health-related problem such as campus violence; however, it is important not to oversimplify the use of the model, as the SEM does have limitations. One key critique of the SEM is that it does not provide specificity at each system level on how to identify interventions (McLeroy, et al., 1988). In a comprehensive review of the use of the SEM in community health, Hawe (2017) identified that the model has the potential to be misused, as it provides a superficial way to conduct research if the full scope of the approach is not utilized. This comprehensive analysis of the model identified four key principles that must be considered in a SEM approach. The first, cycling of resources, refers to the need to consider resources such as expertise or activities and how they move between communities. The second principle of interdependence involves the appreciation that interconnections exist between systems and how actions within one community that can have a consequences within another community. Adaptation, the third principle, refers to the process by which systems naturally seek to evolve to the best fit of an intervention for the specifics of the given community. The fourth principle, succession, of how players change within communities and therefore health interventions can adapt over time based upon factors such as personnel or budget cycles.

SEM approaches have been used to research how exposure to violence impacts individuals in order to develop relevant prevention strategies (Oriol, et al., 2017), to understand how exposure to violence at different system levels can impact aggression in youth (Boxer, et al., 2013), and determine how violence within different systems serve to predict gang violence participation (Merrin, Hong, & Espelage, 2015). Most importantly, SEM approaches have been used to look at school or campus violence. For example, an ecological study was conducted to assess the violence prevention efforts of a school district at all ecological levels (Telleen, Kim, & Pesce, 2009), and Scribner, et al. (2010) used the SEM to discover that postsecondary institutions with a greater density of alcohol serving establishments experience higher rates of violence. Thus, the SEM is a proven framework through which campus violence and violence prevention have been researched. This research study considered the experience of those conducting violence prevention work as compared to incidents of violence, which represents a slightly different way to use the SEM approach in violence prevention research. While using the model in this manner represents a different context within which to use this framework,

there have been studies that use the SEM to evaluate the experiences of teams within organizational settings.

The SEM, as a community health model, has been used to look at barriers and perceptions of individuals within an organization or system that is using a specific health initiative. For example, the SEM was used as a framework to examine barriers experienced by members of a postsecondary institution in the participation in their workplace wellness initiatives (Terrell, 2015). The SEM approach provided the researchers with a framework by which to uncover how employee wellness leaders could improve their work at each of the ecological levels. Brown (2015) used a SEM framework to conduct an ecological assessment of the community health needs of a population in order to design appropriate future health initiatives. These uses of the SEM model as a method to evaluate the experience of institutional community members demonstrates that the model can be used to understand the perceptions of individuals from the various environmental settings. As such, the SEM was an appropriate theoretical framework for this research.

2.6.2. Summary

This chapter has provided a comprehensive understanding of the history of campus violence in the United States and Canada and how postsecondary institutions have been recommended to create multidisciplinary teams as a means to prevent such tragedies. A common type of multidisciplinary team structure that has been created are BITs, which are tasked with establishing a trusted mechanism to receive and review reports of worrisome behaviour that the team monitors, assesses, and addresses to prevent targeted and other forms of campus violence. The literature review highlighted that the research and reference documents on the topic of BITs is almost exclusively completed for and by American institutions, which has resulted in limited Canadian research. The American literature provided a reference point to compare the findings of this research to understand the use of BIT teams in Canada.

The next chapter outlines the purpose and questions of this research and provides an overview of the overall design and methodology that was employed within this research study to explore how such teams have been implemented within Canadian institutions of higher education.

Chapter 3. Methodology

As outlined in Chapter 2, current literature recommended that higher education institutions utilize multidisciplinary teams to assess and address situations that pose a risk or threat to the members of an institution. While BIT teams are a common operational practice in the United States, there is a lack of research into the experience of such team members in Canada. To understand the experiences of Canadian BIT team members, a case study approach was considered for this research. However, as there has been no research of the overall use of BITs in Canada, a case study would not have provided any relevant insight on employing such teams as a strategy beyond the experience of the given institution. There does not exist a publicly available record or source that identifies the Canadian institutions that have implemented multidisciplinary teams to address PSB which meant that there was no way to identify a representative sample of team members from across Canadian institutions. In order to design a study that provided data that was relevant for Canadian higher education institutions, the experience of team members needed to be representative of the overall Canadian postsecondary system's use of BITs. For this reason a multi-staged mixed method study was necessary to gain sufficient insight into the existence of BITs in Canada and the experience of those serving on such teams.

To understand the degree to which Canadian institutions are using multidisciplinary teams to address PSB, a national study was the required first stage. Once a national picture of the use, membership, and function of BITs in Canada was compiled a representative sample of team members could be identified and studied to learn about the experiences of team members regarding their work on such teams. In addition, if such teams have been implemented it is important to understand if team members perceive their work as being an effective way to address PSB as a means to prevent potential campus violence.

This chapter outlines the purpose and research questions explored in this national study, the context of the research methodology, and the rationale for the chosen methodology. Each stage of the multi-staged research design is described including the selection of participants, procedures, and instruments, as well as the data analysis

approach used within each stage. Finally, the limitations of the research and the threats to the validity of the study are discussed.

3.1. Research Questions

The review of the literature in BIT practices identified a gap in knowledge on the use of the practice in Canada. Therefore, this research sought to answer the following research question: “What is the experience of members of behavioural intervention teams that address problematic student behaviour within Canadian higher education?”

The following sub questions were also explored when conducting this research:

1. To what degree do institutions use behavioural intervention teams?
2. What institutional variables, such as size, location, and type, influence the intervention practices?
3. What barriers and limitations do members of behavioural intervention teams believe to exist for the success of interventions?
4. To what degree do members of behavioural intervention teams view their assessment team as effective?

3.2. Research Context

The lack of previous Canadian research in the area of PSB intervention required a broad research approach. In Canada, higher education is provincially regulated; and therefore, each province has jurisdiction over the mandate of the respective institutions of higher education. Each province has existing legislation that outlines the operational requirements for the institutions within it. While the legislations across provinces may appear similar, there exists no national standard or requirements for all institutions of higher education (Jones, Shanahan, & Goyan, 2001).

The absence of a national requirement for how Canadian institutions of higher education manage student behaviour meant that there was no way to easily identify how institutions were addressing PSBs or which had implemented a multidisciplinary team such as a BIT to address PSBs. This reality presented a unique operational challenge for this study to identify and access the population of institutions utilizing multidisciplinary

teams to address PSBs. In order to solve this challenge, a multi-staged study was necessary to both identify those institutions that had a BIT team as well as to access the individuals serving on such teams. This research required information about which institutions had teams and the work of those teams (quantitative data) as well as the actions and perceptions of team members (qualitative data). No singular research method would have adequately provided access the depth of knowledge needed to answer the research questions, and for this reason a multi-staged mixed-methods approach was necessary.

3.3. Research Method – Mixed Methods Approach

There exists a growing trend of research that embodies a pragmatic paradigm that combines both inductive and deductive research strategies (Creswell, 2008). The pragmatic paradigm does not replace the quantitative or qualitative research views; rather, it considers that a combination of both perspectives can minimize the weakness of a singular approach. Those researchers who specialize in such dualistic, pragmatic, perspectives have found that it

offers a practical and outcome-oriented method of inquiry that is based on action and leads, iteratively, to further action and the elimination of doubt; and it offers a method for researchers selecting methodological mixes that can help better answer their research questions. (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 70)

The definition of mixed method research states that “the combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone” (Creswell & Clark, 2007, p. 8). While quantitative and qualitative research alone have merit, each has limits to the data or understanding they can provide a researcher. A mixed methods approach, therefore, offers a research strategy that maximizes the strengths of each method while minimizing the limitations (Creswell, 2008).

Employing a combination of methodologies has become more popular within educational research. The benefit of a mixed method approaches in educational research is that it has “greater impact, because figures can be very persuasive to policy-makers whereas stories are more easily remembered and repeated by them for illustrative purposes” (Gorard & Taylor, 2004, p. 7). The practicality of mixed methods

research was important for this study, as the intent was to understand the existing institutional practices in attempt to develop contextually relevant best practices for Canadian institutions of higher education.

3.3.1. Rationale of Mixed Methods

The inherent social practices and principles that are at the core of educational environments make the mixed methods approach a relevant and useful research design. Educational environments involve interpersonal interactions and exchanges between diverse community members. The exploration and understanding of complex social phenomena, such as education, is the foundation of mixed method research (Greene, 2007). It is the purpose of mixed methods research to provide a more comprehensive and diverse view of phenomena and have more strength to the outcome (Crano & Brewer, 2002; Creswell & Clark, 2007; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). It is the combination of methods that benefit the social researcher to understand experiences in a manner that “no single method can accomplish and can have a personal, social, institutional, and/or organizational impact” (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003, p. 178).

Mixed method research is more complex than simply using quantitative and qualitative approaches to explore a single research question. The usefulness of a mixed method approach is, in part, a function of the interconnectedness of the research methods. The sequence of implementing methods, whether quantitative or qualitative, first or simultaneously, is the mechanism that offers the researcher more richness and depth of understanding (Creswell, 2003). There are four basic types of mixed methods research: triangulation, embedded, explanatory, and exploratory (Creswell & Clark, 2007). The main difference between each type of mixed methods research is based upon the sequencing of the research method and the interpretation of the data collected. For example, in an embedded type, the researcher collects both qualitative and quantitative data simultaneously and interprets the combined results, where as a triangulation type, the researcher simultaneously gathers the data but interprets each dataset independently of the others (Creswell, 2008). Finally explanatory type, the researcher uses qualitative data to further explain the quantitative data collected, as compared to exploratory type, in which the researcher uses the quantitative data to build upon the qualitative data discovered (Creswell, 2003).

Each mixed-method design has various styles of delivery that serve a particular purpose or benefit for the research project. Key to the choice of which design to implement, are the questions being asked and the data necessary to sufficiently answer the research questions (Alise & Teddlie, 2010; Bryman, 2007). This research sought to understand the current landscape of multidisciplinary team use in Canada through quantitative surveys, and then explored the experiences of those individuals doing the work using qualitative interviews, therefore this study employed an explanatory mixed methods design.

3.3.2. Strengths and Weaknesses

An explanatory mixed method approach has clearly identified stages of research in which the full effectiveness of the research approach can be achieved (Creswell, 2008). The quantitative data collected during the first stage was analyzed completely prior to considering the qualitative stage. This clarity creates ease for the researcher and clarity for the participants (Conrad & Serlin, 2006). While the explanatory mixed-method approach aided in identifying those members of multidisciplinary teams in Canada and permitted an in-depth method to understand their experiences as members, there were some limitations of using this approach.

The approach required the study to be conducted in stages, which meant that later stages remained unspecified until the analysis of the previous stage was concluded. This required a longer amount of time to complete the study and required additional resources. The issue of timelines of research is a common problem in mixed methods research that must be considered and accepted prior to conducting the study (Bryman, 2007). Furthermore, as the participants for the second stage were unknown until such time as the completion of the first stage, which posed a challenge to receive ethical approval (Creswell & Clark, 2007). While there was little risk or danger to individuals involved in this research study, this challenge was factored into the implementation of this study.

3.4. Research Design

The mixed method approach was designed to aid in the participant identification and selection. The research included both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods that were analyzed when collected and used to develop the next stage of research as well as identify the appropriate participants. The sequential nature of participant selection involved a staged approach that included both quantitative and qualitative instruments. This represents an explanatory mixed methods design. Figure 3.1 graphically represents the process of an explanatory mixed-method design and time within the process when data analysis and interpretation are completed.



Figure 3.1 Explanatory design

Note. QUAL = Qualitative; QUAN = Quantitative.
Adapted from *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research* (p. 73), by J. W. Creswell & V. L. P. Clark, 2007, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Copyright 2007 by Creswell & Clark. Reprinted with permission.

The stages of research provided a structure to inform the overall use of BIT teams within Canada. This research employed an online survey to access the quantitative data and semi-structured interviews to access the qualitative data.

3.4.1. Quantitative Data - Online Surveys

The design of an explanatory mixed method research study benefits from the use of a broad-reaching quantitative instrument with the research population and use the results to focus on a detailed qualitative instrument to collect detailed information of participants (Creswell, 2003). The best way to access the information from a large population about their opinions, behaviours, or characteristics is to use a survey design (Creswell, 2008). Surveys are quantitative instruments that are useful to describe opinions or evaluate current actions of large samples or populations (Crano & Brewer, 2002; Creswell, 2003). When developing survey methodology, researchers must attend

to the sample and the instrument (Creswell, 2008). In this study, the researcher first studied the population, not a sample; as such, issues of sample size or representation were eliminated.

The approach applied in this study had been used in past national United States research conducted to investigate the use of BITs. In 2011 Gamm, Mardis, and Sullivan conducted a national electronic survey to assess the use of BIT and Threat Assessment teams across the United States. Additionally, the NaBITA has also conducted a national electronic survey of BIT use in 2012, 2014, and 2016 (Van Brunt, 2016; Van Brunt, et al., 2012, 2014). As past online surveys had been used to identify the use of BITs, this research adopted a similar approach.

Survey research takes many forms based upon the need of the researcher. This research required an understanding of current operating practices within Canada. This national assessment was a cross-sectional type of research, as it collected data at a singular moment in time (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009). An online method of surveying was chosen for its convenience, cost effectiveness, and ease of access for the participants. Computer-based methods of survey delivery have proven to increase response rates over more laborious and costly methods such as mailed or in-person surveys (Creswell, 2008).

There are inherent issues when employing a survey methodology, such as ambiguous questions, accuracy of data, and participants' experience with questionnaires (Conrad & Serlin, 2006). Of greatest concern within this study was the issue of social desirability. Participants' desire to be perceived as competent can impact the way in which they answer questions (Singleton & Straits, 2005). To address these concerns, the survey was constructed in a manner avoided the use of leading or double-barrelled questions (Gay, et al., 2009; Singleton & Straits, 2005).

As a graduate student at Simon Fraser University (SFU), the researcher had access to an in-house survey program called *WebSurvey*, which was used for the creation and dissemination of all surveys. The *WebSurvey* survey program allows for the development of a survey instrument that collects the data in a safe manner, as the data can be restricted and password protected. This online tool was hosted within institution, ensured that no personal identifiers were kept on servers outside of Canada,

and was approved for use by the institution's Research Ethics Board. The details of each survey are explained in detail later in this chapter; however, it is important to note that prior to deployment, all instruments were pre-tested with a group of practitioners at SFU. Due to the pilot testing of all instruments, SFU was not included as an institution in the final national study.

3.4.2. Qualitative Data - Semi-Structured Interviews

This research sought not only to understand the prevalence and membership of BIT teams across Canada, but also to determine the perceived effectiveness of such teams to prevent campus tragedy. To gain this insight, it was necessary to understand the experiences of BIT members, and to best gain this type of information, interviews with team members were needed. An interview method uses structured conversation and interactions between the researcher and the participant with a specific purpose (Kvale, 1996). Interviews are a commonly used practice in mixed methods educational research (Gorard & Taylor, 2004). Interview research design offers a method for participants to "provide information about their behavior, thoughts, or feelings in response to questions posed by an interviewer" (Crano & Brewer, 2002, p. 223). Engaging in a purposeful discussion with a participant offers the researcher access to information unavailable through observation alone (Gay, et al., 2009).

The key to conducting interview research is the construction of the interview protocol. The interview protocol included the use of semi-structured interviews that asked a series of open-ended questions yet retained the ability to ask clarifying questions as needed (Crano & Brewer, 2002; Creswell, 2003). As participants were geographically dispersed in-person interviews proved economically restrictive which can be addressed by the use of technological uses such as telephone, electronic tools (Creswell, 2008). In order to be able to interview participants from across Canada, participants were interviewed using Skype™, an online video conferencing program, a program with which all participants were familiar using.

The ability for the interviewer to access the level of information that is necessary requires knowledge of the material and the ability to relate to the participants (Crano & Brewer, 2002; Kvale, 1996). The researcher had served on BIT teams at other institutions, which provided prior exposure to the types of scenarios and work that team

members described. This provided a foundation of understanding the concepts and topics being described by interviewees without having any personal reactions to the topics being discussed. The ability to appreciate the experiences of interviewees helped develop rapport with the participants. The previous experience of the researcher in assessing PSBs assisted the interview process, as it was known that each case is unique in both its severity and outcome. This prior exposure to the subject material was necessary as it prevented the researcher from having a bias towards a preconceived notion of cases and outcomes, thereby enabling the researcher to attend to the descriptions provided by the interviewee.

3.5. Research Stages

This exploratory mixed method study was conducted in three stages. This staged approach provided an understanding of the use of BIT teams across Canada and access to individuals serving as members of teams. This multi-staged method for identifying research participants represented a sequential participant selection method. Explanatory mixed methods design “uses the qualitative data to refine the results from the quantitative data” (Creswell, 2008, p. 560) and for this reason the data of the quantitative stages were analyzed prior to the conducting of the qualitative stage of the research. While both types of data were collected, the final analysis integrated the quantitative results yet emphasized the qualitative findings.

Figure 3.2 below, illustrates the process that this multi-staged research took in the collecting, analysing, and which data set was used to answer which research question. The illustration shows how the Stage 1 and 2 online survey tools, quantitative stage, were pilot tested before being distributed. The results of Stages 1 and 2 were analyzed and the findings were used to develop the Stage 3 interviews, qualitative stage. Stage 3 results were then analyzed before completing the overall study analysis. Each stage is discussed in terms of the sampling procedures and instruments as well as the data analysis necessary prior to the implementation of the next stage.

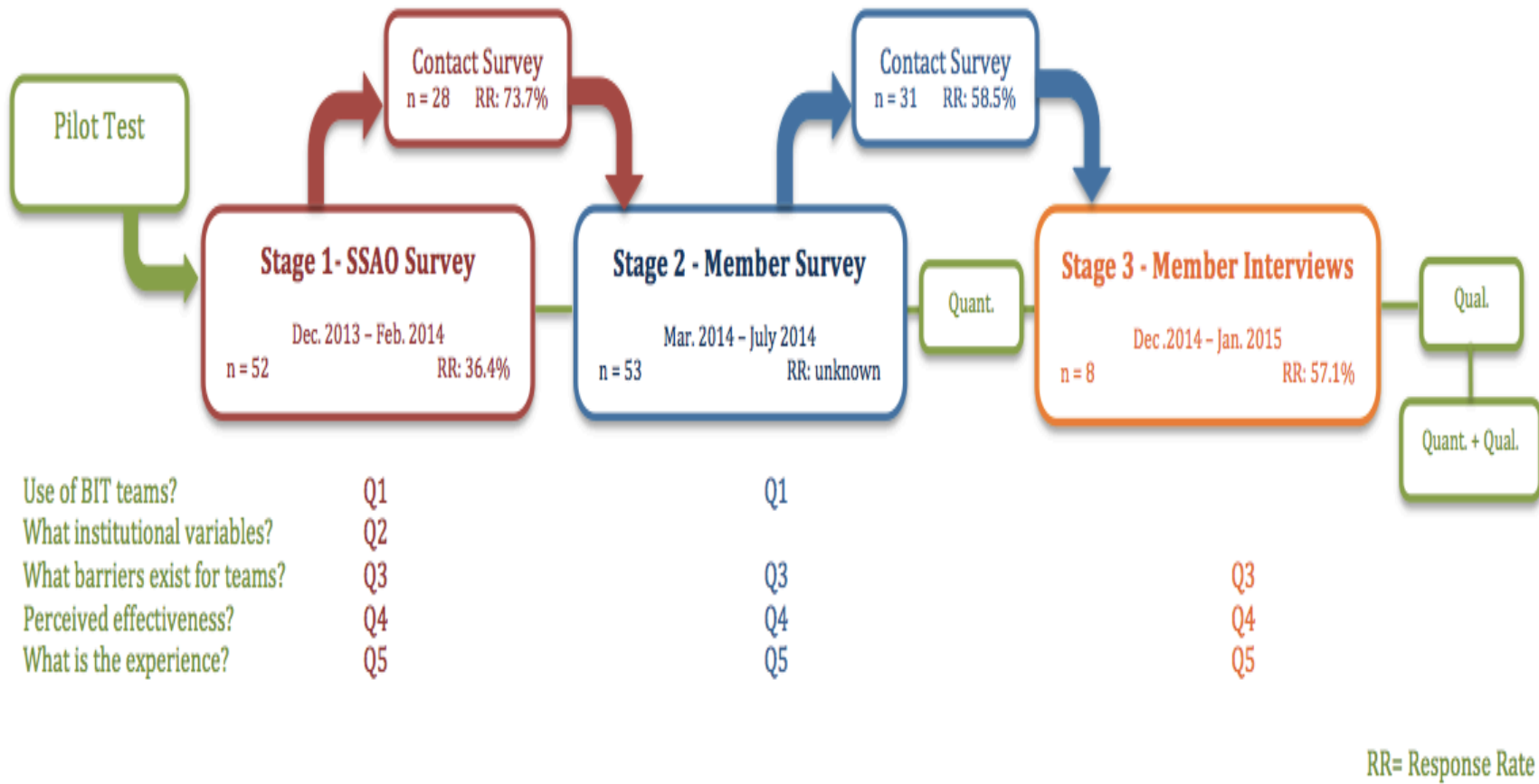


Figure 3.2 Graphic depiction of research design

3.5.1. Participant Identification and Sampling Strategy

To identify and access the participants for this study, various sampling techniques were used. As the institutions currently using multidisciplinary team structures were unknown, the researcher utilized a participant selection model. This model implemented and analyzed the quantitative method first in order to identify the participants who were needed to be qualitatively studied (Creswell & Clark, 2007).

3.6. Stage 1 – SSAO Survey

The first stage of the study was to understand to what degree institutions in Canada had implemented a team to address PSB. To do this, an electronic survey was distributed to the Senior Student Affairs Officer (SSAO) of 143 publicly funded English-speaking universities, colleges, and institutes in Canada.

3.6.1. Sampling Strategy

In order to identify institutions that employ multidisciplinary teams, it was necessary to first survey the population to ensure a true representation of the current practice and to identify potential future participants. For this reason, the researcher decided to include all 143 publicly funded Canadian English-speaking universities within this study. The study of the entire population can lessen the effects of sampling error and reduce any limitations due to poor response rates (Creswell, 2008).

3.6.2. Participants

Often times, there exist a singular position or person who is necessary to contact in order to access the intended research participants. Such a person is termed a gatekeeper, an individual who provides access to a greater population (Creswell, 2008). The responsibility for identifying and responding to incidents of problematic behaviour is most often assigned to the SSAO (Ambler, et al., 2008; Dunkle & Presley, 2009; Hollingsworth, et al., 2009; Sandeen, 1989). Therefore, individuals in the SSAO role

were deemed the most likely gatekeeper to team members. The use of accessing participants via the SSAO has been used as a research strategy to gain participants in previous research exploring similar topics (Dannells & Consolvo, 2000; Gamm, et al., 2011; Stuber & Dannells, 1996; Van Brunt, et al., 2012, 2014). As such, SSAOs were an appropriate position to serve as participants based upon the functional role they play within their institutions. An SSAO has the operational responsibility of addressing PSBs within each institution. While institutions can vary drastically in the operating protocols and organizational structures, there does exist consistency between functional responsibilities (Dungy, 2003). Specifically, the functions of responding to student behaviour and addressing student conduct on campus are most often the responsibility of the student affairs division (Dunkle, 2009).

It is important to note that Simon Fraser University, the host institution of this research inquiry, was not included within the study, as the institutional members served to pilot all instruments. A total of 52 SSAOs completed the online survey, representing a 36.4% response rate. Table 3.1 provides an overview of the location of institutions that participated from the various provinces. Larger provinces such as Ontario, British Columbia, and Alberta had larger response rates where as smaller provinces and territories had low or no responses. The exception was Québec, which was unfortunate as the province includes institutions that have experienced incidents of campus violence.

Table 3.1 *Participant Locations – Stage 1 – SSAO Survey*

Province or Territory	N	Stage 1	
		N	%
British Columbia	22	8	15.4
Alberta	26	9	17.3
Saskatchewan	13	5	9.6
Manitoba	7	2	3.8
Ontario	43	21	40.4
Québec	7	0	-
Nova Scotia	9	3	5.8
Prince Edward Island	2	0	-
New Brunswick	6	2	3.8
Newfoundland and Labrador	4	1	1.9
Yukon	2	1	1.9
Northwest Territories	1	0	-
Nunavut	1	0	-
Total	143	52	

Unlike the province of institutions that are easily grouped into standard categories, the size and type of institutions did not have a commonly agreed upon categorization and therefore, the population size for each category was unable to be reliably categorized. For the purposes of this study, the institutional type used three types of universities as determined using the annual Maclean’s magazine university rankings (Iype, 2010) as well as community college and polytechnic/technical institute. Table 3.2 provides a breakdown of participants by institutional type.

Table 3.2 *Participant Institutional Type – Stage 1 – SSAO Survey*

Institutional Type	<i>n</i>	%
Community College	14	26.9
Comprehensive University	13	25.0
Primarily Undergraduate University	12	23.1
University College	5	9.6
Medical Doctoral	4	7.7
Polytechnic/Technical Institute	3	5.8
Other	1	1.9
Total	52	

Table 3.3 illustrates the size of the study body of institutions that responded to the Stage 1 SSAO survey. Institutional responses represented diversity between both small institutions, below 10,000 fulltime equivalent (FTE) students (*n* = 32) and large institutions, more than 10,000 FTE students (*n* = 20). While responses were not received from all institutions within all provinces, there was representation from each institutional type and size.

Table 3.3 *Participant Institutional Size – Stage 1 – SSAO Survey*

Institutional Size	<i>n</i>	%
Less than 1000	7	13.5
1,000-4,999	16	30.8
5,000 – 9,999	9	17.3
10,000 - 19,999	7	13.4
20,000 – 29,999	10	19.2
30,000 – 39,999	2	3.8
40,000 or more	1	1.9
Total	52	

3.6.3. Procedures

In December 2013, the *SSAO Survey* (see Appendix A) was sent to the publicly available email address of all 143 SSAOs. They received an invitation to participate (see Appendix B) by email that served to “explain the purpose of the study, emphasizing its important and significance” (Gay, et al., 2009, p. 181). In order to be transparent, the email also included a copy of the informed consent form (see Appendix C). This ensured that all those involved were aware of the full scope of the research and what they were asked to do as a participant. Participants were provided a link to complete the online survey. The SSAOs were sent two separate reminders of participation. One email reminder was sent 6 weeks after the original email was sent to account for the winter vacation and semester start up. A final reminder was sent 17 days later (see Appendix D), indicating that there were only three days remaining to complete the survey. The final question of the first stage of the research asked an SSAO from an institution with a team to volunteer their institution’s team to participate in the second stage of research. To maintain anonymity and confidentiality of participants and institutions, the final question offered a link to a single question survey (see Appendix E) that asked the SSAO to provide an email to receive the invitation to participate in the second stage of the research, which the recipient of that email could forward to the invitation to participate in the research to members of their respective teams.

3.6.4. Research Instrument

As described in Chapter 2, the use of BIT teams in the United States has previously been studied. Gamm et al (2011) conducted a national survey of 1,044 SSAOs of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators to identify the use of BITs. Similarly, NaBITA also conducted a national study in 2012, 2014, and 2016 (Van Brunt, 2016; Van Brunt, et al., 2012, 2014) that looked at the use of BIT teams. In an effort to ensure that the Canadian research was relevant, this research adapted the research process and instruments of these previous studies. Specifically, this research study adapted the survey instruments of both Gamm et al (2011) and NaBITA (2012). The investigators of these American research projects gave permission to adapt their tools for the purpose of this study. Relevant questions from each American survey were chosen for relevance for this research and adapted to reflect the use of Canadian

terminology. The original instruments were adapted to create questions within the electronic survey completed by SSAOs in Stage 1 as well as part of the instrument in Stage 2, which was completed by institutional team members.

The Stage 1 SSAO survey included both open and closed-ended questions. Open-ended questions were used to seek the specific name of the team or of a position as well as to ask the SSAOs perception of operational challenges for addressing PSBs. To assess the attitudes in regards to incidents of PSB, participants were asked to share their opinions about their institution's effectiveness, perceptions of frequency of occurrence, and level of training. This was completed using Likert scales, a common format that uses rating system to categorize response (Singleton & Straits, 2005). Demographic data of the SSAO's institution such as student population, province or territory, and institutional classification, were requested in closed-ended manner that allowed the results to be categorized and analyzed (Singleton & Straits, 2005).

3.6.5. Data Analysis

The data from the SSAO survey was downloaded to Microsoft Excel. The 53 survey responses were reviewed for completeness. After review, one participant's responses were removed as the participant responded that their institution had a team however did not answer any further questions for those participants from institutions with teams and thus was deemed to have been incomplete, which resulted in a total of 52 survey responses of which 73.1% (n=38) identified that their institution had a multidisciplinary team. Quantitative data were then imported into Statistical Package and for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24 and answers to open-ended questions were imported into nVivo for Mac to complete the analysis. The survey data were analyzed using SPSS, and then basic descriptive statistics and chi-square calculations were reviewed for significance (Salkind, 2010).

The first level of analysis was conducted by calculating descriptive statistics for all quantitative data from closed-ended survey questions. All qualitative data from open-ended questions was themed using inductive coding. This provided an overall picture of the data and the representativeness of the responses as compared to the population surveyed. This first level of analysis provided a general understanding of the use of BITs in Canada, which was required to answer the research questions. To understand

whether there was a statistically significant difference between those institutions with a team and those without, inferential statistics were calculated. The SSAO survey asked institutional demographic information, such as province, population of city, institution type, on-campus housing, and size of student body. To complete analysis on Institutional demographic information, where possible, response choices were combined to create categories in order to test for significance using inferential statistics. For example, participants could choose one of ten different ranges of size of student population (see Table 3.6 for a full listing). This category was condensed into two categories: small institutions with an FTE of less than 10,000, or large institutions with more than 10,000 FTE. All combined demographic variables were tested for significance ($p < .05$) using χ^2 to test the null hypothesis that no relationship exists between the variables (Salkind, 2010).

The SSAO survey included an open-ended question that asked what operational challenges exist in addressing PSBs. The answers were themed looking for repeated items, and the themes were then categorized into meta-themes. The process used was inductive, as the data was narrowed into few themes (Creswell, 2008). Descriptive and inductive statistics were calculated to compare the open-ended answers with size of institution and whether an institution had a team or not.

3.7. Stage 2 – Team Member Survey

The second stage of this research sought to gain an understanding of the work of BIT teams from those individuals serving on such teams and to understand more about the operational practices used. The last question of the Stage 1 survey asked the SSAOs whose institution that has a team ($n=38$) to provide an email address to participate in the second stage of the research. A total of 28 SSAOs elected to take part in the second stage of the research. This represented 73.7% of institutions from Stage 1 offering to have their team to participate in Stage 2 of the research.

3.7.1. Sampling Strategy

To access the team members of those institutions with BIT teams, the participants in the first stage who provided email addresses as part of the final question

of the survey were contacted and asked to forward the invitation to participate to their team members. This approach is known as a snowball sampling technique. This technique involves the knowledge of a participant being used to identify future participants (Gay, et al., 2009). Having the SSAO who completed the first stage identify future participants was necessary to maintain the anonymity of participants while still enabling the researcher to access team members from their institution.

3.7.2. Participants

An invitation to participate was sent to 28 institution emails. A total of 53 responses were received to the second stage online survey. As the survey went to a singular email address with the request to forward to their team, it is unknown how many people were on each team; therefore, the response rate is unknown. Additionally, the survey instrument included measures to ensure respondent anonymity, which meant that it was unknown how many institutions were represented within the 53 responses. Table 3.4 gives an overview of the numbers of responses by institutional type, which used the same types as Stage 1. Stage 2 responses had participants from all institutional types with the majority of participants representing comprehensive universities or community colleges.

Table 3.4 *Institutional Type – Stage 2 – Team Member Survey*

Institutional Type	<i>n</i>	%
Comprehensive University	18	34.6
Community College	17	32.7
Primarily Undergraduate University	5	9.6
University College	4	7.7
Medical Doctoral	4	7.7
Polytechnic/Technical Institute	4	7.7
Other	-	-
Total	52	

Table 3.5 (see next page) outlines the total responses by province or territory. Similar to Stage 1, the highest number of responses was from the provinces of Ontario and Alberta. A total of six provinces responded to Stage 2 from a possible nine provinces that responded to Stage 1 and it is unknown as to why only western provinces participated in this stage.

Table 3.5 *Institutional Locations – Stage 2 – Team Member Survey*

Province or Territory	Stage 2	
	<i>n</i>	%
British Columbia	3	5.7
Alberta	7	13.2
Saskatchewan	6	11.3
Manitoba	4	7.6
Ontario	32	60.4
Québec	0	-
Nova Scotia	0	-
Prince Edward Island	1	1.9
New Brunswick	0	-
Newfoundland and Labrador	0	-
Yukon	0	-
Northwest Territories	0	-
Nunavut	0	-
Total	53	

Table 3.6 depicts the size of each institution’s study body as reported by team members. Much like the participants in Stage 1, there was a diversity of institutional size in the respondents of Stage 2 with 17 participants from small institutions (less than 10,000 students), and 36 from large institutions (more than 10,000 students). While less than half of all provinces and territories were represented in responses, there were sufficient responses from team members of teams from institutions of all sizes.

Table 3.6 *Institutional Size – Stage 2 – Team Member Survey*

Institutional Size	<i>n</i>	%
Less than 1000	2	3.8
1,000 – 4,999	11	20.7
5,000 – 9,999	4	7.5
10,000 – 19,999	12	22.6
20,000 – 29,999	20	37.7
30,000 – 39,999	1	1.9
40,000 or more	3	5.7
Total	53	

As this stage of the research focussed on the team member, further demographics of team members were asked such as institutional role, highest level of education, and years of experience. Participants’ responses to these questions are

illustrated in tables 3.7, 3.8 and 3.9. Table 3.7 shows that participants represented all roles within the institution. The most common role was student services (28.3%), safety and security (17.0%), and other (20.8%) which represented roles in divisions such as human resources, legal, and harassment and discrimination office.

Table 3.7 *Participant's Role – Stage 2 – Team Member Survey*

Role within Institution	<i>n</i>	%
Student Services	15	28.3
Safety and Security	9	17.0
Housing	5	9.4
Conduct Officer	5	9.4
Counselling Department	4	7.5
Faculty Representative	4	7.5
Other	11	20.8
Total	53	

Table 3.8 illustrates that a total of 77.3% of participants had bachelor's degree or higher levels of education and Table 3.9 outlines that 62.3% of participants had ten years or more experience working in the postsecondary field.

Table 3.8 *Participant's Level of Education – Stage 2 – Team Member Survey*

Highest Level of Education	<i>n</i>	%
Master's Degree	20	37.7
Bachelor's Degree	15	28.3
College Diploma University	10	18.9
Doctoral Degree	6	11.3
High School	2	3.8
Total	53	

Table 3.9 *Participant's Years of Experience – Stage 2 – Team Member Survey*

Years of Experience	<i>n</i>	%
20 or more	16	30.2
10–13	8	15.1
14–16	7	13.2
7–9	7	13.2
1–3	7	13.2
4–6	6	11.3
17–19	2	3.8
Total	53	

Overall, the responses to the Stage 2 included participation from a variety of institutional types from across Canada and with participants with a diverse background.

3.7.3. Procedures

An email was sent to each address provided by the SSAOs with BITs to participate in the second stage of the research. The email invitation (see Appendix F) included instructions on how and to whom the survey was to be circulated. A copy of the informed consent was included for their information (see Appendix G). This invitation to participate included the website link to complete the survey. A reminder email was sent 3 weeks later (see Appendix H). Due to a low response rate, a final request was sent three months later at a less busy time for people working in postsecondary environment.

Like the SSAO survey, the final question on the BIT Member Survey was designed to identify team members willing to participate in the final interview stage of the research. Those interested in participating were provided a link to a short five-question survey (see Appendix I). The use of an entirely separate survey was to further ensure the highest degree of confidentiality for the participant's answers to the Stage 2 survey. The short five-question survey collected a minimal amount of demographic and contact information about the participant to aid in future interview participant selection.

3.7.4. Research Instrument

Stage 2 participants were asked to complete a 41-question online survey (see Appendix J) that explored the functions and tasks of their respective teams. It also served to understand the individual roles participants played within their respective teams and their perceptions of the work. Like the SSAO survey, the Stage 2 survey used closed and open-ended questions as well as Likert scale questions. This survey once again included questions adapted from the instruments of both Gamm et al ., (2011) and NaBITA (2012, 2014).

The survey instrument sought to categorize and understand the actions or interventions used by institutions. To assess the difference between the actions of members serving particular roles, two scenario questions were included in which

participants were asked to choose from a list the first action they would take and why. The scenario questions were also adapted from previous research conducted. In their research surrounding assessment practices in PSB, Stuber, and Dannels (1996) used scenarios of problematic behaviour based upon the Delworth's (1989) AISP model to assess the intervention strategies used by SSAO. As previously stated, the approaches employed to maintain participant anonymity at this stage of research prevented the researcher from knowing which institutions the respondents were affiliated with. As such, it is not known if different members who completed the survey were from the same team or different teams. Participants' responses to these questions were not included in the overall results of this research because without an ability to decipher between team characteristics of responses, the results provided little to no insight into any of the research questions.

3.7.5. Data Analysis

Similar to the SSAO survey results, analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics for all questions. Qualitative questions were coded and themed using the same inductive processes as the previous stage. Tests of significance were completed using the same variables as the Stage 1 SSAO survey based upon institutional characteristics; however, it was decided not to include this analysis in the final results. This decision was made because team members who completed the survey were anonymous, which meant that it was unknown how many members from any given team responded. Due to the anonymity of the respondents coupled with the relatively small data set the answers to this stage were not generalizable to a greater population. Therefore, no inferential statistics were used. As a method to understand the prevalence of institutional variables, descriptive statistics and cross tabulations were calculated for all questions.

In accordance with the research plan, the quantitative data from both stages were analyzed to gain insight into the final qualitative stage of research. In order to identify a representative sample of individuals to participate in the qualitative interviews, the results of team characteristics were reviewed; these included province, size of institution, type of institution, role within the institution, and team membership. This

quantitative analysis provided guidance into the roles that should be invited to participate and the questions to ask as part of the Stage 3 team member interviews.

3.8. Stage 3 – Team Member Interviews

The final question of the Stage 2 team member survey provided a link for people to follow if they were interested in participating the final stage of the research, which was a one-on-one interview. A total of 31 (56.6%) team members completed the short five-question survey that provided details about their background to help in interview selection. Specifically, respondents provided the following demographic information: province, size of institution, role within the institution, and years serving on a team. After completing the necessary analysis of the BIT Member Survey results, participants for the final qualitative stage of interviews were identified.

3.8.1. Sampling Strategy

The final stage used a purposeful sampling technique, as it was dependent on the participants of Stage 2 electing to volunteer to take part in the final stage. This study was designed to best understand the experience of the members of multidisciplinary teams, and for this reason it was important to ensure that participants were representative of overall team membership. This type of sampling constitutes a maximal variation sample (Creswell, 2008) as those chosen to participate in the final stage of the research represented a reflective cross section of BIT members.

3.8.2. Participants

As with any participant selection for a mixed method, the challenge was that the criteria for participant selection was unknown until the analysis of the first quantitative instrument was complete (Creswell & Clark, 2007). A total of 14 participants were invited to participate in Stage 3 as they represented a cross section of size, type, and position within their institution and eight participants were interviewed. Tables 3.10, provides an overview of the provinces of participants in all three stages of the research. The table highlights that the participants interviewed as part of Stage 3 team member interviews were a fair representation of the participants from the previous two stages.

Table 3.10 *Participants' Province – All Stages*

Province	N	Stage 1		Stage 2		Stage 3	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
British Columbia	22	8	15.4	3	5.7	1	12.5
Alberta	26	9	17.3	7	13.2	2	25.0
Saskatchewan	13	5	9.6	6	11.3	1	12.5
Manitoba	7	2	3.8	4	7.6	1	12.5
Ontario	43	21	40.4	32	60.4	3	37.5
Québec	7	0	-	0	-	0	-
Nova Scotia	9	3	5.8	0	-	0	-
Prince Edward Island	2	0	-	1	1.9	0	-
New Brunswick	6	2	3.8	0	-	0	-
Newfoundland and Labrador	4	1	1.9	0	-	0	-
Yukon	2	1	1.9	0	-	0	-
Northwest Territories	1	0	-	0	-	0	-
Nunavut	1	0	-	0	-	0	-
Total	143	52		53		8	

Table 3.11 illustrates that those chosen to participate in the Stage 3 interviews included a diversity of institutional type that closely mirrored the participation in previous stages.

Table 3.11 *Participants' Type of Institution - All Stages*

Institutional Type	Stage 1		Stage 2		Stage 3	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Community College	14	26.9	17	32.7	1	12.5
Comprehensive University	13	25.0	18	34.6	3	37.5
Primarily Undergraduate University	12	23.1	5	9.6	1	12.5
University College	5	9.6	4	7.7	1	12.5
Medical Doctoral	4	7.7	4	7.7	1	12.5
Polytechnic/Technical Institute	3	5.8	4	7.7	1	12.5
Other	1	1.9	-	-	0	-
Total	52		52		8	

Table 3.12 provides an overview of the size of the institutions study body at all stages of the research. The table illustrates that Stage 3 participants represented a

variety of size with 37.5% of participants were from institutions with less than 10,000 students and 62.5% with more than 10,000 students.

Table 3.12 *Participants' Size of Institution – All Stages*

Institutional Size	Stage 1		Stage 2		Stage 3	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Less than 1000	7	13.5	2	3.8	0	-
1,000 – 4,999	16	30.8	11	20.7	1	12.5
5,000 – 9,999	9	17.3	4	7.5	2	25.0
10,000 – 19,999	7	13.4	12	22.6	1	12.5
20,000 – 29,999	10	19.2	20	37.7	3	37.5
30,000 – 39,999	2	3.8	1	1.9	0	-
40,000 or more	1	1.9	3	5.7	1	12.5
Total	52		53		8	

Overall, while participants from all provinces or territories did not respond, there was a reasonable representation of the institutional qualities of Stage 3 interview participants were aligned with those of participants who had completed the previous stages of research. The team members interviewed were also chosen to ensure a representation of the various team member characteristics. Tables 3.13, 3.14, and 3.15 provide an overview of the characteristics of those interviewed, demonstrating that those interviewed in Stage 3 were representative of the previous participants. For example, Table 3.13 illustrates that interviewees were from a cross section of roles, including safety and security, student services, and counselling as these departments were most often represented in Stage 2 results.

Table 3.13 *Participants' Role within Institution – Stage 3 - Team Member Interviews*

Role within Institution	<i>n</i>	%
Student Services	2	25.0
Safety and Security	2	25.0
Housing	1	12.5
Counselling Department	1	12.5
Faculty Representative	1	12.5
Other	1	12.5
Total	8	

Table 3.14 shows that interviewees had experience on teams that had been in operation for various lengths of time, between one and nine years.

Table 3.14 *Participants' Years on a Team – Stage 3 – Team Member Interviews*

Years on a Team	<i>n</i>	%
1–3	3	37.5
4–6	3	37.5
7–9	2	25.0
Total	8	

Finally, Table 3.15 illustrates that interviewees themselves had diverse amounts of professional experience within their field, with an average of 14.0 years of experience where the least amount of experience was a participant with 8 years and the most experienced participant had been working in their profession for 28 years.

Table 3.15 *Participants' Years of Experience – Stage 3 – Team Member Interviews*

Years of Experience	<i>n</i>	%
1–9	3	37.5
10–19	3	37.5
20 or more	2	25.0
Total	8	

Based upon the interviewee responses, further demographic information was gathered regarding the interview participants and their respective teams. It was learned that five interviewees serve as the chair or co-chair of their team. Teams were chaired or co-chaired either by the safety and security division (50.0%) or student affairs division (50.0%).

3.8.3. Interview Procedures

The contact information provided in the short interview survey (see Appendix I) was used to invite individuals to participate in an interview via Skype™. Each individual was sent an email letter of invitation to participate in the interview stage (see Appendix K). When the individual agreed to participate, a time was established for the interview and the participant was sent a Letter of Consent (see Appendix L) that was completed prior to the interview.

Interview questions were based on the results of the analysis of the first two stages of research and used a semi-structured interview protocol as outlined within the informed consent. All interviews were conducted using Skype™ and recorded with the participants' permission. These recordings were stored on a secure computer and were

transcribed by a third-party transcriptionist who signed a confidentiality agreement prior to completing the transcriptions. As a measure of content validity (Gay, et al., 2009), participants were asked if they wished to review the transcriptions of their own interviews; however, all interviewees chose not to review the transcripts of their interviews.

3.8.4. Data Analysis

Stage 3 of the research used qualitative data analysis to understand the experiences of those who serve as team members. Interviews were transcribed and inputted into the NVivo software. Interviews were reviewed numerous times to gain familiarity with the experience of the interviewees. Open-coding techniques were used to identify categories of data, and then inductive theming was completed to help classify, organize, and sort the data into a method whereby the researcher could theme and code the data (Miles & Huberman, 1984). The interviews were then coded using inductive stages. The first stage involved identifying common elements followed by the second stage, which involved theming the common elements. Next, the themes were organized by the answers to the specific research questions and; finally, interview data were analyzed using the social ecological framework and relevant sections of the transcripts were coded using the following social levels: intrapersonal, interpersonal, institutional, community, and public policy levels.

Once the qualitative data were analyzed, as per the explanatory mixed methods research design, the quantitative and qualitative results were analyzed together. This was done by considering each individual research question and noting results from each stage. When there were comparative data sets, cross tabulations were created using descriptive statistics to identify and compare frequencies between stages of research. The final stage of analysis created a crosstabs of the social ecological framework levels (intrapersonal, interpersonal, institutional, community, and public policy) and the data from all stages of research. Descriptive statistics were used to identify data frequencies and patterns. This process allowed for more thorough understanding of the data to answer the proposed research questions and also brought together the theoretical and practical implications of this research that will be presented in Chapters 6 and 7.

3.9. Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

The subject of violence and especially campus violence is a vast topic that can be reviewed from many perspectives. This research specifically looked at the use and operations of BIT teams at public colleges, universities, and institutes in Canada. Due to the researcher's financial and linguistic limitations as an English-speaker, this study was limited to English-speaking institutions in Canada.

This mixed methods study explored the experiences and perceptions of members of such teams and their respective of effectiveness of their team in addressing PSB. The majority of data were collected using online surveys, which provided descriptive and inferential statistics that identified trends in operational practices of Canadian institutions. This form of data aimed to cover the breadth of the landscape within Canadian higher education however the scope of the research did not represent an in-depth exploration of the topic.

The study is limited to the institutions and provinces of those SSAO's who chose to participate, which resulted in many eastern provinces not being included within the study. The low response rate of Stage 2 posed a significant limitation to the study. This stage had invited all team members from each institution to participate in the research. However, as the first two stages of research were designed to maintain anonymity of respondents, it is unclear how many different institutions the participants were from. This limited the data analysis that could be done, as relationships between variables in Stage 2 could not be analyzed. The design of this current study sets up the foundation for future studies to build upon. In terms of limitations, this study did not seek to describe or explain incidents of campus violence in Canada. The data described the operational practices of public Canadian postsecondary institutions in relation to campus violence. As such, the results of this study may not be generalizable to private or international institutions of higher education.

3.10. Ethical Considerations

The individuals agreeing to participate within this research study were asked to express their views and practices within a topic area that could pose a risk to the institution and the professional reputation of those individual participants. It is for this

reason that the researcher expressly followed all ethical practices to protect the rights of participants, ensure participants remained free from harm, assure the anonymity of participants of stage 1 and 2, invite individuals to voluntarily take part, and maintain the confidentiality of all participant responses (Tuckman, 1999) was expressively followed. The questions asked in this research were potentially sensitive in nature as they asked prominent institutional administrators to classify and identify programs and structures that may highlight an organizational flaw, which might be viewed as an institutional risk. There was a possibility of concern over the legal risk to the institution or SSAO, and it is for this reason that the confidentiality of answers was a key design feature in this research. The researcher completed and upheld all necessary ethical requirements as outlined by SFU's ethical approval process (see Appendix M).

3.11. Trustworthiness

The credibility of the research inquiry process is an important criterion to consider when designing any research study. Trustworthy results are considered to be credible, transferable, dependable, and confirmable (Conrad & Serlin, 2006, p. 412). The design of the research serves to dictate the strategies needed to improve the credibility of the study. Creswell (2003) provided a list of eight strategies that are frequently used to improve the accuracy of the results. While many strategies were used within this study to enhance the trustworthiness, strategies were intentionally implemented to improve the rigour and credibility of the research.

The most direct way that trustworthiness was addressed within this research was the establishing triangulation within the results. Triangulation refers to using multiple sources of data to corroborate results (Creswell, 2008). Within this research, participant information was gathered using different data collection methods (e.g., quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews), and from different individuals (e.g., SSAOs and team members). Furthermore, data from the different literature sources served as the basis for triangulation of the data.

Trustworthiness is also derived from the quality of the design of the research instruments (Conrad & Serlin, 2006). Steps were taken to improve the validity of the quantitative survey such as attending to the wording of questions, and the placement of questions especially due to the sensitivity of the questions being asked. Additionally, the

researcher used questions that had been employed in previous research studies and pilot tested with a peer group that represented the intended population being surveyed. Pilot testing is one of the most important steps in survey reliability (Creswell, 2003; Gay, et al., 2009). The pilot testing resulted in changes to wording specific to roles within the institution to better reflect terms as well as minor changes to wording to improve readability and understanding. It is unknown if the original instruments were pilot tested; however the use of these questions in this similar research provided an enhancement to the reliability of the instrument as it involved test and retest reliability (Creswell, 2003).

The credibility of the research, especially research that includes qualitative methods, are improved when the inquiry is prolonged over time, as this provides the researcher a greater chance to develop an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2003). The research processes of administering the SSAO survey through to the final stage of interviews spanned just over 1 year. This permitted the researcher to have extensive time to review and analyze the results from the quantitative results and the literature before proceeding with the interviews.

An important method to establish trustworthiness is for a researcher to clearly outline their personal experience with the phenomenon being researched (Creswell, 2003). As previously discussed, the researcher has served on such teams at various institutions and was actively serving on a team, one not included within the study, at the time of the research. Despite the severity of the types of behaviours being addressed within the BIT system, the researcher understood the organizational imperative of having a team. The interest in the professional standards for the work of such teams was the impetus for this research study. While the researcher has a personal background with the work of BITs, this study sought to explore the use of teams and the experience across Canada of other team members. Having served as a member of a team helped to provide the researcher with knowledge of the language and operational circumstances of teams.

3.12. Summary

Through inquiry, a researcher attempts to explain a construct or situation that is not well understood. This study was designed to gain insight into an organizational structure, BIT teams in Canadian institutions using a three-staged explanatory mixed

methods design. Stage 1 surveyed SSAOs across Canada, Stage 2 surveyed team members, and Stage 3 interviewed team members. The next two chapters will outline the findings of the research. Chapter 4 will detail the overall use and functions of BIT teams and Chapter 5 will provide the experiences of team members and their perceived effectiveness of the practice.

Chapter 4. National use of BIT Teams

With the lack of existing knowledge regarding the use of BIT teams within Canada, the staged approach of this research was necessary to first provide a national picture of the existence of BITs as a practice used by institutions in order to gain insight to the experience of those individuals who serve on such teams. This chapter details the summative findings of the use of BIT teams within Canadian institutions of higher education while the next chapter will discuss the experience of team members and their perceptions of their effectiveness as a strategy to address PSB.

The findings of this chapter outline how Canadian institutions have implemented BIT teams and the processes used by those institutions with teams. The findings answer the Research Sub-Question 1: To what degree do institutions use behavioural intervention teams? The results are organized into four aspects: overall use, functions, meeting processes, and training. Additionally, inferential statistics shed light on the extent to which institutional characteristics influence the four aspects of teams and answers the Research Sub-Question 2: What institutional characteristics such as size, provision of on-campus housing, or type of institution, influence the intervention practices?

The first aspect, use of teams, uses descriptive statistics to summarize the number of institutions that have implemented a team, the name of the team, who serves as the leader of the team, and the membership of the team. The second aspect, team functions, uses descriptive statistics to present the types of behaviours teams address and the actions that teams take to address these behaviours. The interview responses provide context surrounding why the types of behaviours require institutions to have BITs to take action. The third aspect examines the team meeting processes adopted by teams to conduct their work, including the frequency of meetings, the information gathered, and the records kept. The team member interviews provide insight into the rationale for why teams have adopted such practices. The final aspect describes the training team members have received as a member of a BIT. The degree of satisfaction team members have with the training they received is explored, and team member interviews give a rich explanation towards the relevance of the types of training being offered.

As described in Chapter 3, this was an explanatory mixed methods study in which the qualitative results of the Stage 3 interviews served to explain the quantitative results of Stages 1 and 2. The analysis of Stage 1 and 2 informed the selection of participants and questions for Stage 3 and for this reason the findings discussed in this chapter will mainly focus on the quantitative results from Stages 1 and 2; the qualitative analysis of Stage 3 interviews is included to provide insight into the relevant aspects of institutional BIT practices in Canada explored in this chapter.

4.1. Team Use

The first stage of research asked the SSAO of Canadian Institutions (n=52) to outline their use of teams to address PSB. A total of 38 of the institutions that responded (73.1%) are using a team-based approach to address PSB. More than two thirds (68.4%) of teams (n=26) have been in operation for 5 or fewer years and 15.8% have been in operation 6 or more years. Some participants (15.8%) indicated that they did not know how long their team had been in operation. Combining all responses, teams have been in use for an average of 4.28 years (SD=2.60). These results indicate that the use of BITs is a relatively new operational practice for Canadian institutions. How these results compare to those of the United States will be discussed in Chapter 6.

To understand why institutions had adopted multidisciplinary teams, SSAOs in Stage 1 and team members in Stage 2 were asked to what extent they agreed that “the team was created to make sure that the institution is minimizing its liability based upon risks associated with recent high profile violent acts committed on postsecondary campuses”. Approximately 60% of participants from both stages agreed that their team was established to reduce risks based upon such acts of violence. A total of 71.0% of SSAOs (Stage 1) and 81.1% of team members (Stage 2) agreed with the following statement “Within the past 5 years this institution has had to address an incident of PSB that posed a significant risk to the safety of the institution”. This shows that Canadian institutions are mindful of the violent acts reported at other campuses and are taking precautionary actions on their campuses based upon the occurrences at other institutions. More importantly, however, institutions have experienced student behaviours that have been perceived to pose a significant risk to their institutional community.

In Stage 1 SSAOs (n=52) were asked about characteristics of their institution. Inferential statistics were used to test the significance of each characteristic for institutions with or without teams. A chi-square test was calculated on the various institutional variables collected, including size, province, size of city, on-campus housing, and institutional type, to test whether the institutional characteristics influenced the existence of a team ($p < .05$). Table 4.1 provides an overview on the various institutional characteristics that were tested for significance and illustrates that, the only variable that has a significant influence on a whether an institution had a team or not was the size of institution's student body; larger institutions were significantly more likely to have a team.

Table 4.1 *Variables Influencing Team Use*

Variable	χ^2	DF^b	p
Size of FTE	11.97	1	.001
Province of Institution	8.03 ^a	8	.431
Student Housing Available	0.11 ^a	1	.916
Type of Institution	10.11 ^a	6	.120
Population of City	10.52 ^a	8	.230

^a > 20% of cells have expected count less than 5

^b degrees of freedom

As part of Stage 1, SSAOs were asked to estimate the total enrolment of FTE students from below 1,000 to 40,000 and above. Of those institutions with an FTE study body of less than 10,000 (n=32), 56.3% had a team as compared to 100.0% of institutions with an FTE study body of over 10,000 (n=20). A chi-square test of independence was conducted to understand the relationship between size of student body and the existence of a team. There was a significant relationship between the variables (N= 52) $\chi^2 = 11.97$, $DF = 1$, $p=.001$. Thus large institutions were significantly more likely to have a team than small institutions. Table 4.2 (see next page) presents the frequency of participants from different size of institutions with and without teams. The SSAOs without teams (n=14) noted they did not have teams due to the small size of their institution. Unfortunately, those SSAOs without a team did not elaborate as to why the size of their institution was a factor for them not having a team; however, this finding supports the early discovery that size of the institution affects whether or not the institution had introduced a team.

Table 4.2 *Frequency Table*

	Team	No Team
Small Institution	20	14
Large Institution	18	0
Total	38	14

4.1.1. Team Name

SSAOs indicated that those institutions that had one or more teams to address PSB were likely to utilize a variety of team names. A total of 26 different names were noted; however, common phrases did surface within team names. By far the most common phrase included in a team name is *Threat Assessment* (39.5%), followed by *Students of Concern* (18.4%), and *Behaviour Intervention Team* (15.8%). A complete list of specific names is not provided, as the uniqueness of the team name would identify the institution participating in the research. Five institutions (13.2%) identified that they had two teams that were used depending on the severity of the behaviour. Institutions in Stage 2 and 3 of found that teams used similar team names as per Stage 1 results. In Stage 2 a total of 43 institutions (81.9%) had a name that included the words risk or threat, which was similar to Stage 3 as three-quarters of teams used the same terminology. At all Stages of the research teams rarely used the Behavioural Intervention name, yet a few teams used names such as Students of Concern or Early Alert.

4.1.2. Team Leadership

Despite the diversity of team name, participants reported the student affairs division retains the greatest amount of institutional responsibility when addressing student behaviour. SSAOs described that the student affairs division as holding the greatest amount of responsibility for determining how to respond to high-risk behaviour (70.6%), deciding how to discipline students (55.8%), and for the immediate response to high-risk student behaviours (51.0%). As Table 4.3 illustrates that 69.2% of SSAOs also identified that they serve in a leadership role within their team.

The question of leadership with team member and interview participants provided further insight into the units that have leadership responsibilities within BIT teams. The team members survey provided seven different position titles within different divisions of the organization to choose from as serving as the chair of their team. Participants were also provided an option to list the title of person who chairs their team. As the titles provided were unique and could identify an institution if reported, an analysis of team leadership was coded based upon the department to which the title had inherent oversight. Table 4.3 demonstrates that the division of student affairs (35.3%) is the most common department to chair the BIT. Team member and interview participants furthered the understanding of team leadership by identifying that not all teams are led by a single department as several team members indicated that their team is co-chaired. The majority of team members described co-chairs as reflecting the most common team leadership with shared responsibility between the departments of student affairs and safety services. Additionally team members noted that the role of chair rotated based upon case specific details such as the severity of the behaviour or whether or not the behaviour was that of a student. What is evident at all stages of the research is that the department of student affairs and the respective divisions are heavily immersed in the responsibility of addressing PSB and therefore within the work of BITs.

Table 4.3 *Team Leadership All Stages*

Role within Institution	Stage 1		Stage 2		Stage 3	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Student Affairs	26	68.4	18	35.3	1	12.5
Safety Services			10	19.6	3	37.5
Counselling			6	11.8		
Co-Chaired			6	11.8	4	50.0
Case Management			4	7.8		
Student Conduct			3	5.7		
Human Resources			2	3.9		
Other	12	31.6	2	3.9		
Total	38		51		8	

4.1.3. Team Membership

The team members who responded to the Stage 2 survey (n=53) as well as the interviewees (n=8) were asked to outline which roles are represented on their team.

According to team members, teams ranged in size from three to 11 members, with an average number of 6.4. Table 4.4 shows the frequency of departments having a role within the institution's BIT team. The table highlights that there is not a single position that is always a member of the team; rather, a set of core six departments most commonly have representation on BITs in Canada, and these most often include counselling (90.6%), safety and security (86.8%), student affairs (79.2%), housing services (62.3%), health services (56.6%), and student conduct (49.1%). The table also provides the departments that were listed as other departments not listed in the survey.

Table 4.4 *Team Membership*

Role within Institution	Stage 2		Stage 3	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Counselling	48	90.6	7	87.5
Safety and Security	46	86.8	8	100.0
Senior Student Affairs Officer	42	79.2	5	62.5
Housing	33	62.3	1	12.5
Health Services	30	56.6	2	25.0
Student Conduct	26	49.1		
Disability Services	16	30.2	1	12.5
Faculty	13	24.5	1	12.5
Human Resources	13	24.5	3	37.5
General Student Affairs	12	22.6	4	50.0
Health and Safety/Risk Services	11	20.8	3	37.5
Harassment and Discrimination	9	17.0	2	25.0
Campus Manager	7	13.2		
Academic Administration (Dean/Chair)	7	13.2	3	37.5
Case Manager	6	11.3	2	25.0
Legal	5	9.4	1	12.5
International Services	5	9.4		
External Mental Health Officer	4	7.5		
Registrar/Senate	4	7.5	4	50.0
Police	2	3.8	1	12.5
Other			2	25.0

Note. *3 members in Stage 3 identified more than one member from a specific category

Team members were also asked if they ever included other participants on their team who are external to their institution. The following external roles were noted most often to have been included; external mental health professionals (50.9%), police officers (45.2%), and witnesses (35.8%). The inclusion of external members was

contrasted with the size of the size of the institution's FTE student body to explore whether institution size demonstrated a difference in the inclusion of external participants.

Table 4.5 illustrates that smaller institutions (less than 10,000 FTE students) included external members more often and at greater numbers. This is evident given that all but one institution, which reported having never included an external participant, was from larger institutions (more than 10,000 FTE students). The calculated frequencies of smaller and larger institutional FTE size shows that smaller institutions brought in external professionals to meetings more often than their larger counterparts.

Table 4.5 *External Participants by Size of FTE Student Body*

External Members	Less than 10,000		More than 10,000		All	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
0	1	5.9	11	30.6	12	22.8
1	2	11.8	9	25.0	11	20.8
2	1	5.9	5	13.9	6	11.3
3	2	11.8	7	19.4	9	17.0
4	1	5.9	3	8.3	4	7.5
5	3	17.6	-	-	3	5.7
6	5	17.6	1	2.8	6	11.3
7	1	5.9	-	-	1	1.9
8	1	5.9	-	-	1	1.9
Total	17		36		53	

It is unknown why smaller institutions more often included external members than larger institutions. One possibility is that as a small institution they may not have access to a given profession or area of expertise within the internal staff and thus must seek external agencies to provide such perspectives within their team. Only one team member interviewed discussed having an external member as part of the permanent membership of the team; this interviewee was from an institution with an FTE student body of greater than 10,000. The interviewee discussed that the inclusion of the external member was problematic for the team's function.

One of the other complexities for us and this goes back to my original comment about the involvement of the [external member] is their role on that team. Again I don't 100% agree with it because I think that there is

opportunity there for conflict that the institution doesn't need to- like we don't need to add anymore complexity than we already have. (Interviewee 4)

The interviewee described how the external member has different responsibilities and obligations when assessing a case, which can further complicate the case if the requirements of an external member must be met in addition to the internal mandate of the team. Team membership, while diverse in their participation, consistently had representation from areas responsible for institutional safety, student affairs, and counselling, yet individuals might also be chosen due to a skill set that is valued by the team.

The purposeful sampling for those team members interviewed demonstrated a comparable average team membership of 6.4. The composition of the teams reflected the same core membership (student affairs, safety services, and counselling) as well as a greater representation of other departments such as Registrar's office and health and safety. The interviews also provided insight into how teams may identify members to serve on the BIT team, as 25.0% of those interviewed discussed how team members are not only selected as a result of their position within the institution. They discussed that members are included for valued skill set that they bring to the team. Interviewee 8 expressed this concept clearly, stating that "people are not always chosen for their positions sometimes they're chosen for their skillset not just their job title." This statement may also provide insight into why smaller institutions relied on external members, as the skill sets required may not be within their staff complement. Interviewees did not articulate specific skills sets that are sought after; however, the findings presented in Chapter 5 describe the importance that BIT members place on team member experience for effectiveness of the team.

4.2. Team Functions

To understand what work BITs were conducting, team members were asked to indicate the functions the team served. Team members were asked to choose from a list of functions and were provided an opportunity to include additional functions if needed. Table 4.6 shows the frequency of each team function for all team members (n=53). The table illustrates that the functions of the teams are multifaceted, yet with a strong focus on the identifying and responding to various concerning student behaviours.

All respondents reported that assessing at-risk students is work conducted by their BITs, while only 11.3% respond to student academic behaviours which indicates that team members perceived at-risk conduct as mostly being non-academic behaviours. Team members were able to add functions that were not in the list, and responses included policy development, outreach training for the campus community, and liaising with external groups. The findings strongly highlight that teams across Canada have a clear purpose to assess and address non-academic behaviour that is considered to be at-risk or disruptive.

Table 4.6 *Team Functions – Stage 2*

Functions	<i>n</i>	%
Assessing at-risk students	53	100.0
Responding to a crisis that threatens the wellbeing of a student or students	51	96.2
Sharing information among appropriate offices	51	96.2
Responding to student behaviour that is disruptive to the institution	51	96.2
Ensuring appropriate follow-through with student	47	88.7
Making referrals for students in crisis	44	83.0
Initiation of internal review of crisis situation	42	79.2
Identifying student behaviours that disrupt the learning environment	37	69.8
Keeping records on students considered at-risk or who are in crisis	36	67.9
Serving as a source of information to faculty and staff	31	58.5
Responding to incidents where the person of concern is a faculty or staff member	26	50.0
Dealing with students having difficulty academically	6	11.3
Total	53	

The core function of assessing high-risk student behaviour indicates that this type of behaviour is being experienced within postsecondary institutions. To understand the need for BIT functions, SSAOs and team members were asked to what extent they agreed with the statement, “Within the past 5 years this institution has had to address an incident of PSB that posed a significant risk to the safety of the institution.” A total of 71.0% of SSAOs with teams (n=38) and 81.1% of team members (n= 53) strongly agreed or agreed that their institutions had to address a case where the behaviour posed a significant risk to the institution. This demonstrates that the functions of BITs to

address high-risk behaviour is needed to mitigate the risk that such behaviours pose for the institution.

4.2.1. Behaviours Addressed

To understand the types of behaviours that BIT teams are addressing, team members were asked to indicate which of the listed behaviours that they address and provide a description of any behaviours not listed. Table 4.7 on the following page outlines the frequencies of all types of behaviours, either listed or added, that team members indicated their teams address. The most common types of behaviours addressed included threatening (94.3%), stalking (92.5%), or suicidal (79.2%) all of which unmistakably pose a substantial risk of physical harm to the individual being targeted as well as institutional members. A total of 19 additional behaviours were described and themed and coded as worrisome behaviours such as substance abuse or mental health (15.1%), disruptive behaviours outside the classroom (13.2%), violent or dangerous acts (9.4%), and complex situations (9.4%). The written descriptions of additional behaviours addressed highlighted that team members were addressing behaviours that were causing serious concerns to the institution and had a potential for harm, or cases of actual harm.

To further understand the types of behaviours the teams are addressing as part of their work, interviewees were asked to provide their account of types of PSBs they had encountered as part of their work on their respective teams. The description of specific cases provided a greater understanding of the scope of the behaviours being addressed by teams. The types of behaviours discussed aligned with team members' accounts of behaviours that involved a significant level of risk of harm to the student or others. The behaviours described by those interviewed included three core features: disruption to the learning or campus community (100.0%), potential of, or incidents of, violence (75.0%), and mental health concerns (62.5%). One team member described the types of behaviours their team addresses as follows:

[We review] stuff that's of a fairly serious nature so it's either a situation of potential self-harm, potential for violence, or a potential for sort of a type of behaviour that's, you know, on the severe and disruptive to the operation of the institution, so it's pretty, it's the heavy duty stuff, right, not your just kind of run of the mill, you know, academic or just an issue. (Interviewee 3)

Table 4.7 *Behaviours Addressed by Teams – Stage 2*

Behaviours	<i>n</i>	%
Listed Behaviours		
Threats of violence to others	50	94.3
Stalking behaviours	49	92.5
Inappropriate communications	46	86.8
Suicidal threats	42	79.2
Classroom disruption	39	73.6
Emotional distress	36	67.9
Diagnosed mental health disorders	27	50.9
Other	13	24.5
Financial Difficulties	10	18.9
Failing grades	8	15.1
Additional Behaviours Identified		
Worrisome behaviours (sexual, substance use, mental health, etc)	8	15.1
Disruptive behaviours outside of the classroom	7	13.2
Violent or dangerous acts	5	9.4
Complex situations	5	9.4
International issues	2	4.0
Total	53	

The description of the types of PSBs by team members demonstrates the work of the team is necessary to address the potential or existing adverse impact within the institution. To respect and maintain the anonymity of the institutions and the confidentiality of members who participated, specific cases and the respective impacts are not described. The types of impacts discussed were described as causing strain on institutional service providers as repeat behaviours that have not changed despite numerous attempts to address causing disruption to the learning or wellbeing of other students and/or causing others to be fearful for their safety or the safety of others. The PSBs described by team members demonstrate the functional need for the work that they are conducting to address the behaviours that pose a significant risk of harm and/or are having adverse impacts within the institution. These high-risk behaviours form the basis of the work of BIT teams to assess and intervene.

4.3. Team Meeting Processes

To gain insight into how teams have operationalized the functions of their work, team members were surveyed regarding the frequency of which teams met. Such meetings were scheduled on an as-needed basis (62.4%), weekly (26.4%), monthly (7.5%), or twice a month (3.8%). With team meetings mostly being held as needed, it is unclear how often meetings are occurring. Team members interviewed described a similar pattern with 87.5% of teams meeting on an as needed basis; however, of those meeting as needed indicated that the team also maintained a standing meeting time. Findings indicate that institutions utilize planned time to conduct their work but also are flexible to be responsive to urgent cases as they are identified. Interviewee 5 provided insight into how urgent cases can dictate the need to adjust meetings;

Having a standing time in terms of allowing us to be flexible and nimble in terms of responding to issues that might come across, as you know, as I know at least, you can't plan for disruptions for students to be disruptive, it can happen at any time so being responsive has been really important to us so sometimes, I guess our schedules, you know are probably a factor in all of that.

Some interviewees described regular meetings that are needed; however, most interviewees described meetings as needing to happen quickly due to the urgent nature of the case. For example, another interviewee stated:

We usually meet really quite quickly, I guess it depends on the case. But sometimes we meet within an hour, and sometimes it's the next day. And we literally pull the team of 5 or 6 people, sometimes a little bit more if there's other people immediately available and aware of the case, we get in a room and around a table, quite literally, and start going around the table. What do we know? (Interviewee 7).

Team meetings, therefore, tend to be ad hoc and address urgent cases as compared to regular standard meeting times to address all situations.

4.3.1. Sources of Information

To discern how teams become aware of cases of PSBs, teams were asked about their information collection processes. The majority of team members (94.3%) indicated that members of the team bring cases to the team for which they are working on. Other methods for cases being brought to the team included security reports (81.0%), police

files (30.2%), or campus risk management teams (28.3%). Only 13 members (24.5%) used an institutional electronic reporting form and seven (13.2%) used a telephone reporting line. Other methods identified included community members submitting general reports (by phone, email, or in person) or referrals from senior administrators such as deans or directors.

To further understand the meeting processes of teams, team members were asked to indicate the types of information they have access to for reported cases. Team members in the survey reported using various sources of documentation or information in order to conduct their assessments or meetings (see Table 4.8 on the next page). The most common types of information used are documents that are associated with the incident such as incident reports (94.3%), communication received (90.6%), and student conduct records (71.7%). A total of 19 participants provided additional sources that had not been listed. Most responses described how teams had access to any institutionally known information that was relevant to the case. Five of those team members; however, explained that a caveat existed for any health or counselling-related information, as those records were deemed to be private. This indicated that privacy of health and mental health records is paramount for team members. The importance and challenge that privacy of information has to the work of BITs is further discussed in the Chapter 5.

Table 4.8 *Information Available to Team Members*

Available Information	<i>n</i>	%
Incident Reports	50	94.3
Communications Received (such as emails, letters, or social	48	90.6
Student Conduct Record	38	71.7
Student Transcripts	32	60.3
Official Student Record	32	60.3
Student Demographic Information	32	60.3
Known access records of campus health services (such as medical centre, counselling services, or disability services)	28	52.8
Known access records of campus resources (non-health related services such as academic advising, peer support, club memberships, etc)	21	39.6

Academic Dishonesty status	17	32.1
Admission Records	12	22.6
Other	9	17.0
Total	53	

This research did not specifically consider the relevance or use of the types of information collected by teams in the completion of their work. Despite this limited scope, how team members worded their survey responses demonstrated that they were aware and take active steps to protect of the sensitivity of the information collected. This was most demonstrated by a team member who commented, “some of these are only shared if necessary and relevant. Members are not given access to all things in all cases” (Member Survey respondent 44). Interviewees further supported the importance of privacy as they described the importance of compliance with privacy rules and regulations. The importance of confidentiality and privacy will be further discussed in Chapter 5, but through all stages of the research the sensitive nature of information collected dictates the need to understand how teams maintain the records of their work.

4.3.2. Record Keeping

As the previous section highlighted, teams have access to vast amount of information regarding a student and a situation in order to conduct their work; therefore, information management of BIT functions was explored. Almost all (90.6%) team members indicated that records are kept as part of their meeting process; however, the types of records kept and whom have access to these records varied. Team members were provided a list of members and asked to identify which members had access to their team’s records. Only 41.5% of respondents stated that all members of their team kept records and 34.0% reported that only the chair of the team kept records. Team members were asked to describe in their own words how records were kept and the answers were themed and coded. Of those who answered the question (n=48), almost all participants described limitations to what information is documented or who on the team has access to the records. For example, 10 members stated that only the chair keeps or has access to the records and seven members reported that only actions taken by the team are documented. The description of the documentation process followed by teams demonstrated that records were limited in degrees of access or detail. In fact,

three members made specific reference to the fact that documents do not include the name of the student. The lack of detail is apparent, as one member described the team's process of record keeping as "individuals take their own personal notes, or prepare notes prior to the meeting taking place. A redacted summary of items discussed is shared with members who were present for the meeting" (Member Survey respondent 13). The lack of consistency on record keeping indicates that institutions do not use standard documentation processes associated with the activities of the team. The findings in the next chapter associated with the description of the processes followed by teams and the challenges that team members experience provided greater insight into how factors such as privacy obligations and organizational issues impact the record keeping processes of teams.

4.4. Training

The work of BIT teams is specialized and by team members' own descriptions deal with high-risk behaviours that pose a potential risk of serious violence or harm to individuals. As such, the training members receive to conduct this work was considered. Of the team members surveyed, 72.0% indicated that their team has received some of form of training. Table 4.8 provides a breakdown of the specific trainings team members (n=38) reported taking. The types of training described represented two categories of training: formal violence risk assessment training (Canadian Center for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response [CCTA], Proactive Resolutions, and NaBITA) or informal training (workshops, internal training, or unspecified training). The most common training received (55.0%) was Level 1 and 2 of the CCTA training (25.0%). The second most common training was informal sessions described as "other trainings" (32.5%), these training sessions could not be categorized because members used general terms such as "risk assessment training" (Member Survey respondent 45) or "emergency response" or "threat assessment training" (Member Survey respondent 27). Table 4.9 (see next page) illustrates that informal training topics vary from mental health issues, conflict resolution, suicide prevention, to general team skills. The findings demonstrate that not all teams are consistently provided a standard level of training to conduct their work.

Formal violence risk assessment training programs provide rubrics or tools that teams can use when conducting an assessment of problematic behaviour that poses a safety risk towards others. There are various risk and violence assessment tools that are available to post secondary institutions ranging from proprietary to open source. When asked if their team uses tools or instruments to assess behaviour, only 52.8% of team members indicated they did use such rubrics. Team members who reported that they used instruments (n=28) identified that they used professional violence risk assessment tools, such: Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA; 27.6%), Historical Clinical Risk Management- 20 (HCR-20; 24.1%), or the NaBITA rubric (3.4%). However, the most common instruments were generic threat assessment tools (44.8%), with no title or name being provided. While 55.0% team members indicated having taken the VTRA Level 1 training, only 27.6% reported using the assessment tools provided. Teams also indicated that they have accessed instruments designed to assess personal violence, such as the suicide prevention tools (13.8%).

The majority of teams indicated that they had been provided some form of training. To gain insight into the perceptions of this training, participants were asked to rate their satisfaction with the training they had received. Table 4.9 illustrates the degree to which participants agreed that they were satisfied with the training they had received. Regardless of whether or not team members had indicated they had attended training, overall 73.6% of team members were satisfied with the protocols their teams used, whereas only 69.8% are satisfied with the training they received. It is notable that having attended some form of training appeared to influence the degree of agreement regarding BIT members' satisfaction with training, as 81.6% of those who report having had training are satisfied with the protocols used as compared to 53.3% of those who team members with no training. Not surprising, 84.2% of those members who reported having participated in training were satisfied with the level of training, as compared to 33.3% of those who had not. This clearly illustrates that training is an important factor for team members.

Table 4.9 *Training Provided to Teams*

Training	<i>n</i>	%
Formal Violence Risk Assessment Training		
CCTA Training Level 1	22	55.0
CCTA Training Level 2	10	25.0

Proactive Resolutions – HCR 20, SARA	8	20.0
National Behavioral Intervention Team Association Rubric	2	5.0
Informal Training		
Mental Health Training such as Mental Health First Aid		
Suicide Training such as QPR, ASSIST, Safetalk	9	22.5
Webinars and Workshops on relevant topics such as threat assessment, team skills, conflict management	9	22.5
Internal Training such as case studies, skills sharing among members, debriefing cases	6	15.0
Other unspecified training	13	32.5
Total	40	

Note. ASIST = Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training; CCTA = Canadian Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response; HCR = Historical Clinical Risk Management; QPR = Question, Persuade, Refer; SARA = Spousal Assault Risk Assessment.

The majority of teams indicated that they had been provided some form of training. To gain insight into the perceptions of this training, participants were asked to rate their satisfaction with the training they had received. Table 4.10 on the next page illustrates the degree to which participants agreed that they were satisfied with the training they had received. Regardless of whether or not team members had indicated they had attended training, overall 73.6% of team members were satisfied with the protocols their teams used, whereas only 69.8% are satisfied with the training they received. It is notable that having attended some form of training appeared to influence the degree of agreement regarding BIT members' satisfaction with training, as 81.6% of those who report having had training are satisfied with the protocols used as compared to 53.3% of those who team members with no training. Not surprising, 84.2% of those members who reported having participated in training were satisfied with the level of training, as compared to 33.3% of those who had not. This clearly illustrates that training is an important factor for team members.

Table 4.10 *Perceptions of Training – Stage 2 – Team Member Survey*

Perceptions	<i>n</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	%				
				Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
I am satisfied with the protocols used by the team to assess problematic student behaviour	53	.904	3.91	26.4	47.2	17.0	9.0	0

I am satisfied with the training I receive for the work of this team	53	1.03	3.68	18.9	50.9	11.3	17.0	1.9
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While tests of significance were completed, further calculations could not be done due to the small sample size when subgroupings were compared such as size of institution or participant's position. However, descriptive statistics indicated that a total of 88.2% of BIT members from small schools versus 63.9% of those from large schools received training. The difference in satisfaction appeared clear as 82.4% of those team members from institutions with less than 10,000 FTE students (n=17) agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the training as compared to 63.9% of those members from institutions with more than 10,000 FTE student (n=36). This indicates that more small institutions have provided training to their BITs, and the members of these teams report being more satisfied with the training received than those from larger institutions.

The team members interviewed provided greater insight into the important role that training plays in conducting their work. Interviewees identified that they had taken formal violence risk assessment training: VTRA (62.5%), HCR-20 (50.0%), and NaBITA (12.5%). Of the six interviewed who had taken formal risk assessment training, all three of the interviewees from smaller institutions related having been through formal risk assessment training and most interviewees discussed the benefit of attending multiple trainings.

I believe it's important to have more than one tool in your toolbox, so I encourage my counterparts to investigate different training options, not that - I think [VTRA] does a wonderful job, I think Proactive Resolutions does a wonderful job, but they emphasize different aspects of the process, and how you review it. (Interviewee 8)

Some interviewees indicated that training was not always mandatory for all team members yet they also emphasized the importance of all members having training.

Because unless you've been trained, it's a very different way of conceptualizing the issue and what you're trying to achieve, because I think if people come in as a counsellor they want to counsel. If they come in as a manager they want to manage. And that's, and we... what we're trying to

do is keep everyone safe. So you have to kind of keep that in mind as your goal, and it's a little different way of thinking. (Interviewee 7)

Interviewees identified that access to relevant training is an on-going challenge for all new and existing team members. Team members expressed how the training their team members received was a key reason for the perceived effectiveness of their work. The analysis of how team members perceived the training as impacting their experience of being a team member will be discussed further in the next chapter.

4.5. Summary

The findings of this chapter provided a summary of the use, functions, meeting processes and training of BIT teams within Canada. The results highlighted that teams are a common method for postsecondary institutions to address problematic behaviours that pose a significant risk to the institution. It was notable that the size of the institution was a variable that affected whether an institution had implemented a BIT, the membership of the team, and the training received by the team. Team members interviewed were able to provide a context to understand the composition and processes used by teams.

The next chapter will elaborate on how institutions have implemented BIT teams as a practice, and focus on the experience of team members serving on a team. The chapter will present the findings of how team members experience the work considering their role and functioning within the team and their perception of the effectiveness of BITs as a mechanism to address PSBs.

Chapter 5. Team Member Experiences and Perceived Effectiveness

As evidenced by the results in Chapter 4, a majority of Canadian institutions that participated in this study have adopted BIT teams to address PSB. This chapter presents the experiences for those serving as a member of a BIT team to answer the main research question “What is the experience of members of behavioural intervention teams that address problematic student behaviour within Canadian higher education?” This chapter is organized into four main sections: successful interventions, barriers and limitations, perceived effectiveness, and member impacts.

The first section provides an overview of what team members perceive as successful interventions. The description of successful outcomes as expressed by members provides a context within which to understand further findings regarding their experiences. Successful interventions are categorized within five main types with examples to provide a depth of understanding into the reason the interventions were deemed successful. The second section of results discusses the barriers and limitations described by team members in their ability to implement successful limitations. This section specifically answers the Research Sub-Question 3: “What barriers and limitations do members of behavioural intervention teams believe to exist for the success of interventions?” The barriers and limitations as described at all stages were analyzed using emergent coding and represent four key themes: team issues, institutional issues, case complexity, and legal or policy issues. Each category is explored using described experiences of team members interviewed and how these respective challenges create limitations to the team’s ability to implement successful interventions.

The third section outlines the findings of team member’s perceptions of effectiveness of BIT teams as an intervention strategy and specifically answers Research Sub-Question 4: “To what degree do members of behavioural intervention teams view their assessment system to be effective?” Despite the challenges team members’ experienced, the analysis found that the BIT process is perceived to be an effective method to address PSB within postsecondary institutions. This section uses the qualitative data of interviewees to present the expressed reasons why team members found the process to be effective. The findings provide two core

rationalizations for the effectiveness: the importance of multidisciplinary membership and the background of team members.

The final section focuses on analysis of the narratives expressed by interviewees of their full experience of being a team member to provide a robust answer the main research question: "What is the experience of members of behavioural intervention teams that address problematic student behaviour within Canadian higher education?" Interviewees' experiences are categorized by the impacts that team members describe as either positive or negative. These impacts of participating as a BIT team member are subsequently categorized as having impacts on them both personally as well as professionally

5.1. Successful Interventions

A discussion of team member's perceptions of BIT team effectiveness cannot be understood without first understanding what constitutes successful or unsuccessful interventions. To gain insight into the concept of successful outcomes implemented by BITs, interviewees were asked to describe cases on which they have worked that they would describe as both successful and unsuccessful. The depth of cases described provided robust data outlining the various types of interventions that teams had used to address a variety of PSBs. The examples of interventions had similarities that were noted during the analysis and informed the five different types of interventions: external referrals, establishing boundaries, removal from the institution, adjudication under policy, and providing internal supports. Table 5.1 illustrates the various intervention types and provides examples as described by those interviewed. While this list provides a comprehensive account of the various interventions team members have used, it is important not to assume that all types are considered successful interventions. The types of interventions described involve actions taken with the student involved, with others within the institution, or with external representatives.

Table 5.1 *Types of Interventions*

Intervention	Description	Examples
External Referral	Communicating with a third party regarding the behaviour and recommending the third party take specific action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reporting to police - contacting parent or guardian - requiring student seek professional medical attention - contracting with an agency specializing in violence risk assessment
Establishing Boundaries	Requiring the individual(s) involved to limit specific actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - behaviour contract for student - limit contact between parties - limit access to institutional spaces, services, or resources
Removal from Institution	A temporary or long-term removal of the student from registering or attending the institution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - temporary removal from attending classes - removal from living on campus - suspension from the institution
Adjudication under Policy	Formal action being taken under existing institutional policy or procedure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - student code of conduct - human resource procedures - harassment investigation
Providing Internal Supports	The activation or accessing of internal services or processes that are available to support students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - referral to services (i.e. Counseling, accessibility services, etc) - implementing temporary academic accommodations (i.e deferral of exams, distance learning option) - implementing formal academic accommodations for protected grounds

Team members interviewed each discussed examples of interventions from the different categories, however, whether the individual described the intervention as successful or unsuccessful was contingent upon elements of the case. Each case described by interviewees involved intricate case elements that provided background as to why they perceived the actions of the team to be successful or unsuccessful. To assure confidentiality of those interviewed, the data presented do not include specific references to the subject of the case or the institution.

To illustrate how an intervention type does not equate to success but is rather case specific, consider the following hypothetical example. A student's behaviour has

recently changed and they have become easily agitated with fellow classmates and staff. The student has been involved in several verbal arguments with two classmates whom the student claims are sabotaging course work by stealing the student's books and making rude comments. There was an incident where the student of concern had written a long confusing email to the department chair stating that if action was not taken by the department against these other students for their behaviours that the student would "make sure they get what is coming to them." The department chair spoke to the accused students and learned that they were concerned for the other student, as they had noticed that the student was very stressed and seemed very paranoid about things that were not happening. The department chair refers the situation to the BIT team who reviews the file and decides to intervene by having the campus case manager reach out to the student to make a referral to the on-campus counselling services. This intervention may be described as successful if the student attends counselling and the concerning behaviour changes. However, the same referral may be deemed unsuccessful if the student attends counselling but the concerning behaviour does not change, or if the student does not attend counselling.

When asked about successful or unsuccessful cases, team members often described that it was not that a given type of intervention worked or did not work, but rather that there were numerous options to choose from, and these various options present a continuum of success. For example, one team member described an unsuccessful interventions as: "I just think that maybe we made the wrong call" (Interviewee 1). Similarly, another team member stated, "I would say there's some cases that we haven't dealt with as well as we could have" (Interviewee 4).

Team members described interventions or decisions that their team had made that they might have been handled differently had they had a more complete picture at the time. Team members differentiated between describing the intervention as successful or not versus describing the process that occurred as successful or unsuccessful. For example, Interviewee 2 described a case as unsuccessful because "I think, looking back now, we played it too cautiously. I think we didn't push the issue hard enough [because] I think we would have been a lot more successful in resolving that file sooner." The impact of the team's process on the perception of success was clearly captured in another interviewee's statement:

I would say there's some cases that we haven't dealt with as well as we could have. Again I would say it's partly our process is just not well defined. We moved into some of these cases very tentatively and we don't deal with it swiftly. We don't come up with a game plan. We don't necessarily assign actions or individuals, so that to me is where some of our cases have not been as successful as they could have been. (Interviewee 4)

Analyzing how team members described cases they perceived as successful depicted outcomes that included one or more of three core features: (a) the behaviour changed, (b) the student continued their educational pursuits, and/or (c) people were not hurt. These features of a successful outcome depict the team's goal of interventions as supportive as compared to punitive, as acts that resulted in a student being assisted to address the behaviours were at the core of how interviewees described successful interventions. One interviewee articulated this perception as follows:

So we did hold a spot and fulfilled kind of our end of the bargain but so did he. So he did everything. He got the therapy. He connected with physicians. He connected with psychiatrists. He passed his exams. He was a stellar student ... But really we're trying to give the best support and try to get them through so that they can graduate and have a degree at the end of it all. (Interviewee 1)

The intention of team interventions as being supportive is plainly evident in the following interviewees' reflections regarding a perceived successful case:

We actually helped them do that. And I think that was the hopefully, probably saved their life, you know, to try to pull them out of that environment and get them to something that was more stable and supportive for them. (Interviewee 3)

I think that with this particular case we were successful because we were able to again manage the person's behaviour, respect their dignity, and hear them out so that they could be heard as well. But we also were able to take some swift action. ... So we have been able to get them into our various resources [listed resources]. They've been able to then work with that person or a group and figure out what the root cause or the issue is. I guess from that perspective in my opinion we've had lots of success stories because they haven't turned into something that's really negative. (Interviewee 4)

The descriptions of successful interventions by those interviewed most often included supportive actions with the expressed goal of the student being able to continue or return to academic pursuits while maintaining the safety of the institution. As Interviewee 7 explained "what we're trying to do is keep everyone safe [and] I'm glad to

say I can't think of a case where it was unsuccessful because somebody got hurt". Most team members, regardless of size of institution or which department the chair was affiliated with, describe successful interventions as being rooted in actions that serve to support the student whose behaviour was problematic and thus, successful interventions were more dependent upon the context of the case as compared to the intervention itself.

5.2. Barriers or Limitations

In order to understand the experience of team members, a key goal of this study was to explore the barriers and limitations that BITs face when implementing an intervention strategy. All stages of data collection offered opportunities for participants to provide their stories and experiences, which provided information relating to the presence of barriers for the team members and explored how these barriers limited their actions. First, in Stage 1, SSAOs were asked to identify any operational challenges their team experienced in conducting their work. The answers were analyzed and themed into four key categories of challenges: team issues, institutional issues, case complexity, and legal/policy issues. The team member interviews were also analyzed and themed using these four categories, which provided further insight and examples of how operational challenges, limited the team's ability to successfully intervene. Table 5.2 (see next page) provides an overview of the various challenges as well as subcategories of each type of challenge expressed by SSAOs' surveys and team member interviews. The analysis of interviews found that challenges described matched those from previous stages; however, interviewees provided further context and specific examples that gave a deeper understanding about the challenges raised by the SSAOs. Each of the challenges outlined the barrier for the work of assessing or addressing student behaviour and how the type of challenge limited successful interventions. The next sections discuss each barrier and provide examples of each of the four subcategories using both SSAO survey responses and team member interviews.

Table 5.2 *Challenge and Limitations*

Theme	Stage 1 SSAO Survey	Stage 3 Member Interviews
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	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Team Issues	36	75.0	8	87.5
Resources	16		6	
Process Issues	10		6	
Communication	6		0	
Timeliness	4		3	
Institutional Issues	19	39.6	6	75.0
Reporting Issues	8		3	
Organizational Issues	6		4	
Community Awareness	5		4	
Case Complexity Issues	13	27.1	8	100.0
Competing Issues	5		5	
Mental Health	4		4	
Safety	2		1	
General Complexity	2		1	
Legal/Policy Issues	12	25.0	8	100.0
Legal Issues	4		4	
Policy Issues	4		3	
Privacy Issues	4		6	
Total Responses	48		8	

5.2.1. Team Issues

Team issues was the most frequently (75.0%) discussed challenge by the SSAOs (n=48). The SSAO and interviewee responses demonstrated a consistent theme of challenges and limitations to the work of the teams and the ability to meet the BIT team’s mandate. Team issues included elements that directly impacted the functionality of the team such as recourses, process issues, communication, and timeliness. The interviews provided further elaboration into how these categories impacted the work of BITs and how team members experience these issues.

One area identified only by the SSAO survey respondents was the issue of communication. Seven SSAOs (12.5%) identified communication to be a key challenge.

One SSAO respondent noted the need to improve “communication of the issues to all that need to know of the actions that have been taken” (SSAO Survey Respondent 46). The description of the communication challenges by those interviewed focused on challenges regarding the topic of privacy and information sharing as compared to the blanket challenges of communication as described by SSAOs. The challenges of privacy of information as described by interviewees will be discussed later in this chapter.

5.2.1.1. Resources

Resource concerns was the most common team issue, with 44.4% of SSAOs identifying a lack of resources available to the team to conduct their work. The resource challenges were described as the limited time associated with the work, the lack of people within the institution with a specific expertise, the lack of financial investment in the team, and lack of training resources. One SSAO noted the need for “funding for training of the team. Time within otherwise busy schedules to address concerns immediately” (SSAO Survey Respondent 38). The volume of work and the corresponding time that is required as a team member were the main resource issues facing teams. In Stage 1 and 2 surveys, participants were asked to what extent do they agreed with the following statement: “There has been an increase in the number of cases our team addresses.” A total of 73.7% of SSAOs with teams and 71.7% of team members (n=53) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, which supports the SSAO findings that that BIT workload is increasing.

When describing their experience of being on a BIT, 75.0% of interview participants discussed resource issues as having an impact on the team. They discussed that the work they are doing as part of BIT is not their core responsibility, but as an additional expectation of their position. The additional work that was above and beyond their existing workload was depicted as causing can a resource challenge. As one interviewee described “My team was having a hard time getting an academic Dean” (Interviewee 6). Team members described how the work of the BIT team is an additional duty for them that causes financial and workload issues. One interviewee explained

I'd say that the biggest thing is probably induction training, and that's more to do with time, partly money. In the past I've paid for some of the training, like when I say "I", the [department] budget has paid for it, but probably

time and money, but mainly time because these are all individuals, including myself, whom have other responsibilities, and this just is another thing that needs to be taken care of, but, yeah, I'd say time is probably the biggest impediment. (Interviewee1)

The workload that comes with being a member of a BIT team is described to cause issues for team members. As Interviewee 1 and others alluded, there are BIT-related tasks and actions that must be completed on top of their regular duties. One interviewee described this resource pressure as follows:

Keeping all these files up to date, keeping them maintained, putting accurate notes in them, attaching the right electronic communications to them is a job in and of itself. It's supposedly 10% of my job. It's just not happening. It's not happening to the degree that I would like and it's causing me stress". (Interviewee 2)

The resources of people and time, caused pressure for participants, both in their BIT work but also in their regular roles. This has led to challenges in the processes BITs must ultimately use to conduct their work. The experience of team members describe a circumstance where team members are pressured to conduct the BIT work without additional funding for training or team support that would alleviate the increase in workload for individual members.

5.2.1.2. Process Issues

How BIT teams conducted their work was described differently by team members and SSAOs. The lack of consistency of team processes described was evidence that the lack of clarity on team processes served as a challenge facing teams, especially in light of the BIT processes being relatively new for Canadian institutions. The SSAOs outlined various challenging processes, including how decisions were made, the data-collection process, and general decision-making concerns. One SSAO described process challenges as

It is actually the 'turf' struggle with our [department] and their expectation that we will "punish" or "eject" students more quickly for various behaviours where we are more interested in an educational, restorative and reformative approach (SSAO Survey Respondent 17).

In Stage 2 BIT members (n=53) were asked to rate their level of agreement with the following statement: "I am satisfied with the protocols used by the team to assess problematic student behaviour." A total of 73.6% of respondents indicated that strongly

agreed or agreed with this statement. While there is satisfaction of the protocols, 75.0% of interview participants described how challenges with team processes impacted their work. The challenges often involved issues associated with disagreements between team members about the assessment or desired interventions: “We do work towards consensus, and usually we do get consensus, but sometimes that’s a painful, it takes a lot of painful conversations to get there” (Interviewee 7). Another interview participant clearly articulated how process challenges can impact the work of the team:

Again I would say it’s partly our process is just not well defined. We moved into some of these cases very tentatively and we don’t deal with it swiftly. We don’t come up with a game plan, we don’t necessarily assign actions or individuals, so that to me is where some of our cases have not been successful as they could have been. (Interviewee 5)

This statement demonstrates not only how the process used by the team is important but also how the timeliness of actions is also critical to team effectiveness.

5.2.1.3. Timeliness

The final team constraint builds on the both the issue of resources and team process, specifically the ability of teams to address matters in a timely fashion. Of the SSAOs surveyed, 8% identified that it was a challenge for their teams to respond in a timely manner to “ensure a rapid, appropriate response” (SSAO Survey Respondent 41). The SSAO survey did not provide an opportunity to explain why these challenges exist; however, the analysis of interviews provided more contexts as to why timeliness is a concern. Interviewees discussed how BIT members all have other roles within their institutions and thus when an urgent case arises there is a challenge for all team members to quickly assemble.

Sometimes it’s hard to get everybody together quickly for a meeting. Right? So sometimes you end up having to leave off a team member or two who might be valuable to that particular thing [...] (Interviewee 3)

Team members interviewed also described the importance of dropping everything to attend to the work of the BIT due to the nature of the problems being addressed.

5.2.1.4. Limitations to Successful Interventions – Team Issues

While SSAOs and team members were able to articulate the various team issues they were experiencing, the interviewees provided insight into why such team issues

limit the team's ability to intervene successfully. Interviewees discussed team issues associated with making high-stakes decisions as a difficult process as a result of disagreements between team members. For example, as one interviewee described:

We have three or four different perspectives on the table. I'm not, I don't know the right answer. I don't know what we should do! And just sort of persevering through the conversation. (Interviewee 7).

How the team issues impact success was often described as a function of the level of experience that team members have had on a BIT. Interviewees noted, as the team developed more experience, the more adept members became at implementing successful interventions. This prior learning also helped the team be more effective in successfully addressing similar cases.

We would like to have that as a do over. I think we've also learned from it. We've had other files; we just had a file ... 2 weeks ago that looked a lot like it, that we moved much more definitively on. (Interviewee 2)

It wasn't always entirely clear which needed to occur first, and through trial and error process ... have we been able to establish you know, if this type of situation or similar situation occurs, these are the types of procedures we would make sure happened first. (Interviewee 5).

The analysis of the interviews outlined that team issues can limit the success of the team, specifically the team's lack of experience. As another interviewee stated, "I think we're getting more confident in some things where we were a little bit hesitant before" (Interviewee 6). The importance of previous experience was described by team members representing all roles (i.e., the chair as well as team members), years of experience on a team (between 1 and 9 years), years of experience in the participant's given role at the institution (between 6 and 21 years), or the participant's department within the institution (i.e., security, student services, faculty, or counselling).

5.2.2. Institutional Issues

Institutional issues comprise the second most common theme of challenges or limitations to the work of BIT teams. A total of 39.6% of SSAOs and 75.0 % of interviewees described circumstances within their institutions that impact how their teams function. Challenges were articulated to involve intricacies rooted as a condition

or factor of the team's institution and were classified into three areas: reporting issues, organizational issues, and community awareness.

5.2.2.1. Reporting Issues

The most referred to institutional issue involved the team not receiving timely or complete information regarding a given case of PSB that was brought forward to the team. A total of 16.7% of all SSAOs and 37.5% of interviewees describe challenges involved due to members of the institution failing to inform the team about problematic behaviour in a timely or effective manner. One SSAO described the BIT challenge in "ensuring people on campus do not ignore behaviours but report them so the student can be helped and the situations do not spiral out of control" (SSAO Survey Respondent 43). Interviewees provided an understanding as to why the information about a student does not come forward in a timely fashion as an expression of institutional past practices. One interviewee described the reporting issue as follows: "I think it's the [behaviours] that have been going on for a long time where there's different things that we find out [and] that makes it very difficult" (Interviewee 6).

Some interviewees expressed that their teams have attempted to address the reporting issue by introducing additional ways for members of the institution to report behaviours, such as an online reporting form. Another interviewee, whose institution had introduced an online reporting tool, described how the questions of the report had to be changed because the way institutional members were filling out the form did not provide the necessary information for the team to complete their work. This participant described the challenge as:

It [the original reporting form] gave faculty a lot of room to create their own narrative. What we had to do was constrain that somewhat, so we were getting more behaviours and less diagnosis. Since we've done that, we've gotten a lot more useable information because we're getting just the raw 'here's what I'm seeing'. (Interviewee 2)

Findings demonstrate that specific institutional characteristics introduce an additional barrier for reporting cases. Interviewees described how the existing culture of the institution has established long-standing operational practices. One interviewee described this as how the institutional culture manifests:

Sometimes what happens is instructors, as they also have very small class sizes, are really close to their students and things start to escalate slowly and instructors tend, or in the past try to deal with it themselves, and they try and they try, at some personal emotional cost. (Interviewee 6)

Team members outlined that when institutional members do not provide timely and robust information about PSB the team's ability to conduct their work effectively is adversely impacted.

5.2.2.2. Organizational issues

Another way that institutional issues manifest for team members is a factor of how the institution is designed or structured, which may pose a challenge for the work of BIT teams. A total of six SSAOs and half of the team members interviewed noted specific organizational issues, such as institutional size, having multi-campus, or the reporting structure of a department, as examples of elements that cause challenges for having or operating a team. Thus, organizational issues were determined to be factors specific to their institution that participants described as impacting the functioning of a multidisciplinary team.

Analysis of the information team members shared when interviewed provided context as to how such organizational issues cause impacts for their team's work. One concern identified was the complexity of the institutional system. The institution at which Interviewee 7 works has multiple campuses that are very far from one another, and the interviewee discussed how this impacts their team:

Makes it a little bit tricky in that each campus has a little different culture, a little different representation, and then different expectations. And so consistency can become a bit of a challenge.

Participants also reported the culture of the organization as having an impact on how the team was able to meet its mandate. One team member described this as "sometimes there's a little bit of politics" (Interviewee 3), and another member discussed this as buy-in.

I just don't think we're at a point where we're capturing all of that, and whether we have complete buy-in from the institution. I know that I have buy-in from my senior executive, but I guess it's one of those things where [people believe] it's not going to happen here, so why do we put so much investment into it? So I think that people are having trouble buying into that,

and therefore we're not as far down the road as I'd like to be with that process and with the policy behind it. (Interviewee 4)

The culture of the organization is described as having a direct impact on the operations of the team. Team members described how the organizational structure of the institution, specifically where in the institution a given department, such as, safety and security, reports as further complicating team operations. Interviewee 2 described how they supervise multiple units, which often have relevant information for the team. This interviewee noted how this supervisory relationship has both assisted and hampered their work on the team. Thus reporting structures within the organization can cause challenges for the institution in accessing information relevant to conducting their work.

5.2.2.3. Community Awareness

The final category of institutional issues focused on the awareness of the institutional community of the role or existence of the BIT team. Only 10.4% of SSAOs and half of team members interviewed discussed the challenge of “ensuring ... the university community knows and understands the role of the committee” (SSAO Survey Respondent 19). The importance placed on community awareness is a relevant institutional challenge because it directly relates to the other institutional concerns of reporting and organizational issues as a community that is not aware of the team or how to appropriate report to it would cause issues for the functioning of the team. One interviewee described how their team was trying to improve community awareness:

We have more work to do. I think we have more communication to do. In fact, along with our [title of a member], he and I are going to be presenting to our leadership team in [date], just trying to raise awareness of how the team operates. Because I think there's still some people that just aren't that familiar with it and are used to doing things the old way, like they know who to call and when to call and sometimes that still goes on, so it kind of circumvents our process a bit. (Interviewee 7)

Team members described issues that arise when those within the institution are uncertain as to the exact scope of the work of a BIT, as institutional members may have an expectation of an intervention that is beyond the scope of the team's mandate. When community members' expectations may not be possible or required, confusion results in others who “felt that they weren't being supported, you know. It was hard to help them understand that we weren't favouring the student over them” (Interviewee 6). BIT

members also described the intricacy of their core function being compounded by the need to validate their efforts and performance to the community for whom they work. Interviewee 2 succinctly described the challenging dichotomy of pressures as the need to help the institutional community, as “understanding of process and understanding of limitations, are the two largest issues that I would say I’m facing right now in those really complex situations”.

5.2.2.4. Limitations to Successful Interventions – Institutional Issues

Team members noted various ways that institutional issues have created barriers that further complicate their ability to meet their BIT mandate that limit their ability to be successful. The work of BITs serves to provide a layer of intervention to aid in reducing risk of harm and limiting the negative impacts on PSB. For example, institutional issues not only impacted BIT members’ ability to obtain sufficient timely information, but also affected their ability to implement the planned intervention. As Interviewee 2 explained:

I think in some ways, the overall structure of my institution causes challenges, because so much of what's been done here historically, has been done without policy backing. It's not rooted in policy. It's not rooted in legislative authority. It's not rooted in best practice. ... I think it's more of an institutional culture thing, then a size thing.

In Stage 1 and 2 of this research, the survey participants were asked to what degree they agreed with the following statement “I am confident our team is adequately meeting institutional expectations”. In response, 84.2% of SSAOs (n=38; SD =.811) and 84.9% of team members (n=53; SD = .718) either strongly agreed or agreed with the statement. Therefore, participants view that the team function is achieving its institutional mandate. However, as the behaviours are being addressed occur within and impact the institutional community, it is foreseeable that specific institutional characteristics would impact a team members’ ability to be successful at their roles within the institution

5.2.3. Case Complexity

Respondents within all stages strongly indicated that a challenge for the work of BIT teams was that the cases of PSB are increasing in complexity of both presenting behaviour and the impact of the problematic behaviour within the institution. The

complexity of cases involves factors of competing issues, mental health, and other complications. One interviewee described a case as complex because

potentially having that student in that environment is putting other students at increased risk for their own mental health, and not wanting them to be traumatized by what was going on. So it was a very messy situation for us to deal with (Interviewee 7).

The in-depth description of cases by interviewees provided clear illustrations of the multiplicities of interconnected factors that teams must address in their work. The details of specific cases described by interviewees are not discussed to ensure the confidentiality of the individuals and institutions that participated. However, to provide an understanding of the types of complexity described while maintaining the confidentiality of participants, the following example represents an edited overview of a complex case described by an interviewee. The case involved a student's behaviours that were significantly disrupting others, however the student held a paid role within the institution. The role the student held complicated the situation as intervention by the institution on the actions of an and student employee posed a question regarding the degree of which the institution had authority to act within the operations of a unionized role within the institution based upon behaviours exhibited as a student yet raised significant concerns for the ability for the person to safely conduct their work for the institution.

5.2.3.1. Competing Issues

One of the greatest causes of complexity involved situations whereby the BIT had to address behaviours involving competing issues between the rights of individuals, the demands of individuals, and institutional obligations. A total of 10.4% of SSAOs described in their own words how competing issues proved challenging for their teams. They clearly articulated competing issues as "balancing the human rights of an individual against those of others" (SSAO Survey Respondent 24) or "the need for a team approach to addressing these concerns while balancing fairness to the student and ensuring community safety" (SSAO Survey Respondent 51). Balancing these competing rights represents an additional layer of complexity, which teams must assess as part of their decision making process.

The competing demands of the various involved parties were more deeply understood by the in-depth description of scenarios addressed by those interviewed.

Team members described situations in which the student exhibiting problematic behaviour had not engaged in the supports or resources available; this resulted in continuous disruption for others, especially in a residential setting (Interviewee 1 and 7). Others participants noted situations in which a student whose behaviour had been perceived as a threat of violence had caused a high level of fear for the safety of faculty or staff of the institution. In this case, BIT members needed to balance the level of fear community members were experiencing with the right of the student to continue their studies. Interviewee 3 provided an example of the level of fear experienced by staff: “they were even accessing the employee assistance program, like for counselling services and things.” This situation resulted in competing demands of “human rights, versus the medical evidence, versus our duty to protect employees. You know, like all these things are kind of all crossing each other” (Interviewee 3).

While SSAOs and interviewees often expressed competing demands based upon the rights of those involved, other competing issues were discussed that centred on the circumstance of the student involved. For example, students can simultaneously engage in other roles within the institution, such as employee, volunteer, patient, or faculty member. As Interviewee 5 described:

So suddenly we have a number of other concerns and other obligations, legal obligations that the university has to meet, and so what gets really confusing and complicated is having to understand which procedural tool needs to be used first or which can occur at the same time, and you know it usually affects how fast the process will go.

Therefore, the complexity of the rights of those involved or the nature of the relationship of the student to the campus resulted in additional competing issues that increase the *complexity* for the team when attempting to resolve the PSB.

5.2.3.2. Mental Health

Another common complexity described by participants included behaviours that involved elements of mental health issues. In discussing this subject, 8% of SSAOs and 50.0% of BIT members interviewed described the prevalence of mental health issues as a challenge facing the work of teams. For example, an SSAO noted “The mental health issues underlying some of the behaviour also makes response more challenging” (SSAO Survey Respondent 17). Team members interviewed discussed cases in which a

student's mental health resulted in the individual accessing numerous services, causing a disruption for others, a need to involve professional health resources, and a question of how to hold a student accountable for actions that occurred as a result of an illness. The degree to which mental health concerns impact the work of the team was clearly stated by Interviewee 4, who said, "the complexity of this person's issues with regards to mental health issues, and making judgments based on what could be personal health information was very difficult."

5.2.3.3. Other Complexities

While most points described by participants discussed complexities that clearly fit as competing issues or mental health concerns, there were a few elements discussed that demonstrated a general concern for complexity. Such complexities were identified as "increasing complexity of issues" (SSAO Survey Respondent 45) or general statements for "safety of others" (SSAO Survey Respondent 11). One interviewee discussed how, as part of their BIT teamwork, the interviewee discovered that the problematic behaviour of greatest concern to the team was occurring outside of the institution, and an issue arose because the actions were "not part of our scope, it's beyond our control" (Interviewee 8). Therefore, while these issues did not fit into a particular theme under the heading of complexity, they do highlight the numerous ways that student behaviour can cause a challenge for the work of BIT teams.

5.2.3.4. Limitations to Successful Interventions – Case Complexity

In Stages 1 and 2 of this research, participants were asked to what extent they agreed with the following statement "I believe that the cases of problematic student behaviour the team addresses are becoming increasingly complex." Table 5.3 shows that 78.9% of SSAOs and 84.9% of BIT members believe that the complexity of the cases is increasingly challenging. Why cases are complex involve elements surrounding the student, the behaviour, and the context within which the behaviour has occurred. The complexities of the case cause the team members to have to adapt to the complexity, which can impact the interventions implemented by the team. Team members interviewed described how complexity requires that the team deal with cases on an ongoing basis and attempt different interventions that may or may not work: "And if that didn't work, let's try something else" (Interviewee 1).

Table 5.3 Case Complexity – Stage 1 and Stage 2

Case Complexity*	n	SD	M	%				
				Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
Stage 1 – SSAO	38	.957	4.05	36.8	42.1	10.5	10.5	0
Stage 2 –Team Member	53	.837	4.38	56.6	28.3	11.3	3.8	0

Note * Participant responses to statement “I believe that the cases of problematic student behaviour the team addresses are becoming increasingly complex.”

Overall case complexity also involves the limitations of what the team can be expected to accomplish. As one interviewee stated

I think the most challenging part of it is, I think people want an easy answer. They want to press the easy button and be able to say, "Okay you are expelled" or "we're going to require you to discontinue for a year" and then wipe our hands of it. I think people began to realize is that no matter what our decision was, whether it was to have the student discontinue, have him allowed to take classes, whatever the result was, we were still going to have to deal with him. Because there was always a chance he could come back. (Interviewee 4)

Teams must consider short and long term impacts with regards to interventions implemented. The complexity of short and long term interventions is further complicated by the limitations of the team and their scope of work. For example when working with behaviour that is the result of highly acute mental illness

there's a certain kind of limit to what we can do. You know, we aren't able to offer the particular student, you know, lifelong help and you know that kind of stuff, so we do the best we can (Interviewee 3).

Participants at all stages of the research demonstrated that the cases of PSB are increasing in complexity, which is causing greater strain and challenge for teams to address behaviours in a timely and effective manner. Team members must work within these limitations in order to develop the best approach at the moment and consider the long-term impact of the decision for the student and the institution.

5.2.4. Legal and Policy Issues

The final category of challenges experienced by BIT teams is the intersection of the legal requirements of the institution and/or the policies of the institution. Participants

who discussed legal or policy concerns identified that teams struggle to ensure that they are adhering to the various formal requirements governing their actions. These issues embodied three core types: legal, policy, and privacy. As discussed within the competing issues section of case complexity, often team members encounter cases whereby legal rights of individuals impact the institutional responsibilities. A participant expressed this challenge as “the need for a team approach to addressing these concerns while balancing fairness to the student and ensuring community safety” (SSAO Survey Respondent 51). The rights of an individual and their privacy juxtaposed with the complexity of providing a safe learning environment dominated this category.

5.2.4.1. Legal Elements

Teams work within their institutions and, therefore, must adhere to various legal principles and statutes in order to meet their obligations. In regards to this subject, 8% of SSAOs and 50.0% of BIT members interviewed outlined how various legal elements are a challenge for their work and pose a liability for the institution if not addressed appropriately. Participants made reference to various legal issues such as human rights law, duty to accommodate, workplace safety legislation, insurance requirements, employment law, workplace harassment, and criminal laws. As one interviewee discussed, “There’s liability issues, insurance issues, there could be all kinds of things that come up with a legal context” (Interviewee 3). It is clear that BIT members are educated on the various legal requirements of the institution when addressing problematic behaviour, with the most prominent legal concern being the need to provide a safe environment for community members. Participants demonstrated a level of familiarity with legal requirements as they used legal language. Specifically, one interviewee cited the specific section of and Bill number of a legislation that was relevant to the work of their team (Interviewee 5). Another interviewee noted, “[we’ve] done our due diligence and we’ve accommodated this student to the degree that we need to, in order to safely, and without legal recourse [address this situation]” (Interviewee 2). BIT members are, therefore, making institutional decisions that are informed by legal requirements of the institution at both the federal and provincial levels.

5.2.4.2. Policy Elements

Institutions of higher education exist within a clearly articulated set of policies that govern the relationship between the student and the institution. In regards to policy

elements, only 8.3% of SSAOs, yet 37.5% of BIT members interviewed, described how the existence, or absence, of institutional policies represent a challenge to their work. One SSAO described this challenge as “the educational policies governing the College and the need to ensure students complete their education” (SSAO Survey Respondent 29). Team members described the dearth of existing policies or the lack of clarity within policies as posing a substantive issue to their work. Numerous times referenced the fact that their institution’s student conduct policy was problematic. For example, one participant stated:

Not only was it complex, to know what to do with that student, but it really challenged our policies and our processes. Because our policies talk about code of conduct issues, and that really kind of lends itself to somebody threatening other people, not so much when they’re threatening themselves and that’s harmful to other people. (Interviewee 7)

Team members also referenced the importance of having a specific policy that governed the actions of the BIT and noted that not having such a policy impacted their work. As the policy provides the rationale and scope of the work, a BIT-specific policy provides the team with guidance; however, it could also be a challenge depending on how it is worded. As one interviewee stated,

Part of our challenge has been while we do have a terms of reference, it’s very vague, it’s very broad, and lots of feathery words. It doesn’t really help us with the process and what we do and when we do it, that kind of stuff. So we’re working on developing a lot of that now. (Interviewee 4)

As the work of BIT teams is complex, deals with high-risk situations, and requires the access to highly sensitive information, having a policy framework within which the team operates is viewed as being preferred. A clearly articulated mandate provides BIT members with guidance on how to operate within their scope and roles within the institution. While a clearly articulated policy provides authority and scope for the BIT team, the team must also consider how to operate within a myriad of other institutional policies each with their own mandates that may or may not be in conflict with the scope of the BIT’s work.

5.2.4.3. Privacy Elements

The final legal or policy element that BIT members experienced as a challenge focused on the privacy requirements the team must adhere to as both an institutional

process and as a legal obligation. Only 8.3% of SSAOs yet 75.0% of BIT members interviewed described the pressure experienced while trying to conduct their work while simultaneously balancing the privacy requirements of the student in question. This challenge was outlined clearly by an SSAO who noted a “lack of operational clarity regarding our privacy (information sharing) limitations within the institution and the inability to share information among institutions” (SSAO Survey Respondent 42). As each province has its own privacy regulations, BITs in different provinces must be aware of their specific requirements.

The way that interviewees described their experiences in working on specific cases provided rich detail into how it is a difficult balance to maintain privacy requirements as set out in law with the operationalizing of information sharing within the institution to conduct their work. One team member described how this challenge manifested within the institution:

One of the challenges we've had is growing the ability to share information because, you know, people get, like, in our province it's called [privacy legislation name], the privacy legislation, right? And people get like [privacy legislation name] is or whatever. They're afraid to share any information off campus. But it really is important to promote the sharing of information to those who really need to know it to protect the student and the whole community. So that's been a bit of a challenge. (Interviewee 3)

The intersection of privacy also extends to the notes and records that are created (or not created), by the team. The growing case complexity and the privacy requirements demonstrate that as one member stated, “I think privacy is going to continue to be a challenging issue for this field” (Interviewee 2).

5.2.4.4. Limitations to Successful Interventions – Legal and Policy Issues

While not a main focus of the research, in Stages 1 and 2, participants were asked to what extent they agreed with the following statement: “I am confident that our institution is meeting the reasonable professional standards to effectively manage our legal liabilities when dealing with problematic student behaviour.” Table 5.4 shows that 81.6% of SSAO and 79.2% of BIT members believe that BITS are meeting their legal liabilities. The work of BIT teams does not occur without limitations or scopes of practices whether legal or policy. Policies both provide the scope of the work of BITs as well as a framework for their interventions. The implications of legal, policy, and privacy

elements in the interventions are a conscious piece to the work of BITs. This is evidenced in the following participant statement:

I touched on this earlier about policy. It's, we don't have very robust policies around this stuff as an institution. And so it kind of leads to, okay how are we going to defend this decision if it's challenged (Interviewee 7).

Table 5.4 *Legal Liabilities Stage 1 and 2*

Legal Liabilities*	N	SD	M	%				
				Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
Stage 1 – CSAO	38	.972	4.03	34.2	47.4	5.3	13.2	0
Stage 2 –Team Member	53	.831	3.96	24.5	54.7	13.2	7.5	0

Note * Responses to the statement “I am confident that our institution is meeting the reasonable professional standards to effectively manage our legal liabilities when dealing with problematic student behaviour.”

Team members believe that they are meeting their legal requirements when conducting their work. However, the policy and legal environments within which teams are operating present a challenge to both how and what BIT members do as part of their work.

5.3. Effectiveness of BIT Teams

This research study was designed to understand how members of BIT teams perceive the team process, specifically as an effective strategy to manage PSBs. Team members described successful interventions as those that lack a severe impact to the institution and in which the student’s behaviour changes to the point that the individual in question is able to continue their studies. This definition was important in order to understand a team members’ perceptions of the effectiveness of their work. In Stages 1 and 2 of the study, participants were asked to indicate to what degree they agreed with various statements about their team’s work. Two questions specifically asked participants to describe their perceptions of the effectiveness of their team as well as meeting institutional expectations. Table 5.5 provides a review of participants’ answers to those two statements. The table illustrates that the majority of participants perceived that BITs are effective, as 81.6% of all SSAOs (n=38) and 88.7% of BIT members (n=52)

either strongly agreed or agreed that the team is an effective strategy for managing PSBs.

Table 5.5 *Perceptions of Team Effectiveness Stage 1 – SSAOs and Stage 2- Team Members*

Perceptions	Stage	n	SD	M	%				
					Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
I am confident our team is adequately meeting institutional expectations	1	38	.811	4.13	34.2	50.0	10.5	5.3	0
	2	53	.718	4.06	24.5	60.4	11.3	3.8	0
The team is effectively addressing problematic student behaviour for the institution	1	38	.868	4.05	31.6	50.0	10.5	7.9	0
	2	52	.573	4.5	24.5	64.2	9.4	0	0

As part of the analysis, the answers to Question 41 of the Stage 2 survey were compared between different categories of members, taking into account participants' years in the profession, size of institution, role within the institution, and team leadership. Using descriptive statistics (mean, median, mode, standard deviation), the only category that showed a noticeable difference in level of agreement and disagreement with the effectiveness of the team was team leadership. Table 5.6 shows that participants' level of agreement is lower when the department of safety and security is the leader of the team as compared to all other departments. The table also shows that teams with leadership by counselling or SSAO have the highest reported agreement of effectiveness of the team.

Table 5.6 *Team Leadership and Team Effectiveness – Stage 2*

Statements of Team Effectiveness	SSAO (n = 23)		Counsell -ing (n = 5)		Safety (n = 8)		Conduct (n = 4)		Other (n = 18)	
	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D
	I am confident our team is adequately meeting institutional expectations	87.0	0.0	100	0	50.0	25.0	100	0	94.4
I am confident that our institution is meeting the reasonable professional standards to effectively manage our legal liabilities when dealing with problematic student behaviour	95.7	0.0	100	0	50.0	25.0	100	0	77.8	11.1
The team is effectively addressing problematic student behaviour for the institution	100	0	100	0	75.0	0.0	100	0	80.9	0
I am satisfied with the protocols used by the team to assess problematic student behaviour	82.6	4.3	100	0	37.5	25.0	75.0	0	83.3	5.6
I am satisfied with the training I receive for the work of this team	69.6	13.0	100	0	62.5	37.5	100	0	66.7	25.2

Note. A = answers of Strongly Agree and Agree, D= answers of Strongly Disagree and Disagree

Interviewees were asked directly if they believe that the work of BITS is an effective way of addressing PSB. All interviewees said that it was effective and as one interviewee put it, “I feel it is very effective” (Interviewee 7). The analysis of their answers demonstrated two clear reasons as to why participants believe BITS are effective: the multidisciplinary team membership and the experience of team members.

5.3.1. Multidisciplinary Team Membership

As was noted in Chapter 4, BITS have an average membership of 6.4 members who represent various roles within the institution. Team members described the diversity of membership and multidisciplinary nature of the BIT, to be a key reason for

their success. Team members interviewed were not directly asked why they believe the BIT team process is effective; however, 100.0% of all team members interviewed made at least one reference to the importance of the multidisciplinary nature of the team in relation to the success of the addressing PSBs. The fact that all interviewees expressed that the multidisciplinary nature of the team is deemed important demonstrated the importance existed for all team members regardless of background, their team position (chair or not), role within the institution, years of professional experience, the size of the institution, or the number of years the team has been in operation.

Team members described how multidisciplinary membership is an essential element of BIT effectiveness. For example, one interviewee stated,

Well I think it's really positive in the sense that it's a really, it's a really great tool to make sure that the university takes a coordinated approach to things. You have a multidisciplinary team that can bring all this perspective that you need to deal with the matter to the table and it facilitates information exchange to so that the different parts of the university that have a need to know some of the sensitive stuff are informed and what that does is create a coordinated approach that's more effective in dealing with a problem, and that's also probably helps the institution create a safer environment for staff and students." And "I think they bring a really important balanced approach in terms of that multidisciplinary aspect so that you can really figure out the problem in the best way and also the way that they bring together the concerns that often exist across the whole campus and coordinate the response to it. (Interviewee 3)

Team members described how the multidisciplinary nature aids in working within the institutional environment:

I think the most positive is the teamwork. Truly the multidisciplinary approach and the different perspectives, I'm sure we are not the only institution that has experience with departments that are silo'd and everybody does their own thing until they're forced to work together. And we've been plagued by that to some extent. And I think this would be an excellent example of how our institution has pulled various departments together, work together for a common purpose. (Interviewee 7)

The benefit of multidisciplinary team membership provided confidence for team members regarding the decisions being made:

Certainly I come with a particular lens, but all my colleagues around the table also come with different ideas and different ways of being able to

address problematic behaviours on campus and so I find that together we come up with really great and creative solutions, or meaningful solutions for that particular student. (Interviewee 5)

Team members described how the diversity of perspectives of members is helpful as each person brings a perspective that others may not have. For example when considering the role of a counsellor, the most common institutional role to be a team member as noted in Chapter 4, a team member described the importance of a counsellor as follows:

Her position on the team is unique, in that her background is clinical counselling. As a result she has a really good diagnostic ability and the ability to look at a file and tell us, “okay, so here's what we're seeing; here's what the diagnosis is and here's what could likely follow from that.” From that standpoint she is very, very handy to have on the team. (Interviewee 2)

Some team members noted that they were confident that the multidisciplinary nature of the team was effective in contrast to their experience of how cases of PSB were addressed prior to the team's inception:

In the institution I worked in previously we didn't have such a team, and the delay while people yicked and yacked in the hallways and talked and were on the phone and so many people knew different pieces, I think was really dangerous in some cases. It didn't, nothing ever happened you know, because of that (Interviewee 6).

I think, when I was here early on, these decisions were made in a very localized, uncoordinated way, usually a very disciplinary approach, quite different from that kind of learning approach that we talked about earlier. So yeah it's been really helpful. (Interviewee 3)

The interviews demonstrated that team members strongly asserted that having a diverse membership is a key reason for the team's effectiveness. Team members explained that while the multidisciplinary aspect was beneficial, the experience of the individual members is equally important as their roles within the institution.

5.3.2. Team Members' Background

In describing the work on BIT teams, all members interviewed described how the personal or professional experience of team members beyond their institutional role has contributed to the ability of the team to be successful. Participants described times

when the knowledge of a team member, and at times themselves, which was derived in a capacity beyond their given institutional role, aided in the success of an intervention. One participant described how a member of the team had a previous role within a provincial organization (details are not provided to maintain confidentiality of the case and institution) that was not directly related to the postsecondary environment. The knowledge of this team member directed the team towards an external agency that was brought in. This participant noted, “[it] was more that they had community connections and community resources that allowed them to make some more informed decisions” (Interviewee 1). One member described how they personally have a background in the criminal system working directly in violence prevention and how this experience has been valuable to the team.

Team members described that being a member of their institution’s BIT was not solely based upon their positions within the institution but was also a function of their experiences. As one team member described, “people are not always chosen for their positions, sometimes they’re chosen for their skillset not just their job title” (Interviewee 8). One team member interviewed described being invited to be a member of their team because of their subject matter expertise;

So I think the team functions quite well in that way, in that we do bring that different experience. It just so happens that my area of expertise, I’m the [specific academic role within the institution], and so in that [department] my background, my personal training and the portfolio I manage is about [specific subject matter]. (Interviewee 7)

Background that is relevant to aid in the effectiveness of the team goes beyond professional or subject matter experience. Participants discussed the experiences of members who had in a postsecondary residence before, had attended postsecondary institution, or were being of a specific gender were discussed as adding value to the diversity of relevant experiences. One participant discussed the benefit of individual backgrounds is expressed as follows:

I actually believe there’s some strength in having a male and a female if you have a two person team, because there’s barriers or there’s no barriers depending sometimes just on the gender of someone on the team. (Interviewee 8)

The BIT member interviewees described a rich appreciation for the diversity of membership on a team to provide assistance in helping assess and determining appropriate interventions. Members described the importance of disciplinary diversity as well as the background of members as being key components to the effectiveness of BIT work.

5.3.3. Importance of Prior Learning

As was noted in Chapter 4, teams have been in operation for different lengths of time, ranging from 3 to 11 years. The length of time in operation as well as the case volume can differ between teams. The team members interviewed often referred to the important role that previous experience with similar cases had on the success of an intervention. One team member succinctly described the important role that prior team experience has on a team and stated “we learn so much by just accumulating that knowledge over time” (Interviewee 7). The opportunity for team members to learn from previous cases was an important factor for effectiveness of outcomes for those interviewed. As interviewee 6 shared

As we do this more, and so we're really obviously young in this field having only had this committee for, since 2009 and I've only been on it for a few years. I think we're getting more confident in some things where we were a little bit hesitant before.

Team members described how the actions and resulting outcomes that came from previous cases provided key learning for the team in future actions. One team member discussed how actions in a similar case were different based upon unsuccessful outcomes of a previous case:

I think looking back, we didn't move as definitively as we should have with that. That was one of our earlier cases; that was probably 8-9 months ago. I think at this point, we're looking at it going, we would like to have that as a do over. I think we've also learned from it. We've had other files; we just had a file, a couple, 2 weeks ago that looked at lot like it, that we moved much more definitively on. (Interviewee 2)

Team members were asked to describe interventions that they would classify as unsuccessful. When describing prior perceived failures, often the team member would identify how the team learned from the unsuccessful case. For example, one team member stated:

I think that in that earlier case that I'd like to have back, I think the rest of the team probably gave me too much leeway. If I think about other files, where we've had, where we've made little mistakes along the way, it's because we gave each other too much leeway and not challenged each other enough. (Interviewee 2)

Team members described that having had exposure to similar types of cases provided them with more confidence and knowledge in order to make better decisions. Team members also described that the experience of working together to make team decisions can be challenging; therefore, there is a benefit in the team developing working practices that facilitate team decision-making. For example, one team member described the importance of prior team by stating "I think once we worked through it, we kind of replicated it again, but the first time through we really struggled" (Interviewee 7). Overall, the longer a BIT has conducted the work the more the team can refine their ability to do the work successfully.

5.4. Experiences of Being a Team Member

While members of BIT teams described the process as effective, this research also sought to understand what was the experience of individuals of participating on BITs as an intervention strategy. How interviewees described their experience of teams was analyzed to gain a comprehensive understanding of how describe the experience of being a team member. Although participation on such a team was not necessarily the purpose for which the member was hired, what became clear through the interviews is that team members found their participation on the team to be mainly a positive experience. Despite the overall positive experience as a team member, interviewees did identify certain negative impacts they encountered as a result of work conducted on a BIT. How participating on a team impacted team members was well stated when Interviewee 7 said:

I have overall found it to be a very positive role for myself. I enjoy the work, I enjoy the team problem solving that occurs. And, although it's not pleasant stuff to work through these conflicts, usually there are conflicts, that's never pleasant work, but its really important work.

Participants described elements of their experiences serving on BITs in positive and/or negative expressions of the impact to them personally or professionally. Personal impacts included elements that affected them as an individual as compared to

professional impacts, which were elements that had a connection to participants' work within the institution. Table 5.7 summarizes the themes that emerged within these four categories of experiences.

Table 5.7 *Summary of Interviewee's Experiences*

Experiences	Personal	Professional
Positive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoyment – an expression of joy as a result of participation • Enrichment – a sense of pride for making a positive and meaningful contribution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team of Peers – a sense of camaraderie with trusted group of colleagues • Skills and Knowledge – appreciation for developing new skills that aid in their day-to-day work • Job Fulfillment – an expression greater appreciation for their role within the institution
Negative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear/Stress – a sense of pressure and awareness of risk if wrong decision is made • Team Issues – how differing opinions can cause discord among team members • Skewed Perceptions – learning about the most concerning of behaviours can result in team members forgetting that most people are not in stages of distress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workload – increased time pressures to complete behavioural intervention team tasks regardless of existing work expectations

5.4.1. Positive Impacts

Team members interviewed were not asked directly if they believed their experiences had been positive or negative in order not to lead the participants. For this reason, it was extremely noticeable that all members described how being a team member was a positive experience for them. A strong theme that team members identified were the positive personal impacts as well as clear professional benefits.

5.4.1.1. Personal

The positive personal impacts of team membership were evident across all interviewees, regardless of institutional role, years of professional experience, size of institution, or who served as chair. The analysis discovered that positive impacts were described in two categories: enjoyment and enrichment. Interviewees overwhelmingly described the experience of being a team member as something that they enjoyed, and all team members used nearly the same wording to describe their positive experiences. For example, four interviewees stated, “I enjoy the work” (Interviewees 2, 4, 6, and 7) or used a similar term such as “positive” (Interviewees 6 and 11), “lovely” (Interviewee 1) or simply “great” (Interviewee 3). What was equally evident was that members also clearly stated that they found the work enriching and worthwhile. Members described BIT work as important and were proud to participate. Participants made many statements to describe this sense of positive enrichment, such as, “I think its important work I contribute and gain from it personally” (Interviewee 1). One interviewee provided a rich context as to why they found the work enriching:

I know that we're the home of red tape and policy and conflict and I think that sometimes it's just trying to help people to resolve some of those issues and help young people make their way in a more positive manner, and so for me it's - I just find it very intriguing work, and I think that it really gives us an opportunity to have a positive experience in the prevention of major problems at a universities. (Interviewee 4)

The universal description of team membership as being a positive personal experience demonstrated that interviewees appreciated being able to participate in the work. In addition, participants reported being a team member had positive professional impacts.

5.4.1.2. Professional

Team membership provided individuals with positive impacts for their professional roles both within the institution and for their careers. The positive professional impacts were described to have occurred in three distinct ways: team of peers, new skills or knowledge, and job fulfilment. The first way that team members described having professionally benefited was from being part of a team of peers who add value to their existing role within the institution. For example, Interviewee 1 stated that their role was the least senior within the team. Despite the seniority difference, this interviewee found comfort in having a team of people to call upon for support as well as

a sense that the team appreciates the individual's professional experience at the institution. This participant stated

It also makes it good to go to that table to feel like other people are also feeling the same way when we're like 'what is going on?' It's not just me that's wondering, you know, what's in the water this week and other people are feeling the same way. (Interviewee 1)

Another team member stated, "you know, I think it's created a community of peers for me" (Interviewee 5). Participants found the strong connection, or trust, that they have with their fellow team members to positively impact their work. A clear description of the positive professional impact was evident in the following participant statement:

Not only that, but we've intentionally created that relationship outside of the [team name] room, as well. We go for lunch together. We've done trainings together. We do fun things that bond and unify us. We [participate in activities associated with work]. We try, and it's more than the files. It's about having that relationship, so that when things go really and ethically bad, we know that we can trust each other. (Interviewee 2)

The work of BITs is unique and participants demonstrated that having a team of peers who they can trust and who can understand their responsibilities has added value to their work within the institution.

Another positive professional impact participants discussed was the new skills or knowledge that team members gained and been able to use within their professional careers. The knowledge can be as simple as "it also is really positive to find out what's going on in our community" (Interviewee 1). It was also the opportunity to gain new knowledge: "I certainly learn something from them [team members] and I certainly appreciate that" (Interviewee 5). Team members also provided direct acknowledgement of the skills that they learned as part of serving on the team that in turn have directly benefited their work:

I'm gaining skills in conflict resolution and some creative problem solving that, in my day work, I mean that's just constant for [their position]. You're constantly trying to solve problems. They should really write that into the job description! And, so it gives me a broader perspective to see you know, the benefit of working with the team and the multidisciplinary perspectives, I can apply that in my day-to-day work in smaller more run of the mill conflicts and issues that arise. (Interviewee 7)

Interviewee 2 described the skills gained by participating on a BIT as relevant for them and their future career goals:

I think, I'm professionally, this is an experience that I know will help me in the future. Having this skill set, having this background, is something that, it's not like it's dropping in demand across our industry. I know that will be valuable.

All three of those interviewed who were not the leader of their teams identified skills that they have gained while only one individual who served as chair described gaining skills as a positive benefit.

The final positive professional impact expressed by team members described how the work on the BIT provided team members with a greater sense of fulfilment within their existing jobs within the institution. Half of those interviewed described how participation on the team gave them an opportunity to gain and utilize a skill set that they may not have acquired within their regular work. In order to help ensure confidentiality the named skill set is not quoted; however, as one team member described, "I wouldn't be able to do some of the [skill set] I enjoy, so if anything it provides a really great work life, work balance for myself" (Interviewee 5). Another team member appreciated that their day-to-day work addresses behaviours once they are a problem, whereas as a BIT member, "I find it very satisfying because it really gets down to the root of what I believe with my [current role] hat on, that we can resolve these problems before they become major issues" (Interviewee 4). Of the four interviewees who described the work as fulfilling, three were from large (greater than 10,000 FTE student body) institutions (n=5) whereas only 1 was from a smaller (less than 10,000 FTE student body) institution (n=3). While the analysis did not provide information as to why this difference exists, it is further evidence that the size of an institution has a potential impact on BIT members and is worth further investigation.

5.4.2. Negative Impacts

While team members were able to clearly articulate how participating as a member of a BIT provides them with positive personal and professional benefits, they also articulated ways that they were negatively impacted both personally and professionally. Once again, interviewees were not directly asked if or how they were

negatively impacted in order to avoid leading participants to particular responses. Despite not being asked directly, analysis of interviews data found that all interviewees described at least one negative personal impact and 62.5% discussed adverse impacts to them professionally.

5.4.2.1. Personal

The work on a BIT team involves assessing information regarding behaviours that have the potential for violence, and the team works collaboratively to determine how to best intervene. Interviewees' discussion of their work included references to the negative ways the work impacted them personally. The descriptions of negative personal impacts were grouped into three themes: fear and stress, interpersonal team issues, and skewed perceptions. As discussed in Chapter 4, the types of behaviours that are brought to BITs to address can pose a significant risk of violence or harm. Addressing these types of behaviours does have an impact on team members, as 62.5% of those interviewed indicated that this work has caused them fear or stress. In relating their experiences, participants articulated how they experienced stress and fear as a result of the perception of pressure to make the important decisions regarding situations that pose a significant risk to others. For example, one team member described this personal impact as follows:

I guess the second thing is it can be hard. You feel this huge sense of responsibility in making these decisions because your typical cases are either somebody that's threatening to kill themselves or somebody that's threatening to kill somebody else. That's a pretty serious matter to be dealing with and, you know, if you make the wrong decision it can have pretty serious consequences. And a lot of these have their roots in some pretty sad stories and pretty sad background once you dig into it and you hear people's stories. So it's not fun sometimes and there's a big responsibility that you kind of bear to protect the community. (Interviewee 3)

One team member spoke of “[...] the downside, the time and energy and the sort of emotional toll, it's not like ‘yay we have a [team] meeting today’” (Interviewee 6). The degree of negative personal impact is clearly evident in the following team member statement:

The stress causes me concern. As much as I'd love to leave a lot of this at the office, there's students who I know are walking around our campus, who, either we've dealt with, I don't feel like there's any whom we've dealt

with, who are a danger to the community, but I know that there's people who we don't know about. It's one of those things that you can't un-know what you already know. Having seen some of the stuff that is out there. I know we've got bad people on our campus and every campus does. You just try to push that outside and do what's in front of you for the day. ... sometimes I wake up in the middle of the night, a little bit stressed about this file or that file. (Interviewee 2)

Those who described the stress they feel as a team member were often serving as the chair of their team. A total of 62.5% of those who serve a chair role (n=5) described the experience as stressful as compared to 33.3% of those who do not hold a chair role (n=3). As the chair has a leadership role within the BIT, it is reasonable to understand why these members described experiences of stress associated with the work more so than those who did not have the same level of responsibility.

Other negative personal impacts that team members experienced were themed as interpersonal frustrations, which can occur as part of the team decision-making process. A total of 62% of team members gave examples of circumstances involving team disagreement, which they described as unpleasant experiences for them personally. As one team member related; "the experience has at times had been quite challenging personally, to advocate for my point of view when sometimes everybody around the team has a different perspective" (Interviewee 7). Interpersonal challenges are described as a function of team decision-making practices. The high stakes of making decisions about community member safety made the description of the frustration more poignant. As one member stated,

You know, to think of these teams as a labour of love, right? And if they can think of it as a labour of love, like it will certainly be that much more enjoyable in some ways, despite the fact that we talk about difficult situations and tricky situations. (Interviewee 5)

A clear description of the interpersonal frustrations helped further understand how interpersonal interactions frustrated team members;

The experience has at times had been quite challenging personally, to advocate for my point of view when sometimes everybody around the team has a different perspective. I think in some of your materials you were asking about like how do you get to a decision? Well sometimes, sometimes that's not a very smooth process. We do work towards consensus, and usually we do get consensus, but sometimes that's a painful, it takes a lot of painful conversations to get there. And so that's

challenging as an individual sometimes someone that is sometimes [in a position] to speak up for their own perspective kind of thing, or kind of confused by, okay we have three or four different perspectives on the table. ... I don't know the right answer. I don't know what we should do! And just sort of persevering through the conversations. (Interviewee 7)

While working with a diverse team was viewed as the main rationale for why the team is effective at assessing problematic behaviour, the process of participating in team-based decision-making was referred to, at times, as negatively impacting team members. When considering those team members statements, 100.0% of participants who were not in chair a role ($n = 3$) described these interpersonal team issues as negative, whereas 20.0% of those serving as chair ($n = 5$) identified the same impact. This demonstrates that those team members who are not responsible for leading the team discussion experience more negative impacts with the interpersonal frustrations associated with decision-making processes than those serving as chair. While this research did not provide specific insight into why team members are more susceptible to negative impacts of team dynamics, it may be a function of the role of the chair. When a team decides to take an action that may be counter to the recommendations of team members. The chair role may not present their perspectives or assessment and thus may not be as affected when a decision as it was not in contradiction to their original plan. Thus a team member may find it challenging when a team decides to take actions for which they are not in total agreement.

The final negative personal impact discussed was that exposure to only negative types of behaviours discussed as part of the BIT teamwork had at times skewed team members' perceptions of the institutional population. A quarter of those interviewed described that dealing with the problematic behaviours has meant that the person focuses more on the negative situations occurring. Interviewee 1 described it as follows: "I think sometimes my perception of our student body is heightened because all of the escalated cases come to me and I forget that most people are doing fine." Another member provided this description:

So the fact that we invest this enormous amount of time in these certain students does not imply that generally we have a bad student population, right? Because if you really think about it, you know, these six people that we're dealing with are not representative of [the institutional population of] other students that are here on the campus. And so you can't let it cloud you that way and sometimes you know some of these problems can, right?

Like you know you feel a little bit depressed about those things.
(Interviewee 3)

Participation in BITs does have a negative impact on members, whether it is personally or professionally. The majority of the adverse impacts stem from the pressure associated with the high-risk nature of the behaviours addressed and the decisions made as part of the work.

5.4.2.2. Professional

The final way team members referred to negative professional impacts was raised by most of interviewees. They discussed the time needed to be a member of a BIT took time away from their main institutional role. Interviewees explained that as a team member they must respond immediately when called upon to conduct the work, regardless of the existing workload in their day-to-day institutional roles. One team member described it as:

Well when it's very busy with the team, it negatively affects my job [Laughs]. I just can't get stuff done right? Like a 'oh god I just pushed that back'. Sometimes there's a little bit of stress involved with the, the stuff that we're working on. (Interviewee 8)

Another team member described the time pressures not in terms of the participation in the meetings, but rather the tasks that are assigned as a result of the meetings.

Interviewee 2 described these extra tasks as a challenge:

The other challenge that I'm having, personally, is that the student, the behavioural intervention side is only a portion of my portfolio. Keeping all these files up to date, keeping them maintained, putting accurate notes in them, attaching the right electronic communications to them is a job in-and-of itself. It's supposedly 10% of my job. It's just not happening.

When considering the time constraints that negatively impact members, 80.0 % of those who served in leadership roles within their team ($n = 5$) described overtly expressed the issue as compared to 33.3% of those who did not hold a leadership role. This indicated that those serving in a leadership roles experience a greater sense pressure on their time associated with their work on the team.

5.5. Summary

Chapter 4 provided an overview of findings on the use of BIT teams by Canadian institutions as a method to address PSB. This provided evidence that almost three-quarters of Canadian institutions sampled have adopted a form of multidisciplinary teams to address at-risk behaviours. Canadian teams have an average of 6.4 members and are most often lead by a member from the student affairs division or co-lead with a member who has responsibility for campus safety services. Teams are most often meeting on an as needed basis to conduct core functions necessary to assess at-risk or worrisome behaviours. While most team members indicated that they received some form of training as a member of a multidisciplinary team, there were differences in the types and satisfaction with the training they received. It is important to note that the size of an institution plays a significant role in the likelihood of an institution having implemented a team as the larger the institution the more likely they are to have a team.

Chapter 5 presented the findings from all three stages of the research to provide insight into the experience of team members who served on BITs across Canada. The results of the Stage 1 and 2 surveys coupled with the interviews of eight team members demonstrated how BITs are overwhelmingly considered to be an effective way to address PSBs as a result of the multidisciplinary teams that provide the necessary experience to achieve successful interventions. Team members provided a robust overview and reported that their work is challenged by the degree of complexity of cases that are rife with legal and policy expectations. Teams described how they struggle with establishing suitable processes to sufficiently address their unique institutional characteristics, which further complicates their BIT work. Despite the work providing additional stress and pressure on team members, overall participants described the experience as enjoyable and team members expressed a sense of fulfilment for serving on teams that conduct important work for institutions.

The following two chapters will discuss the findings from this research in relation to the existing literature regarding the subject of multidisciplinary team use in higher education as a violence prevention model and the experiences of those who participated as team members. Chapter 6 will specifically compare and contrast the current study's findings with those from the American research that this study replicated. The findings

and discussion will provide a contextual understanding of the use and function of BITs in Canada as compared to the American context. The results will be discussed in relation to implications for Canadian administrative practices as well as future research. Chapter 7 considers the findings of the experiences of team members in conducting the work of violence prevention and the perceptions of the effectiveness of teams at achieving this mandate. The experiences will be discussed using the SEM (Bronfenbrenner, 1977) to provide a framework to consider how these results offer insight to develop an understanding of the operational practices that are relevant for Canadian higher education administrators in the use of BIT teams as a method to reduce postsecondary violence in Canada.

Chapter 6. Comparison of Multidisciplinary Team Use in Canada and the United States – Findings and Implications

As highlighted in Chapter 2, no research was found that provided insight into the use of multidisciplinary teams in Canada as a mechanism to prevent campus violence. To date, all research that measured the use and practices of such teams had been conducted in the United States, leaving a gap in understanding in Canada. This research adapted the survey materials of two previous research studies conducted in the United States (Gamm, et al., 2011; Van Brunt, et al., 2012) to conduct comparable research in Canada. The 2012 NaBITA survey questions were adapted, along with the survey questions used by Gamm, et al, (2011) to develop for this research. Since the time of this research being conducted in 2012 to 2013, NaBITA has conducted additional surveys in 2014 and 2016 with slight alterations to the questions. The findings of this research, as outlined in Chapter 4, provided an understanding of the use of BIT, which helps answer the Research Sub-Question 1: “To what degree do institutions use behavioural intervention teams?” However, to understand the implications for these findings, it is important to contrast the results with those from the United States research. Recognizing the use of BIT teams in Canada as compared to the United States set a foundation on which to answer Research Sub-Question 2: “What institutional variables, such as size, location, provision of on-campus housing, or type of institution, influence intervention practices?”.

The comparison of research conducted in the United States to the findings of this Canadian study served as a mechanism to explore the degree to which Canada has implemented multidisciplinary and highlighted any differences in how the work is conducted. The comparison of Canadian and United States results offered greater insight into the BIT process and has implications for operations and practices for Canadian institutions’ use of multidisciplinary teams. This chapter will discuss the implications by focusing on the use of multidisciplinary teams in relation to operational activities such as name, membership, leadership, meeting frequency, functions, behaviours addressed, information and record keeping, and training.

6.1. Team Use

One of the core questions of this research sought to understand whether or not multidisciplinary teams had been adopted as a practice in Canada. The research found that 73.1% of Canadian teams who participated in this study had implemented a multidisciplinary team. Table 6.1 provides a comparison between the three surveys and highlights that the use in Canada is substantially lower than in the United States. However, institutions with BITs in both Canada and the United States have been in operation for approximately the same length in time. Interestingly, the 2016 NaBITA survey reported on the length of time teams had been in use and found teams had been in operation for approximately 6 years (Van Brunt, 2016). It is important to note that the response rates of the NaBITA surveys, (2012 with over 800 respondents, 2014 with over 500 respondents, and 2016 with over 300 respondents) are unknown (Van Brunt, 2016, Van Brunt et al., 2012, 2014) which may represent why the average years in operation in 2016 was not representative of the survey being conducted 4 years later.

Table 6.1 *Comparison of Team Use and Years in Operation*

Team Information	Canada (N = 52)	Gamm et al (2011) (N = 181)	NaBITA (2012) (N = over 800)
Percentage of Respondents with Teams	73.1%	96.7%	92.0%
Average years in Operations	4.28	4.26	54% less than 5 years

In an effort to appreciate why Canadian institutions have adopted multidisciplinary teams to address PSB, this study included a question from the surveys conducted in the United states by Gamm, et al. (2011); Van Brunt, et al. (2012) that asked to what extent participants agreed that their team was implemented as a way to reduce the liability-based high-profile acts of campus violence. A total of 71% of SSAOs and 81% of team members in Canada agreed with this statement, as compared to 38% of American teams who agreed with this statement (Gamm et al., 2011). The literature review demonstrated there have been significantly more high-profile incidents of campus violence in the United States as compared to Canada. As American incidents of campus violence are often reported in Canadian media and news, it is unknown if the American

incidents of campus violence have influenced the decision of institutions to implement BITs.

As part of the analysis of this research that was not available for the other two surveys, it was found that the size of an institution played a significant role in whether or not the Canadian institution had implemented a BIT. This meant that the larger the student body the more likely the institution was to have a multidisciplinary team. Therefore, it would be of value if researchers who conducted studies in the United States analyzed the data to determine whether or not the size of the institution influenced the presence of a team. Regardless, as BIT teams are recommended as an effective strategy to address campus violence (Sokolow, et al., 2014), further efforts are needed to understand why smaller institutions are not adopting this best practice. One can make many assumptions as to why smaller institutions have not implemented BITs, such as lack of resources, being unfamiliar with best practices, or lack of perceived risk of campus violence; however, more research is needed to understand the rationale for this trend. An American study looked at threat assessment team use in community colleges and noted, “campus leadership need not wait for an incident to occur on their campus before putting prevention efforts in place” (Bennett & Bates, 2015 Fall, p. 14). Regardless of reason, this research shows that Canadian institutions have implemented multidisciplinary teams proportionally less than their counterparts in the United States and a focus on Canadian smaller institutions and their respective barriers for implementation is recommended for further study.

6.2. Team Name

As noted in Chapter 2, the name chosen for a team is an important factor in successful operation of the team (Randazzo & Plummer, 2009). This research found that the most common name for Canadian teams included the term *threat assessment* as compared to all NaBITA surveys and the Gamm et al. (2011) survey where the most common name involved the term *behavioural intervention team*. While the recommendations for the team name suggest administrators adopt a name that is relevant for the respective institution, the inclusion of the word threat has been suggested to limit the type of information that a team will receive (Deisinger, et al., 2008). Using the term threat assessment as the name for the team would indicate that

multidisciplinary teams in Canada are operating more as first-generation teams than as second-generation teams “see their role as nominally to address threat and primarily to support and provide resources to students” (Sokolow & Lewis, 2009, p. 69). While the name choice of the majority of teams in Canada may not be aligned with the BIT’s mandate to truly understand if the name is adversely impacting the practices of the team, more information is needed regarding the functions of the team. Comparing the findings of the functions and behaviours addressed by Canadian teams versus those in the United States will be discussed later in this chapter.

6.3. Team Leadership

Leadership of teams is an important consideration, as the leader can have a significant impact on the direction and functioning of the group. Acknowledging the important role that the leader plays on the team, it was of note that the division of student affairs most often serves as the BIT leader in both Canada and the United States. This consistency demonstrates a clear goal for all teams to focus on students, as the expertise of student affairs would focus on student needs. Having the SSAO as the leader is the main recommendation for leadership of second-generation BITs as the role most often has authority over students’ behaviour and the services to support the student (Sokolow, et al., 2014). The findings demonstrate that the majority of teams in Canada align with the best practices. Of interest however, is that this research, especially the interview data, noted a trend of Canadian teams having co-leadership roles between student affairs and safety services. This co-leadership function is described as shared responsibility as a result of the goal of the team being both to prevent violence as well as support students. The joint leadership role was necessary, according to Interviewee 2, as one team may have two different approaches to responding to a presented case:

If there is a credible or valid threat, then it gets pushed off to the [threat assessment] side. At which point, [security services leader title] takes the lead on the response. If there isn't a threat, most of the times we can identify that very quickly, it gets pushed off to the [BIT] side, at which point I become the lead on the file.

Furthermore, Interviewee 6 suggested this dual chair role helps with staff or student issues:

We have kind of a co-chair structure so if we're dealing with a threat associated with a staff member, then our [senior leader] of HR [human resources] is the chair, and if it's a student then I'm [student affairs leader] the chair. But we're both on the committee in either event. It just depends on sort of what the focus is. (Interviewee 6)

The co-leadership model, which was found to be an operational practice in Canada, demonstrates a division of leadership based upon the person being discussed and their role within the institutional community. The exact purpose and impetus of this model was not directly explored within this research, and co-leadership is not noted within the literature as a recommended model. However, best practices suggest institutions amalgamate all threat and risk assessments of all community members under the umbrella of a single team to reduce silos of information (LaBanc & Hemphill, 2015; Randazzo & Plummer, 2009). The co-leadership model could be considered a method of blending the multiple team functions within a singular team while maintaining expertise based upon the nature of the case being considered. Given that multiple teams are not recommended, if necessary, to reduce the margin for error, one key recommendation is for multiple teams is to overlap membership and give teams access to one another's records (Sokolow, et al., 2014). While the co-leadership model may be meeting these requirements further exploration of the rationale and benefits of a co-leadership model is needed to understand the efficacy of this blended leadership model.

6.4. Team Membership

Similar to team leadership, the membership on the team is a relevant factor in the operational practices of multidisciplinary teams. The nature of the team emphasises the need to have a variety of points of view and expertise to achieve the benefit of such teams, both in the information they may have as well as in the knowledge they bring to the team. While team membership can depend on the needs of the team, it is recommended that the team have no more than six to eight members (Sokolow, et al., 2014). This research found that BITs in Canada had an average of 6.4 members, which falls exactly within the recommended range. However, teams in this research ranged in size from three to 11 members, with a median of six. Comparatively, the 2014 NaBITA survey did not specifically note a range of total members, but rather reported that teams had an average of 8.6 members (Van Brunt et al, 2014), which was slightly more than recommended.

Team membership recommendations have suggested implementing an inner circle, or core members, as well as an outer circle of supportive members (Sokolow, et al., 2014). The inner circle should include three main representations. The first is mental health expertise, to represent the needs of the individual at the core of the assessment. The second is safety services, which represent the interests of public safety. The final core group are student affairs professionals, who represent the interests of the institution. The most common members of teams in this Canadian study were counselling services, security services, and student affairs professionals. In comparing the membership between the Canadian participants to the Gamm et al (2011) and NaBITA 2012 surveys (Van Brunt et al., 2012), it is interesting to note that the top four most common members are the same: counselling, security, student affairs, and housing. The fifth most common member in the Canadian sample was health services as compared to academic affairs in both American samples.

In this study, only 24.5% of teams had faculty representation, as compared to 53% in the 2014 NaBITA survey (Van Brunt et al, 2014) and 41.1% in the Gamm et al. (2011) survey. While faculty representation forms part of the outer circle of membership, there is recent evidence to suggest that a faculty perspective provides a relevant point of view for a team. Leuschner, et al. (2017) conducted a large quasi-experiment involving a new method of targeted school violence (secondary school system) risk assessment to over 108 schools, and representing over 9,000 faculty and staff trained in the new process. The results found that faculty increased their skills to identify and address problematic behaviours that could lead to violence. This study demonstrated the importance of training as well as faculty involvement within multidisciplinary teams, as they provide a perspective that is very connected to the students experience within the institution. One interviewee within this Canadian study who represented a faculty perspective described the relevance of faculty's role on the team as:

I feel like I'm contributing that expertise about okay, the student responsibilities, the expectations of a student, you know what has been communicated to the student in terms of policy and process and then I'm the link back to the faculty and the classroom and the classroom environment, that kind of thing for problem solving. And for any of the sort of sanctions or discipline related to, you know a conduct issue, or a threat that has occurred. And that's a unique perspective compared to security or counselling or human resources. (Interviewee 8)

Faculty roles within BITs have not directly been studied in the postsecondary setting. This research found that BITs in Canada have lower representation of faculty members on their teams as compared to those in the United States. Having trained and consistent participation by a faculty member could benefit the overall diversity and breadth of knowledge on the BIT.

6.5. Team Meetings

Stage 2 of this research asked team members how often their respective teams met. Approximately two thirds (62.4%) of team members indicated that the team met on an as-needed basis, as compared to only a quarter (26.4%) that indicated they met weekly. This result showed that Canadian teams that participated in this study tend to meet on an ad hoc basis as compared to American teams. Gamm et al (2011) found that 29% of teams met as needed as compared to 31% that met weekly, and the 2014 NaBITA survey found that only 10% of teams met as-needed, whereas 39% met weekly (Van Brunt et al., 2014). The literature that provides guidance to multidisciplinary team operations boldly stated that teams must meet regularly, regardless of case activity, in order to maintain the skills and trust needed to conduct the work (LaBanc & Hemphill, 2015; Sokolow, et al., 2014; Van Brunt, 2012). Thus, teams that are not meeting regularly lack opportunity to enhance members' skills, which ultimately impacts the growth ability of the team. The teams that employ an as-needed meeting process seem to take a more reactionary approach to the work, as they meet only if behaviours of concern have been identified. As was previously noted, more teams in Canada have adopted the name of threat assessment, which suggests that the work of the team is to address individuals whom pose an identified risk. This approach does not align with the updated role of multidisciplinary teams, whose purpose is to proactively identify and prevent violent behaviours. In considering the team name and meeting approach, a majority of teams are operating in a manner that suggests the team's functions may not align with best practices, which are preventive versus reactive. The functions described by teams provided a greater understanding of the operational practices of BITs; as such, these are discussed in the next section.

6.6. Team Functions

This study intentionally included questions from the Gamm et al.'s (2011) survey that asked participants to select which functions their teams conducted as part of their work. The NaBITA surveys (Van Brunt, 2016; Van Brunt et al., 2014; Van Brunt et al., 2012) did not ask a similar question about functions of the team, and without such questions information gathered would only provide insight into the structure (name, leadership, membership, etc.) of a team and would not offer any data to understand the workings of teams. Including the question in this particular study proved useful, as participants' responses provided further context through which to understand the reactionary approach that was evident in the majority of Canadian teams. Table 6.2 presents the comparison of the question asking about team functions for both survey populations. When contrasting the most prevalent functions between both teams, the reactionary nature of Canadian teams becomes more apparent. The functions where there was a greater than 7% difference between the Canada and the United States are noted in bold within the table. The difference is most apparent in the fact that making referrals is the second most common function of American teams as compared to the sixth most common in Canada. The most common functions identified by Canadian teams are more consistent with those of more specialized threat assessment function, as activities the most common activities centered on assessing at-risk students and responding to threats. The greatest discrepancy between BITs in Canada and United States exists in the role that teams play in serving as a source of information for faculty and staff.

While the results from this study and Gamm et al.'s (2011) survey are not drastically different, they do reinforce the previous data comparison that demonstrates a trend towards Canadian teams serving more of a responsive ad hoc role. The next section provides more insight, as it considers the types of behaviours BITs address.

Table 6.2 *Comparison of Team Functions: Canada and the USA*

What function does your team serve?	Canada n=53	USA * n=175
Assessing at-risk students	100.0%	93.1%
Responding to a crisis that threatens the well-being of a student(s)	96.2%	87.4%
Sharing information among appropriate offices	96.2%	95.4%
Responding to student behaviour that is disruptive to the institution	96.2%	86.3%
Ensuring appropriate follow-through with a student	88.7%	88.0%
Making referrals for students in crisis	83.0%	93.7%
Identifying student behaviours that disrupt the learning environment	69.8%	81.1%
Keeping records on students considered at-risk of who are in crisis	67.9%	75.4%
Serving as a source of information for faculty and staff	58.5%	72.0%
Responding to incidents where the person of concern is a faculty or staff member	50.0%	54.9%
Dealing with students having difficulty academically	11.3%	29.7%

Note* United States results are from Gamm et al (2011)

6.7. Behaviours Addressed

Sokolow et al.'s (2014) *The Book on Behavioural Intervention* identified a non-exhaustive list of 22 types of behaviours that should be reported and assessed by BIT teams. This represents a suggestion that all out-of-the-norm behaviours should be centrally reported so that concerns can be considered and to identify any patterns of behaviour that could enable the BIT to proactively address concerning issues before high-risk threats are present. Table 6.3 offers an overview of the behaviours Canadian and American teams identified as concerns that their team would address in the conducting of their work. While the list did not present a comprehensive list the Canadian responses show that behaviours that pose a potential risk to others as the most common behaviours considered, whereas those that place students in personal risk are less common. The comparison shows that American teams take into consideration more mental health-related behaviours that are pose a concern for the student.

Table 6.3 *Behaviours Addressed*

What behaviours does your team address?	Canada (N = 53)	USA * (N = 175)
Threats of violence to others	94.3%	94.2%
Stalking behaviours	92.5%	83.4%
Inappropriate communications	86.8%	85.7%
Suicidal threats	79.2%	89.1%
Classroom disruption	73.6%	85.1%
Emotional distress	67.9%	90.3%
Diagnosed mental health disorder	50.9%	73.7%
Financial difficulties	18.9%	22.9%
Failing grades	15.1%	28.0%

Note United States results are from Gamm et al (2011)*

Canadian multidisciplinary teams must begin to address a wide array of concerning behaviours to be more aligned with best practices and to address the current needs of the students attending their institutions. A recent Canadian distribution of the National College Health Association (NCHA) highlighted that students experience greater stressors to their mental health and overall wellness (American College Health Association, 2016). With the growing rates depression, anxiety, and severe mental disorders experienced by students, there is a greater likelihood of these behaviours impacting their ability to thrive at the institution an increased potential for disrupting others. Considering that Canadian teams are more inclined to use an ad hoc multidisciplinary team to address a known concern, teams must adapt to serve as a central triage location for out-of-the-norm behaviours to not only assess for risk but also to intervene early and connect students to appropriate resources to prevent further risk from developing. This would enable Canadian teams to move away from being reactionary towards behaviours and to become more proactive in identifying and addressing behaviours.

6.8. Information Collection and Record Keeping

Procedurally, how BIT teams collect information and maintain their records is important to ensure the team is compliant with legal and policy obligations. With

complex privacy regulations (Paludi, 2008) and little to no formal training, teams must struggle to identify the best system for collecting and maintaining information that is relevant to the work conducted as part of the BIT. When comparing this survey data, 90.6% of Canadian BITs sampled keep records, which is very much in line with American research that reported 94% of participants in the Gamm et al. (2011) survey and 85% of teams in the 2014 NaBITA survey (NaBITA, 2014) as keeping records. While it is clear that teams are maintaining records, which is a best practice (Deisinger, et al., 2008) there is little clarity on the exact nature of what information to capture and how to record it effectively. Team members describe how maintaining privacy obligations complicated the benefits and needs of record keeping practices. The challenges and confusion regarding appropriate information collection and recording surfaced as a key area themes described by team members as impacting their BIT experiences; therefore, this subject will be discussed further in the next chapter.

6.9. Team Training

The final operational data that was collected in this study as well as in the American surveys regarded training. In this study, 72% of the teams that participated reported having attended training, which is similar to the Gamm et al. study (2011), which found 67.2% of team members had attended training. However, there were differences in the types of training that team members participated in. For example, in the Gamm et al. (2011) study, the majority of the training attended was considered to be informal and included webinars, books, and presentations. This study found that more than half of Canadian teams that participated had attended formal threat or violence risk assessment training programs such as the CCTA levels 1 and 2 or HCR-20 training. While Canadian teams also participated in less formal training, such as webinars and workshops, there was a greater representation of training in the use of formal assessment tools.

The evolution of BIT teams has resulted in the best practices of the work of violence prevention by conducting team assessment processes that include standardized assessment protocols (Sokolow & Lewis, 2009; Sokolow, et al., 2014). The findings that Canadian teams are attending more professional training aligns with the 2017 study of the 704 participants from 74 Canadian higher education institutions who

attended a violence prevention training seminar (Watt, 2017). The analysis of the feedback forms submitted by those attending was that they were extremely satisfied with the material, but also noted that members identified four remaining training needs. These unmet needs indicated a need to focus training on how the team functions operationally, including procedures and implementation. The unmet operational needs of team members serves to explain why, in this current study, despite 71.7% of teams attending training, only 69.8% were satisfied with the training they had received. As Watt (2017) states “because higher education has sufficiently high rates of violence and high numbers of employees, it is very important that these teams be established, but it equally important that they receive adequate training and support” (p. 55). Given that there are many books and resources that provide guidelines and recommendations for team processes (Deisinger, et al., 2008; LaBanc & Hemphill, 2015; Randazzo & Plummer, 2009; Sokolow, et al., 2014), participants who took part in this study were either not aware of such documents or formalized training needs to be developed.

The work conducted by BIT teams is complex and important and is carried out by team members with different personal and professional backgrounds. The training of team members is a key component to the ability of teams to fulfill their mandates. In the analysis of the 2016 NaBITA survey, it was found that training was a weakness, challenge, and important factor of overall team effectiveness (Van Brunt & Murphy, 2016), which aligned with the findings from the qualitative stages of this research. A study that considered six teams at six different schools in the state of New England found a positive correlation between members who attended professional threat assessment training and team members’ confidence in using assessment techniques (Graney, 2014). The evidence is clear that training is an imperative part of a team’s effectiveness, including the findings of this Canadian study. Therefore, it is recommended that institutions work to further establish training protocols within their operational structure, as it is necessary for team effectiveness.

6.10. Recommendations for Practice and Future Research

This study was designed to provide a snapshot on the degree to which BITs had been implemented in Canada. Adapting questions from prior surveys conducted in the United States provided an opportunity to compare and contrast the Canadian and

American findings. To continue to understand the trends in BIT use and functions in Canada, conducting research on a bi-annual basis, much like the NaBITA surveys, would establish a mechanism to monitor trends in the use of BITs. The research should also be expanded to include all French speaking institutions as several historic incidents of campus violence in Canada have occurred in the province of Quebec. Additionally, this research focused on institutions that have established BIT teams and did not explore the rationale or experiences of institutions that lacked these teams. As this study found that the size of an institution plays a significant role in whether or not an institution has implemented a team, further research is needed to understand why smaller institutions are less likely to have implemented a team.

Another area where further inquiry would be helpful is exploring multidisciplinary team leadership. Many Canadian teams who participated in this study are using a co-chair leadership model, most often between the student affairs and safety divisions. This represents a model that deviates from the best practices established within the literature, which suggests that the student affairs division have the sole leadership responsibility (Sokolow & Lewis, 2009). The discrepancy of Canadian practices from the American recommended leadership framework warrant further research to explore the rationale and effectiveness of this leadership model as compared to the singular SSAO leadership model. This would provide guidance to Canadian teams to help understand the best leadership for their BITs that explores both institutional and personal expertise.

This study found that Canadian teams are most often meeting on an as-needed basis, a practice that suggests teams are serving as a method to respond to concerning behaviours as compared to a method of early identification and prevention, which is the recommended best practice (Sokolow & Lewis, 2009; Sokolow, et al., 2014). The practice of meeting on an as-needed basis demonstrates that teams are missing an opportunity to gain additional confidence and skills that are fostered and developed through meeting more regularly. Team members would benefit from establishing a weekly meeting schedule, as this would provide an opportunity to address some of the team process concerns members identified experiencing. Teams would have an opportunity hone their skills, conduct tabletop exercises, and support the development of stronger team dynamics, as they become more familiar and develop trust with other team members. In addition, this would allow the team to access training options for the

team that not are based upon violence risk assessment training and instead focus on addressing any team skill deficits that are noticed as a result of ongoing meetings.

Training that includes operational team practices within formalized assessment training would serve to provide a formalized mechanism to address both training needs. While this may solve the training needs of a team just being implemented, it does not serve to address the ongoing professional development of teams or when new team members join the team. NaBITA attempts to fill this gap by providing written and workshop-based training opportunities for team members (National Behavioral Intervention Team Association, n.d.); however, this organization is American, and the United States has a different education system, with different laws and types of campus violence. As such, training offered in by an American organization is not always directly transferrable to the Canadian higher education context. To address this gap in resources, Canadian-specific training materials for BITs are needed to support the training and skill development of team members which could include knowledge areas such as: provincial privacy laws, Canadian legal context, and Canadian-specific simulation scenarios. As many of the operational resources provided by NaBITA are transferrable to the Canadian system, it would be beneficial to introduce Canadian specific content within training materials and courses to better support the operation of BITs in Canada.

6.11. Summary

This chapter compared and contrasted the findings of this Canadian study with the findings from the American research upon which this inquiry was based (Gamm et al., 2011; Van Brunt et al., 2012). This comparison demonstrated that Canada has adopted the practice of multidisciplinary teams to address campus violence, but at a slower pace than their American counterparts. While teams are being utilized in Canada, the processes that teams have implemented are not as evolved as the American second-generation teams. Canadian teams who participated in this research show that many institutions have adopted a threat assessment, or reactionary process, which does not fulfill the true mandate of a multidisciplinary team. For this reason, Canadian teams would benefit from accessing more current resources and training to

ensure that operational practices and mandates better align with best practices in the literature.

The next chapter will discuss the findings of the experiences of Canadian team members' participation in a multidisciplinary team. The social ecological model (SEM) (Bronfenbrenner, 1977) will be used to contextualize the experience of team members in relation to their environments from the intrapersonal, interpersonal, institutional, community, and policy levels. The nature of interventions, the limitations to success, and overall effectiveness will be described through the various social structures in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the experience of team members of this work. The cross-sectional understanding of team members' experiences provides a context through which to describe implications for practice, policy, and future research in the area of BIT teams use in Canada.

Chapter 7. Discussion and Implications of Team Member Experiences of Membership and Effectiveness

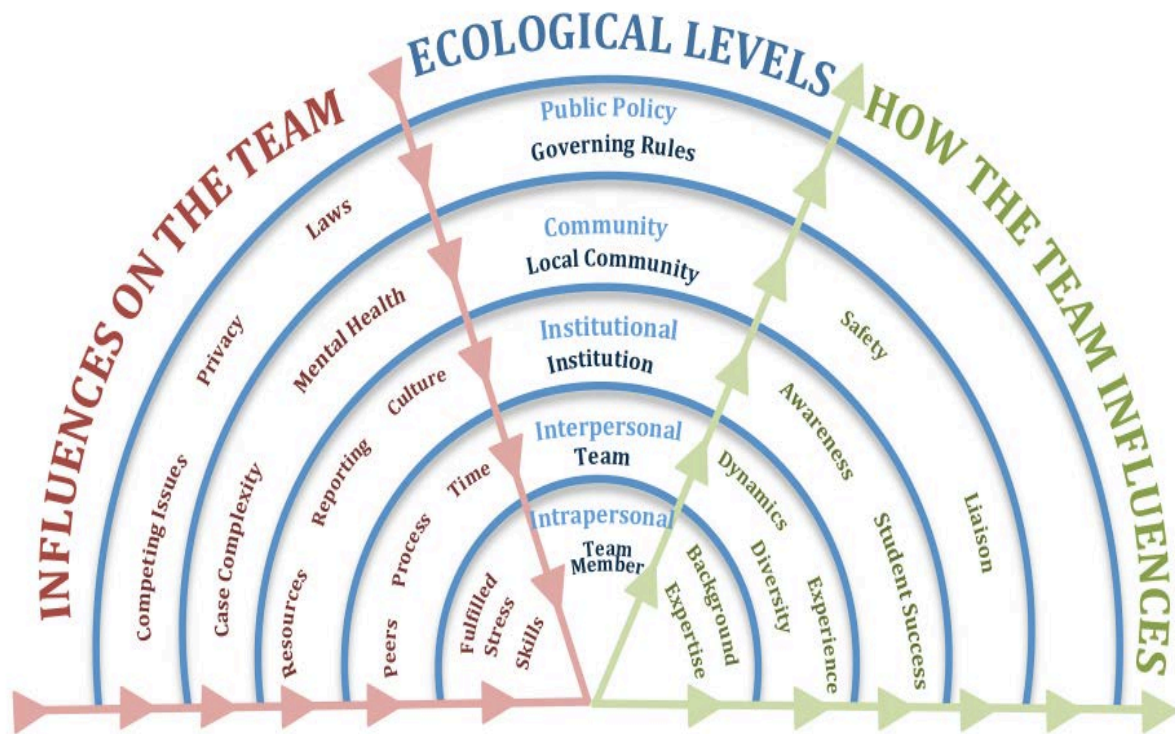
Violence prevention, when approached using a social-ecological framework, suggests that all social levels of an environmental system must be attended to in order to be effective in addressing the complicated nature of violence (Krug, et al., 2002). The model is an appropriate way to research violence prevention as social-ecological theory is rooted in the perspective that people's behaviours are the result of the interconnected and complex relationships of settings that govern their actions (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Hawe, 2017). The use of the SEM in violence prevention research considers known violence risk factors within the various levels of social systems in order to assess and determine appropriate intervention strategies to prevent violence from that given environmental perspective (Krug, et al. 2002). For example, youth with little supervision and social connections are a known risk factor for violence; therefore, a community could implement an afterschool program (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2015). As such, SEM provides a framework to understand the nuances of how an individual is affected and also affects the various social environments of concern.

This chapter discusses the experiences of team members at each social environmental system level and how such experiences inform the implications for practice, policy, and future directions in research. The SEM structure provides a framework to discuss the findings to the main research question of this study: "What is the experience of members of behavioural intervention teams that address problematic student behaviour within Canadian higher education?" The model provides a way to illustrate the barriers and limitations that BIT members experience and the degree to which members view BITs as effective, which were both sub-questions of this research.

This research used a multi-staged mixed methods approach to understand the experiences of BIT members in completing their violence prevention role within institutions of higher education in Canada. Krug et al., (2002) suggested that it is best to conduct violence prevention activities at all social-ecological levels, which is applicable to BITs as teams operate at all social levels. While a SEM model could be used to look at the intervention activities conducted at all levels as a part of a BIT's violence

prevention work, to date this research has not been conducted. Therefore, the SEM model was adapted to understand the experiences of BIT members within the social-ecological structures within which they conduct their work. Figure 7.1 offers a visual representation of the social-ecological levels within which BITs operate, how environmental systems influence team members (red arrows), and conversely how the work of team members impacts the various environmental systems (green arrows). Each of the ecological level is discussed and describes the themes that were found within each category.

Figure 7.1 Influence of BIT team members on social-ecological system of higher education



This chapter uses the social-ecological structures (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; McLeroy, et al., 1988) to present how environmental levels are influenced by the work of teams and how the work of teams is impacted by the given environmental system. For the purposes of this research, the first environmental level, the intrapersonal level, represents the individual team member. The second level, the interpersonal level, consists of the whole team as well members' respective roles within the institution. The third system level is the institutional level, which represents the institution within which

the team operates. The next level discussed is the community level, comprises the local area or city within which the institution is located. The final environmental level is the public policy level, which represents the societal rules and regulations that govern the work of teams, such as laws and educational structures. To provide a comprehensive overview of how BITs operate within the social-ecological network of relationships, the perceived effectiveness of team members is discussed. This provides a holistic understanding of the needs, implications, and future areas of research when considering the use of BITs in Canadian higher education.

It bears noting that the literature regarding threat assessment or violence prevention teams within higher education is almost exclusively represented by reports and books that suggest best practices for teams that are derived from very little peer-reviewed scholarship. While reference documents are most often uniform in the content there remains little evidence-based research to support the recommended practices of multidisciplinary teams. It is for this reason that research such as this study is necessary, as it will provide evidence to substantiate (or not) the claims and recommendations put forward within such documents.

7.1. Intrapersonal Influences

According to the SEM, the intrapersonal level signifies the “characteristics of the individual such as knowledge, attitudes, behaviour, self-concept, skills, etc” (McLeroy, et al., 1988, p. 355). In this research, the intrapersonal level consists of the individuals who serve on multidisciplinary teams and the various backgrounds that they have. The analysis of the experiences of those team members gathered through Stages 2 and 3 of this study provided insight into how team members described their experiences as being impacted by the social-ecological system and how they in turn influence the environment within which team members conduct their work.

7.1.1. How team members influence the system

The influence of any team member on the social system begins with the rationale as to why they were chosen to be a member of the specific team. The extensive literature on team membership suggests that teams select members based upon how

their skills would benefit the work of team (Deisinger, et al., 2008; Randazzo & Plummer, 2009; Sokolow & Lewis, 2009; Sokolow, et al., 2014). While teams are encouraged to develop their own team based upon the needs of the institution, the benefits of having specific expertise represented on a team are often discussed in this same literature and were directly spoken about in this research by SSAOs and other team members. For example, this research found that student affairs staff are often on teams and frequently serve in leadership roles of the majority of teams. It is suggested that student affairs provide benefit to a team as

In cases involving students of concern, deans of students and/or student conduct administrators offer the ability to access student conduct records to determine if the student has a history of disruptive behavior or other disciplinary issues. They also have expertise in the campus policies around the student disciplinary process to make sure the team does not run counter to campus policies. (Dunkle & Mistler, 2014, p. 134).

At the core of the design of BIT team structure is the importance that the multidisciplinary team membership brings, which was a factor found in this research.

Team members in this research discussed the value of having diverse membership and expertise on the team. When discussing the effectiveness of their team and the successful interventions implemented, team members pointed to the *expertise* of specific team members as being an important factor to the success. For example, participants noted the importance of having a counsellor on the BIT, not to provide information regarding a particular person, but rather to contribute subject matter expertise in mental health. The crucial role of mental health professionals is overtly expressed within the various guideline documents for BITs. The importance of the diversity in expertise of individual members influences team members' abilities to meet their objectives at all social structures. This is especially true when considering a mental health professional with forensic risk assessment knowledge, as such a team member would bring a level of expertise to a subject area that is often challenging for BITs. Having a member with previous experience in conducting violence risk assessments in a community setting has also been found to be a positive recommendation (Leuschner, et al., 2017).

Within this study, team members also described the unforeseen benefits that resulted not from the expertise people brought as a result of their positions within the

institution, but from their past personal or professional *backgrounds*. For example, one team member described how a team member of theirs had worked within a specific government organization (not identified as the level of specificity could identify the institution) that is not commonly associated with higher education. The knowledge the person was able to provide about the government organization enabled the institution to access a previously unknown community resource that was pivotal to the success of the decided intervention.

As Deisinger, et al. (2008) states “Each member of the TAM [threat assessment management] team has his/her own area of expertise, and makes a unique contribution to the Team” (p. 41). The expertise and background of team members has a large influence on the social structures of violence prevention work in postsecondary campuses. Membership on Canadian BITs seem to be align with best practices (Deisinger, et al., 2008; Sokolow, et al., 2014); however, further research, in both Canada and United States, is necessary to understand the validity of the recommended team membership. Until such research is conducted, teams must choose participation carefully to ensure that the expertise is available to make the appropriate decision. For example, institutions with satellite campuses within different communities would be adverse to make decisions regarding a case involving another campus without representation from that community to ensure institutional knowledge and context are fully represented. When administrators are establishing teams it is critical to form a core group of individuals who are able to learn from previous cases and benefit from their diverse expertise while limiting the size of the group to six to eight members (Sokolow, et al., 2014).

7.1.2. How team members are influenced by their environments

Despite the plethora of documents that exist to provide suggested operational practices and procedures for multidisciplinary teams, it is surprising that there is no research on the impact that such work has on the individuals. Therefore, this research provides a new lens through which to consider the work of BIT teams and the impact of the work on individual team members. An overwhelmingly positive finding of this study was that team members described the work as enjoyable and *fulfilling*. This is not surprising, as the work conducted by a BIT is to intervene in life safety situations which

aligns with how others describe the work, such as: “doing behavioural intervention right can save lives, save money, save time, and save reputations” (Sokolow, et al., 2014, p. 2). Overall, team members described the work positively, despite their experiences of significant negative personal impacts as a result of the work.

Thinking of the depth and type of information that team members receive about cases with potentially serious consequences, it is not surprising that team members described feeling *stressed* by the work. Given all the media attention on campus violence, a team member described their stress in this way:

Initially I was quite fearful of being a member of this team, but I think that's natural because you wonder “well, am I going to be dealing with a Columbine or Virginia Tech? (Interviewee 8)

Another interviewee vividly discussed their stress as:

The stress causes me concern. As much as I'd love to leave a lot of this at the office, there's students who I know are walking around our campus, who, either we've dealt with, I don't feel like there's any whom we've dealt with, who are a danger to the community, but I know that there's people who we don't know about. It's one of those things that you can't un-know what you already know. Having seen some of the stuff that is out there. (Interviewee 2)

Despite this stress, team members mentioned participation on multidisciplinary teams provides them with new *skills* that helped them personally and professionally. Providing training in conducting the work of BITs is a core operational expectation (Dunkle & Mistler, 2014); as such, it is easy to understand how members would gain new skills. Team members interviewed reinforced that the training received was helpful in their current roles within the institution, and Interviewee 2 described the training as helpful for their professional career, as the work of BIT is a growing area of needed expertise within the participant's field. Team members identified gaining specific soft skills in conflict resolution and creative problem solving, which they reported as benefiting them personally as well as professionally.

Like many roles and functions within one's job, BIT members find value in the work that they do as a member of the team, despite the stress that the position causes. Hoban (2014) considered the nature of the work of BIT members and outlined how they are likely to experience burnout and compassion fatigue. Hoban recommended that

team leaders attend to the wellbeing of team members by implementing self-care strategies within the team structure. Hoban recommended the introduction of the Professional Quality of Life Scale as a tool used to assess the burnout and compassion fatigue of team members. The experience of team members who participated in this research confirmed that team members are experiencing personal impacts such as stress as, which Hoban had considered in his work on wellbeing of team members.

This research demonstrated that team membership has both personal benefits and adverse impacts that are important for institutions to consider. For example, the personal fulfillment and skills team members' gain as a result of participation can be benefits relating to the professional development of individuals. Additionally, the stress that is caused by participation is important for leaders to take note of and ensure that efforts are in place to support those conducting the work to prevent them from becoming overwhelmed by the work. To provide support to team members, senior leaders can provide additional resources that support the wellbeing of individuals conducting the work. The senior management responsible for team oversight would benefit from understanding the personal impacts that team participation has on the individual and implement practices that support team members. This would include self-care strategies such as team debriefing after serious case, access to personal care resources such as counselling, training of compassion fatigue, and strategies to avoid burnout will be beneficial.

7.2. Interpersonal Influences

Interpersonal environments are where the various social settings of an individual interconnect. In Bronfenbrenner's original model of human development, interpersonal settings was called the microsystem, which represented where individuals engage in roles or behaviours such as employee, teacher, or daughter (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). In relation to this study, the interpersonal setting involved the social environments within which team members interact such as their teams or the departments within which they work within their institutions. Teams have members whose interconnectedness of roles is evident, as they simultaneously bring to the BIT their institutional role, their subject matter expertise, their professional requirements, as well as their personal background.

Therefore, the team level represents the collective ways of being of all team members while conducting their work of violence prevention.

7.2.1. How the social environments influence the team

Team members wear many hats when participating within a BIT team. They bring with them multiple perspectives both personally and professionally that often blur together. Team members interviewed described how participating in the team social structure afforded them opportunities that enhanced their other professional obligations by establishing a group of like-minded *peers*. An individual often has a natural set of peers within an organization with whom they work; however, team members described how their participation on a BIT expanded the boundaries of their peer group, which served to enhance their professional role within the institution. Team members described how their work benefited due to new trusted confidants as well as new institutional knowledge that improved their ability to conduct their work. This unforeseen benefit of participation highlights how the intersection of roles provides benefit within other social environments.

There are many recommendations for how teams should function and conduct the work of a BIT team. The *Balancing Safety and Support on Campus: A Guide for Campus Teams* (Higher Education Mental Health Alliance, 2012) included a sample workflow diagram from an American institution's team protocols. Additionally this resource summarized the variety of interventions a team has the option to take as compiled from the various guideline documents for teams. Any institution that has a membership to NaBITA also has a vast repertoire of protocols and process documents that are used across the United States. Despite the existence of a plethora of American reference materials available for Canadian teams, team members do not reference such documents; rather, they depicted a high level of anxiety around their team not yet having established *processes*. Team members describe how a lack of clear processes impacted the team's ability to conduct their work. The challenge that ill defined processes can put on a team was evident in how one team member described different perspectives on how to do the work was challenging in their team:

What does this start to look like and how do you work through this? What's the best methodology to do it? We've just got a number of different

perspectives that are pulling people in different directions I think.
(Interviewee 4)

The resource documentation describing the second-generation of BITs (Sokolow & Lewis, 2009; Sokolow, et al., 2014) highlighted the importance of teams using structured and standard protocols for decision making. Recent Canadian research of higher education team members attending violence risk assessment training reinforced that team members feel ill prepared when it comes to team structure and processes (Watt, 2017). Watt recommended that team leaders must take actions to develop and train team on processes. Future case study research of teams' perceptions of team processes would help identify procedures that teams find useful. Additionally, a content analysis of Canadian BIT policies and procedures would provide additional information into the formal structures and mandates of Canadian teams.

The other way that team members are impacted by their participation related to their *time*. The majority of team members, if not all, must complete BIT work in addition to their existing work within the institution. The time pressures as described by team members are most likely impacted by the reported increase in workload expressed by participants at all stages of the research. Operating principles suggest that teams meet weekly to discuss files whether or not they have an active case to review (Dunkle & Mistler, 2014; Sokolow, et al., 2014; Van Brunt, 2012; Van Brunt & Murphy, 2016), which represents a significant amount of time for individuals who would describe themselves as busy. The 2016 NaBITA survey indicated that 41% of teams met weekly (Van Brunt, 2016), as recommended, even though less than half of teams in this study reported meeting frequently, as recommended, the survey participants indicated that time pressures involved in BITs as a main challenge facing teams (Van Brunt & Murphy, 2016). Recognizing the time commitment that participation entails, recommendations are now emerging to provide dedicated case management staff who can take on a large portion of the administrative work, such as information gathering, monitoring of outcomes, liaising with external stakeholders, and campus education (Sokolow, et al., 2014). The stress and time pressures experienced by Canadian team member participants support the recommendation for institutions to invest in personnel, expertise, and resources to manage the important work conducted by BIT teams on their campuses. Canadian institutions will continue to experience time pressures for the work; therefore, the capacity of those people tapped to participate require attention in a

manner that potentially shifts other responsibilities within their primary role to provide greater release of time for the volume of work that comes as part of being a member of a BIT.

7.2.2. How the team impacts the social environments

This research found that team members represent a wide cross section of representation from student affairs, human resources, as well as even external community members. The *diversity* of team membership is credited by team members as one of the key reasons why the team approach is an effective method for preventing campus violence. The use of multidisciplinary teams as a mechanism to prevent campus violence arose out of post-incident revelations from the tragedy of Virginia Polytechnic Institute tragedy that multiple divisions of the institution had prior knowledge of the risk that the shooter posed to the institution (Agger & Luke, 2009; Cornell, Sheras, Gregory, & Fan, 2009; Figley & Jones, 2008; Kaminski, et al., 2010; Thrower, et al., 2008). The original recommendation of team diversity was to share internal knowledge of the person of concern (Allen, et al., 2008; Meloy, et al., 2012; Nolan, et al., 2011), that is a benefit appreciated by team members interviewed. While access to internal information regarding a situation is a key role, the diversity of violence prevention knowledge is also viewed as beneficial to the outcome and overall safety of the campus community. Campuses often have a wealth of knowledge within the faculty ranks that can be drawn upon:

We also need to look to our own professors of psychology, criminology, or criminal justice, or bullying and violence prevention specialists who work in campus crisis centers, health/wellness and prevention programs. When you view prevention holistically, what they know is directly relevant to what behavioral intervention and threat assessment teams do. (Sokolow, et al., 2014, p. 22)

The Handbook for Campus Threat Assessment & Management Teams (Deisinger, et al., 2008) provides over 20 characteristics that make a person qualified to serve on a team. The benefit of a multidisciplinary team is clearly appreciated by team members as a key factor for success as evidenced by the following participant statement:

They can see how the different members of the team would have different contributions. So for example, you know the mental health professional that is on the team is able to work with the students' own caregivers and sort of

discuss in an educated way whether or not there really was a mental health related risk there. The lawyer and the HR person could deal with the issues you know related to our obligations for human rights, for you know work place health and safety, duties to protect our employees, things like that. You've got the student affairs side, you know the Vice Provost Student Affairs is another person most familiar with student discipline and appropriate penalties and the history of those kind of precedence and things like that. So different key members brought different pieces to the table and all those things together helped make the decisions (Interviewee 3)

While teams have an immense appreciation for the diversity of perspectives shared by the team members, they also described that the same diversity of opinion can cause challenges when it comes to team *dynamics*. As individuals are members of the team for their expertise and knowledge, they can experience difficulties when making it collective decisions. One team member described the challenge as:

At the same time, the experience has at times had been quite challenging personally, to advocate for my point of view when sometimes everybody around the team has a different perspective. I think in some of your materials you were asking about like how do you get to a decision? Well sometimes, sometimes that's not a very smooth process. We do work towards consensus, and usually we do get consensus, but sometimes that's a painful, it takes a lot of painful conversations to get there. (Interviewee 7)

A common pitfall that teams reportedly experience is “neglecting the team dynamics and stress” (Higher Education Mental Health Alliance, 2012, p. 31). The opportunity to foster a strong team decision-making style is one of the rationales noted as to why teams should meet regularly, as it “provides an excellent opportunity for relationship building among the team members” (Deisinger, et al., 2008, p. 42). Canadian team members reported that they tend to meet as needed, which indicates that they are not using regular team meetings to work on team processes and protocols. Team members who described meeting regularly noted a positive team dynamic. For example one interviewee stated:

I suspect [what] is probably in the background there, is the team dynamics. I think one of the things that I'm really proud of, with our team, is that there's, I think a lot of teams say it, but in our team I really believe it. There's little to no ego. (Interviewee 2)

Additionally team members overwhelmingly described how lessons learned from previous incidents help the team better address cases in the future. The *experience* of

the team having worked through cases in the past provides a greater ability to determine the appropriate intervention. How a diverse team works together to leverage the knowledge and skills of its members in an effective way serves to enhance the overall effectiveness of BIT teams. Canadian teams therefore, would benefit to adopt a regular meeting schedule to develop team processes and decision-making skills by using tabletop case studies to aid in the development of the team's ability to conduct the time-sensitive and difficult work.

7.3. Institutional Influences

In the SEM, institutional environmental systems are “social institutions with organizational characteristics, and formal (and informal) rules and regulations for operation” (McLeroy, et al., 1988, p. 355). Not surprisingly, for the purposes of this study, this referred to the institution within which the multidisciplinary team operates. Institutions of higher education are governed by formal regulations as set out in provincial statutes that set out the legal frameworks within which institutions must operate (Shanahan, 2015). Additionally institutional environments can differ by type of institution (university, college, or polytechnic), size of student body, location (rural or urban), and provision of on-campus housing, and these are just some examples of how institutional settings may impact how teams function.

7.3.1. How the institution influences the work of teams

The first, and most overt way, that this research found the institutional setting influences the work of teams was in the relationship between the *size* of the institution and the likelihood of the institution having a team. Institutions with a population of less than 10,000 FTE students were more likely not to have implemented a team as compared to those with more than 10,000 FTE students. The qualitative stage of this research only included institutions that had a team; therefore, further research is necessary to explore institutions without teams to understand the reason for this significant difference. One interviewee from a team within a very small institution did provide some insight into why the difference may exist; the participant stated that in a small institution “there’s much greater likelihood that people know where to turn when troubling behaviour has happened” (Interviewee 8). Therefore, as a factor of the

organization's size, students, staff, and faculty of small institutions may find it easier to identify and share concerning behaviours. While much research has been conducted on cases of campus gun violence in the United States (Agger & Luke, 2009; Blair & Schweit, 2014; Lee, 2013), none have looked at the influence of campus size on the prevalence of campus violence. Analysis of international school shootings considered the countries, severity, age of shooter, and months of incidents (Böckler, Seeger, Sitzer, & Heitmeyer, 2013), but not to the size of the institution. The significant finding of the size of the institution and the prevalence of having a team would indicate that further research is needed on demographic information about institutions where campus violence has occurred.

Multidisciplinary teams core function is taking *reporting* of behaviours so that members can identify patterns and potential points of intervention with the goal to prevent violence. Therefore, the ability for a team to complete its work is predicated on the need to receive relevant and timely information to conduct the appropriate triage and assessment. Throughout all stages of the research a common theme that surfaced was the challenge of teams receiving timely information regarding student behaviours. One SSAO in Stage 1 succinctly outlined this challenge within the participant's institution: "ensuring people on campus do not ignore behaviours but report them so the student can be helped and situations do not spiral out of control" (SSAO Survey Respondent 43). The pervasiveness of this concern to Canadian team member participants is not surprising as timely reporting is a foundational need of BITs to be able to intervene prior to a serious risk arising. After all, the lack of central reporting regarding the warning behaviours overtly demonstrated by the perpetrator of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute incident was the impetus for the establishment of multidisciplinary teams as the preferred, and in some instances legally obligated, mechanism to prevent campus violence.

BIT best practice guideline documents stressed the importance of timely reporting (Allen, et al., 2008; Barton, 2008; Cornell, 2010; Dunkle, et al., 2008; Eells & Rockland-Miller, 2011; Meloy & O'Toole, 2011; Randazzo & Plummer, 2009; Sokolow, et al., 2009). The importance of reporting is rooted in the "willingness and ability of the campus community to communicate with the TAM [threat assessment and management] team and make the Team aware of any concerns or suspicions they may have about a

particular individual's behaviour" (Deisinger, et al., 2008, p. 48). A social-ecological perspective would suggest that teams seek to interact with the all members of the institution to increase the campus awareness of what to report, to whom, and how. A majority of the functional protocols recommended within *The Book on Behavioral Intervention Teams* concentrated on setting up processes to improve and ensure timely reporting of appropriate types of information necessary for the team to conduct their work (Sokolow, et al., 2014). To establish an informed culture of reporting throughout the institution, Canadian BITs would benefit from adapting their practices to move from an assessment function to also include educational activities. How this can be achieved will be examined further in the next section discussing awareness as an influence teams have on the institutional level of the social environments of an institution.

Increasing community member awareness and establishing processes will require an investment of time and *resources*. As previously noted, participation on a BIT requires team members to commit a significant amount of time. Exacerbating this time is the fact that teams have noted that more work is needed to improve reporting by their institutional community members. Canadian team member participants noted that resources such as training, internal expertise, and funding are challenges that teams are having to address, which echoes the findings of the 2016 NaBITA survey (Van Brunt, 2016) It has already been noted that training plays a significant role in the ability for the team to conduct their work effectively, and training requires financial investment. Teams that receive an investment in resources are beginning to implement case management roles to provide personnel capacity to conduct the administrative and follow up functions of the team (Van Brunt & Murphy, 2016). Teams members' ability to meet the operational requirements necessary for a highly functioning BIT will require fiscal and personnel investment by Canadian institutions that can expect to grow, particularly if teams begin to more completely adopt the functions of a BIT and align with proactive prevention practices to move beyond the mainly reactionary approach they are currently working within.

It is encouraging to note that while team members described receiving a challenging volume of work, BITs reported that overall, their teams are meeting institutional expectations. In this study, 84% of SSAOs and team members were confident that their team was meeting their institution's expectations which is slightly

higher than the 74% result from the same question asked of American team members (Gamm, et al., 2011). These results described a condition in which team members perceive the BIT to be functioning in an appropriate manner, despite their need for additional resources. This situation suggests that team function would remain stagnant unless provided with the necessary resources. To reap the full benefit of multidisciplinary teams, Canadian institutions face a situation in which investment of time, personnel, and finances are required and must be considered by senior administrators across Canada. It is important to look at the human resource and expertise needs of teams to appropriately invest precious fiscal and human resources.

7.3.2. The work of BIT teams and their impact on the institution

Through the interventions that they implemented, the impact BIT teams have on an institution is the most apparent of all of the social environments. The actions of the team are designed to intervene early on behaviours that when left unchallenged could result in harm to one or more institutional members. BIT teams that operate, as they should, result in the prevention of incidents of harm thereby improving the *safety* of the institution. The introduction of multidisciplinary teams was, after all, born out of the recommendations put forward after the tragedy of Virginia Polytechnic Institute as a way to prevent such grievous incidents (Figley & Jones, 2008; Fox & Savage, 2009; Hong, Cho, & Lee, 2010; Hoover & Lipka, 2008; Leavitt, et al., 2007; Thrower, et al., 2008). The practice of BITs has since been widely adopted in the United States, and, as this research indicates; Canadian institutions have also found validity in such teams as a mechanism to enhance campus safety.

SSAOs and team members indicated that their institutions implemented a team as a way to address liability from campus violence, and the majority (81%) of team members have had to address a student's behaviour that posed a significant risk to the institution. This shows a trend for teams being implemented to both address on-campus behaviours that are concerning for the safety of others as well as to prevent high-profile violence. The goal of BITs is to assess and intervene early with the hope of having no harmful actions towards a member of the campus community. While the prevention of harm is a positive outcome for the institution, the lack of an incident is not something that can be easily quantified or promoted to the community. This operational reality poses a

challenge for researchers, as there is no method to confirm if a violent action would have occurred and was avoided due to the actions of the team. As one interviewee stated

We're doing this because there's a threat. And so at the highest level if the threat doesn't take place the person doesn't hurt themselves and doesn't hurt anybody else and the threat is, you know, sort of alleviated, that's success" (Interviewee 6).

Therefore, the functional goal of BITs is to improve the overall safety of its campus members based upon intervening on behaviours that could lead to future violence.

Research conducted on single institutions has shed light on the type of behaviours and volume of cases conducted by teams. A case study of a large American institution's BIT and the cases this team had between 2008 and 2012 illustrated that team members assessed approximately 100 cases per year; however, the vast majority of those were assessed to be a mild risk and the team dealt with no severe cases (Greenstein, 2013). In the same year, another study found a team at a large institution addressed over 284 cases, and almost half involved an external threat such as assault, harassment, or stalking (Cao, et al., 2013). This research also found that 21.5% of the cases the team addressed included employees of the institution as the person of concern, which is a practice that aligns with the modern best practices of BITs, to have a singular team that address behaviours reported about all campus community members. While these studies were limited in scope, as they each studied only one institution they do provide an indication of the annual type of cases an institution may experience. Whether or not teams are addressing high-risk behaviours, they are managing behaviours that are noticed within the campus that are causing a disruption or concern.

As previously noted, the work of modern high-functioning BIT teams includes mechanisms to address all concerning behaviours and not only threats. In fulfilling their mandate, multidisciplinary teams also influence and shape the knowledge and ability of its members to have the *awareness* of the appropriate behaviours that should be reported to the team. A fundamental pillar to the operational best practices of BIT teams is to develop strategies to empower the campus community to recognize appropriate behaviours, how to report those behaviours, and to whom (Deisinger, et al., 2008; Eells & Rockland-Miller, 2011; Higher Education Mental Health Alliance, 2012; Randazzo & Plummer, 2009; Sokolow, et al., 2014). Awareness is described as a need to create a

reporting culture on campus that “exists on a macro level, transcending severity, proactivity, and personal relationships. It gets the right information to the right people in real time most of the time” (Sokolow, et al., 2014, p. 19). The importance of the campus community having multiple ways to report relevant concerns is at the core of BIT models (Keller, et al., 2011). A BIT members must receive timely and relevant information in order to conduct their work, thus the team must establish clear processes for the campus community to report behaviours that are relevant for the team to consider as part of their work.

The participants at all stages of this research consistently articulated that it is a challenge to ensure that all members of the community are familiar with the team and how to access BIT members. Participants described how they struggle to encourage the institutional community to become familiar with the role and function of the BIT. One interviewee described this challenge in the following way

[We’re] just trying to raise awareness of how the team operates. Because I think there's still some people that just aren't that familiar with it and are used to doing things the old way, like they know who to call and when to call and sometimes that still goes on, so it kind of circumvents our process a bit.” (Interviewee 7)

The difficulty BIT team members experienced in creating awareness of the team within their institution permeated throughout this study. As interviewees alluded to, it can be challenging to change the way in which people have always done their work. The challenge BIT members experience in developing the awareness and ability of the campus community of their work was noted by teams in the United States (Van Brunt & Murphy, 2016). The 2016 NaBITA survey introduced numerous questions to understand how teams educated their institutions about their work. The survey found that 59% of teams had a website dedicated for the team and that members used such measures as in-person training, presentations, handouts, and orientations to promote their work (Van Brunt, 2016). Little research has been conducted to understand how teams can successfully increase institutional awareness. In 2013, a study was conducted at one institution in the United States that explored the campus community’s perceptions of safety and the institutions BIT team (Reese, 2013). The study found that unless an individual had made a report to the team, the community was not very familiar with the team; however, community members did believe it was a good idea to have a BIT. This

demonstrates that creating awareness of teams is a challenge that other institutions experience.

Institutions of higher education have many different groups: students, staff, faculty, and visitors. Unto themselves, each of these groups is not very homogenous. For example, students maybe studying full time or only taking one class per semester; they may be married and living with their family or a first-generation student who has recently graduated from high school and lives in on campus residence. Employees of an institution, for the most part, have the most long-term and robust relationship with the institution. Generally, employees have a formal role within the functioning of the institution, and thus represent an important population for BIT administrators to focus attention towards developing a process of educating regarding the role of a BIT on campus. Knowing this, BIT teams can implement processes that engage employees in becoming knowledgeable about the role and function of the team within the institution.

One particular segment that teams could focus on would be institutional faculty. In a 2013 study of one BIT, it was found that two thirds of all cases were reported by institutional employees and that faculty members were the most common source of the report (Cao, et al., 2013). As the majority of individuals on campus are students, and students are the subjects of concern, faculty have greater interactions with students. A recent study looked at the implementation of a violence prevention training program called Networks Against School Shootings at approximately 100 German schools and delivered to over 3,500 employees of those schools. (Leuschner, et al., 2017). The study found that the training increased the ability of faculty to recognize and evaluate students who were in distress. These studies highlight the importance of BIT teams to focus on creating awareness with faculty on how to recognize and intervene on distressing behaviours of students. Canadian institutions would benefit from conducting in-service training to faculty, including faculty members on the team, and working with academic leaders to create an appreciation for the skill of behaviour identification.

The final way that BIT teams' actions impact the institutional community derives from the successful interventions they implement. Some community members may view the role of the BIT as getting rid of those who cause trouble; however, the reality is that the BIT's "purpose is to be caring and preventative" (Sokolow, et al., 2014, p. 25). Thus BITs lead to the *success of students*. The participants in this study described successful

interventions in PSB as occurring when the student was able to continue their studies. As one interviewee stated, “if we can help a student cross that stage at convocation, and that's our goal, that's everybody's goal in that room is to help those students” (Interviewee 1). A small case study of four cases referred to a BIT at an institution in the United States found that interventions have a potential to adversely impact a student’s academic success (Daniel & Logsdon, 2015) and found that “the challenge will be to protect the campus community while preserving the ability of the institution to provide the best possible academic support to all its students” (p. 68). To best ensure the continued academic success of students, the researchers recommended a greater inclusion of faculty in the work of BITs as a way to understand the academic impacts of certain interventions.

The results of this research viewed through a social-ecological framework highlight the important impact that the work of BIT teams has on the institutional environments. However, the analysis indicates that significant challenges exist for teams at the institutional level to conduct their work effectively. Team members must, therefore, intentionally consider the way in which they actively engage the institution in the work that they do and not oversimplifying the work of the team as maintaining safety, as this can only occur if the institution is not aware and engaged with the work that BITs conduct.

7.4. Community Influences

The next environmental influence level in the social-ecological framework involves community factors. This level of influence derives from the “relationships among organizations, institutions, and informal networks within the defined boundaries” (McLeroy, et al., 1988, p. 355). Within the context of this study, the community influences refer to the organizations, neighbourhoods, and social services of the surrounding geographical location of the institution. For most teams this would be the city in which the institution is located and the various formal and informal organizations that exist within it. For example this may include the local neighbour group, municipal government, hospitals, police agencies, and citizens of the city or town.

7.4.1. How the community influences the work of BIT Teams

The participants at all stages of this research most often described circumstances and experiences that focused closer to the centre of the individual sphere of influence and less on greater systems such as the community. This is to be expected, as individuals are more likely able to describe things that directly impact their day-to-day work as compared to the more nuanced or subtle ways in which greater systems impact their work. While less overt, team members described how the overall *mental health* of students related to their work. Team members described how the mental health or serious mental illness of students presented a challenge to the team. Institutions of higher education exist within a greater system of health and safety within the community at large. As many institutions have a population larger than many cities across the country, it is expected that institutions would experience similar issues as those found in the community within which it operates. More and more students with a range of mental health issues are attending postsecondary campuses (Benton & Benton, 2006; Gallagher, 2010). For example, if a community experiences issues of petty theft or drug abuse, it would be foreseeable that the same issues would be present on campus. A recent Canadian edition of the National College Health Assessment studied of over 43,000 students at 41 different institutions found that 8.4% of students were diagnosed or treated for mental illness-related matters (American College Health Association, 2016). An even more alarming finding of the same study was that 44.4% of students report feeling so depressed that it was hard to function, and 47.3% were overwhelmed with anger, and 59.6% felt things were hopeless (American College Health Association, 2016). In addition, 60% of students reported having experienced more than average or tremendous amounts of stress within the last year. These results actually demonstrated a slight increase from when the same research was conducted in 2013 (American College Health Association, 2013). The health care system, which includes mental health, can impact the overall experience of students. While many postsecondary institutions have mental and physical health care services, these are part of a greater community-wide system of care. More students are experiencing mental health concerns, whether diagnosed or not, thus complicating the work of BITs.

As the mental health of the overall community has a direct impact on the wellness of students, BIT teams need to commit to working at the community level to

foster greater connection with the mental health services and engage in activities of the local community level. A 2013 study of notable perpetrators of campus gun violence found that perpetrators fall into three categories: psychotic, psychopathic, or traumatized (Langman, 2013). High degrees of mental health expertise are required to be able to diagnose and treat individuals within these three categories. To be equipped to both assess and refer potential high-risk individuals, teams must have a strong relationship with mental health professionals, both on and off campus. For example, the BIT can engage with the local community health unit to establish collaborative relationships. This would ensure that the team is connected to the organization and if community health care professionals have a person of concern then there is a strong supportive relationship to provide assistance to the student with mental health concerns to enable the individual to be successful.

The Book on Behavioural Intervention Teams discussed the importance of de-stigmatizing the mental health and disability within the institution (Sokolow, et al., 2014). The mental health of everyone is a high priority of the campus community and, therefore, teams can align to support all individuals within the greater community within which they live. For example, if an individual referred to the team is deemed to be experiencing high levels of psychosis, community-based mental health services will be necessary to support the student for long term care. While team members expressed that mental health factors add complexity to the work of BIT teams, it is important that teams maintain perspective regarding mental illness and violence. While it is difficult to avoid the temptation, team members need to find ways to avoid profiling students with mental health issues (Van Brunt, 2012). It is, therefore, important for the leadership of teams to identify strategies to prevent members from making assumptions about the individual based solely upon mental health behaviours reported. One way to ensure this is for the team to have an active role in educating the campus community on mental illness with the goal of reducing stigma associated with campus's actions designed to reduce stigma surrounding mental health.

Mental health factors impacting the student's behaviour was often discussed by team members as a challenge for their work; however, they also discussed how the individual *case complexity* is a factor that makes their work more difficult. One must look no further than how society has changed to understand why cases of PSB may be

complex. Institutions and their campus communities are affected by the world around them, and not just their immediate geography. The introduction of technology, media, globalization, and many other social influences can further complicate cases. Team members described having to address cases that included situations that were difficult but become more complicated the more the case is assessed. For example, team members described situations with students with complex mental health needs who had been socially isolated and had no other places to live if they were no longer in school. Team members also described threats of violence over social media that involved references to religious minorities and the concern this raises for community members who compare the situation to high profile tragic events. Thus, BITs are influenced by the community as the intersectionality between one's social sphere and academic environment are increasingly blurred with the fast-paced nature of technology and globalization within Canadian institutions of higher education (Strange & Hardy Cox, 2016). The community context provides additional complexity to BIT cases. To address the community complexities, community experts can be sought out by BIT teams to develop a mutually beneficial relationship that helps both the community and the institution be adept at navigating the multiple layers of complexity that arise with distressed individuals.

7.4.2. The role BIT teams in influencing the community

The original concept of multidisciplinary teams was to serve as a way for on-campus stakeholders to share information that could identify a person of concern early in order to prevent large-scale violence (Cornell, 2010; Deisinger, et al., 2008; Randazzo & Plummer, 2009). However, as teams have evolved, emerging best practices recognized the importance of teams establishing networks with individuals and organizations from the surrounding community, as these resources provide a greater level of expertise that may not exist within the institution (Sokolow & Lewis, 2009; Sokolow, et al., 2014). For example, establishing mechanisms for external community members, especially parents of students, to report concerns to the team would help provide better understanding of the student's situation and background. This would enable the community to inform teams by developing a *liaison* role within the local community.

The participants in this study did not often discuss connections to the local community in any great detail. One team member described how the team included a member of a local community organization; however, this was described as a hindrance to the team and was cited as the reason why the team was considering removing the external member from the team. Team members did describe situations in which having a connection within the local community who was included as part of the successful intervention did benefit the team. Overall, team members did not describe their work in connection with local community members; rather, BIT members focus their work narrowly on their institutions and the individuals within them.

The narrow scope that the sample of Canadian teams takes by focusing internally is a weakness to overcome to fully leverage the full potential of a multidisciplinary team. Teams “must also establish linkages to other outside organization, such as law enforcement and mental health professionals, to ensure that all possible information is available to the team prior to the analysis and response stage” (Keller, et al., 2011, p. 87). Violence and threat assessment work requires access to as much accurate and relevant information about the individual of concern as possible (Meloy & Hoffmann, 2014). While multidisciplinary teams are designed to increase the information available to teams from within the organization, teams have not been able to effectively establish mechanisms for sharing relevant information beyond their institutional walls.

The importance of sharing and gathering information with established community connections is an important function for campus as well as community safety. In the 2013 analysis of perpetrators of campus violence, Langman noted that there had been several incidents of mass casualty violent acts in the United States that occurred off campus that had been carried out by former students. It was noted that many of these perpetrators of off-campus violence had displayed concerning behaviour on campus, and in one case the perpetrator had been suspended from the institution pending a mental health evaluation (Langman, 2013). The tragedy of an off-campus violent act being caused by a student removed from the institution based on internal concerns demonstrates the imperative nature of a team being connected to local professional organizations, as it not only helps improve the safety of the institution but of the local community as well.

The guiding best practices for BITs articulated the need to have a relationship with external stakeholders as a mechanism to improve the effectiveness of BITs. Canadian team members described the wellness of the population of students coming to their institutions as being a contributing factor to the complexity of their cases; however, there exists a gap in team's appreciation of formal collaboration with local community professionals to enhance their work and aid in maintaining the safety of the local community. BITs intentionally include a diversity of internal experts from mental health to campus safety. There exists an opportunity for teams form partnerships with relevant external community organizations, such as community mental health team, local police agency, or local hospital emergency department, as a source of information and resources sharing. This does not require including external members on the assessment team; rather, team members can be tasked with seeking out and/or providing relevant information with their respective agencies to enable all involved to conduct their work effectively. This critical subject of sharing of information will be reviewed in more detail in the next section, which discusses the policy and legal frameworks that teams experience.

7.5. Social Policy Influences

The final social-ecological environment is the social policy level, which encompasses all the laws, norms, and policies that govern the actions and interactions within all ecological levels (McLeroy, et al., 1988). Bronfenbrenner's original theory referred to the social policy level as the macrosystem as, "carriers of information and ideology that, both explicitly and implicitly, endow meaning and motivation to particular agencies, social networks, roles, activities, and their interrelationships" (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, p. 515). In Canada, in stark contrast to the United States, the provinces have oversight responsibility of postsecondary institution's (Shanahan et al., 2015), which results in a lack of national standards for behaviour intervention or campus safety. Incidents of campus violence create vast amounts of media attention that reinforce the societal expectation that institutions of higher education are safe havens for students. The social pressures facing postsecondary campuses are reinforced by the legal requirements of a public body such as an institution and how such legal requirements inform the actions of teams.

7.5.1. How do the societal policies govern the work of teams

Multidisciplinary teams, in some of the American states, were formed as a result of new legislation introduced that compelled institutions to implement such a team (Deisinger, et al., 2014; Deisinger, et al., 2008). While there has been direct legal rationale for the inclusion of BIT teams within administrative practices in higher education, there are more nuanced *legal* reasons why teams are in operation. Teams work within a complex structure of legal obligations that serve to inform the actions that the BITs take. Each institution must operate within its own provincial legislative framework that dictates the mandate and overall obligations (Shanahan, et al., 2015). Specifically, the individual institution's provincial legislation establishes scope and authority of how an institution is able to discipline a student which is important when considering the possible need to remove a student from the campus, even for a short period of time, as a mechanism to increase the safety of others and often the student of concern. The provincial and federal legal obligations within which institutions must operation serve as a key framework through which teams must consider their actions. How teams decide to intervene, or not intervene, are both complicated and simultaneously strengthened in the understanding and adherence to the relevant legislative and policy requirements.

While BITs expressed legal issues at all stages, team members interviewed unmistakably expressed the need and complexity of the legal context within which teams must operate. One interviewee described the legal context, listing "liability issues, insurance issues, there could be all kinds of things that come up with a legal context" (Interviewee 3). Pochini (2008) provided an overview of the various legal frameworks that intersect with Canadian postsecondary campus violence prevention. The article outlined laws such as occupier's liability, duty to care, mental health legislation, and other legal requirements that inform institutions on the actions that they can, and are expected to take when faced with a potential violent student. A common legal obligation that team members referred to was workplace violence regulations. Team members described a general understanding of the legal expectations, and in fact some teams have included a legal representative on their team to ensure that they are fulfilling their legal obligations. A team member with a legal background made reference to the

complexity that employment legal obligations involve when dealing with a person of concern who is a staff member.

One of the most commonly referred to legal contexts within which team members in this study discussed were the *privacy* regulations. In Canada, each province has its own privacy legislation that prescribes how public bodies collect, use, and disclose of personal information of others (Hannah & Stack, 2015). Applying these regulations within the work of BIT teams requires a depth of understanding of the regulations to ensure the actions of the group comply with the requirements. As a public body, institutions take privacy requirements seriously; this has, at times, resulted in situations in which the institution has chosen not to release private information of a student. As a result of public outrage of the actions of institutions not sharing information on a student in distress and a resulting tragic outcome for the student, the privacy commissioners of British Columbia and Ontario released a report that provided guidelines for postsecondary administrators to understand their privacy requirements in situations involving a high risk of harm, which emphatically stated that “life trumps privacy” (Loukidelis & Cavoukian, 2008, p. 1). The guidelines went further and described the steps that institutions can and must take when it comes to sharing of personal information in a situation that poses clear danger to an individual or the public. This interpretation of privacy laws that permit institutions to share private information in high-risk situations has been referenced following high-profile incidents of campus violence. For example, the administration of Virginia Polytechnic Institute was criticized for their false interpretation of the privacy laws resulting in a full chapter of privacy law recommendations within the review panel’s report (Massengill, et al., 2007). The importance of a correct interpretation of privacy laws is reflected in the concerns presented by participants in this study. Team members described concerns not only regarding their confidence about what information the team could share with others, but participants also found that internally people would cite privacy as a reason why they could not share information with the BIT.

As previously described, a core mandate of BIT teams is to serve as a central source for behaviours to be reported and triaged, which requires others to share relevant information with the team. Canadian team members described situations in which people within the institution cited privacy legislation as a reason for not sharing

information internally with the team. One team member noted, "people in our own institution are saying, "well that's personal information I can't give it to you even though you are [safety organization]" (Interviewee 4). To address this concern, BIT operational guidelines suggested that a function of the team be to train the campus community on privacy laws and confidentiality (Randazzo & Plummer, 2009; Sokolow, et al., 2014; Van Brunt, 2012). While these recommendations refer to American privacy legislation, similar principles exist within Canadian privacy regulations. To address the significant role that privacy has in both the collection and sharing of information, internal and external experts on provincial and federal privacy requirements are needed to help inform the work and mandates of teams. Not only do team members, and especially team leaders, need to be very clear on privacy rules, it is important that the team's operational practices comply with collection, use, and disclosure of private information requirements. For example, if a team discloses the private information of a student, what is the requirement for informing the student of this disclosure of their information? This should also include recommendations for documentation and record keeping as the information gathered as part of the work of a BIT is considered highly sensitive and, therefore, demands a high degree of compliance with protection requirements as dictated by law.

It bears noting that some roles within an organization have professional ethics that dictate how they must maintain private information gathered through their work. Roles in counselling and/or health services are traditionally the two units that have this duty-bound requirement. BIT best practices recognize this boundary of confidentiality and suggest that it is imperative to the success of those roles within the institution that students and staff have confidence that these professional ethics will be upheld while maintaining the institution's obligations to provide a safe environment (Sokolow, et al., 2014; Van Brunt, 2012). Participants throughout all stages of this research stressed the importance of mental health professionals and the pivotal role within the team. The importance of this role to serve on the BIT dictates that the team leader reinforce the fact that mental health professionals do not participate to provide information from confidential counselling sessions. To achieve this important dual role, recommendations have been outlined for those team members who have existing professional confidentiality duties

It is an important responsibility of all members of the team and especially the team leaders to protect the special confidentiality held by campus mental health services and not push for information. There are several advantages to this approach: (a) Using secondary sources of information supports accuracy; (b) protecting the perception of confidentiality of mental health services encourages students to continue to use counseling services voluntarily, which is paramount for long-term campus health and safety; and (c) making determinations using behavioral data rather than mental health data is likely to be more defensible (and appropriately so) given disability laws. (Dunkle & Mistler, 2014, p. 135)

Therefore, team leaders can create and promote strong appreciation for professional standards of confidentiality for all mental and primary health care members of the team and not require confidential information from such sources.

Multidisciplinary teams are required to address very sensitive and potentially high-risk situations, which, as noted above, require the team to consider multiple laws and regulations to guide their work. However, at times complex situations create circumstances in which these various laws may be in conflict, requiring the team to consider situations involving *competing rights*. Consider a scenario, not much different than many described by team members, in which the concerning behaviours of a student are a result of the individual's documented mental health disorder. These behaviours are causing others to be fearful for their personal safety within the institution. The institution has a duty to protect the human rights of the student in accordance with the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (1982); however, the institution has a duty to comply with the provincial workplace safety obligations. Teams are therefore tasked with resolving the tension between individuals (or groups of individuals) who are vocal and knowledgeable about their rights and their demands to have such rights protected. Team members often described these complex situations of competing rights. For example, one interviewee described the following situation:

Our team's here looking at this and trying to weigh the fact that we probably think that [they] are not a real threat, but we have a legal duty to protect our staff and the staff were quite conscious of that and they demanded that they be protected. (Interviewee 3)

To successfully navigate a situation in which people's legally required rights are in potential conflict teams must be knowledgeable of the various laws and legal duties of the institution. Addressing the competing rights is an emerging issue identified within the *Handbook of Canadian Higher Education Law* (Shanahan, et al., 2015). In a chapter

within this book, Nilson (2015) addressed this growing issue when stated “as campus violence and harassment continue to make headlines, it will be important for institutions to develop clear policies and procedures” (p. 294). Thus, teams should have access to legal expertise in order to provide guidance in assessing the competing rights and to help review protocols and practices to ensure that they sufficiently meet the legal burden necessary when making complex decisions.

7.5.2. How does the work of teams influence social policies

While team members of this research and the best practices of multidisciplinary discussed the importance of having institutional policies that legitimize their work, there exists no discussion about how the work of BIT teams can or should inform the laws or public policy of education, privacy, or safety. Educational institutions are meant to be sanctuaries for students, staff, and faculty to enable community members to learn free from safety concerns. It is for this reason that when incidents of campus violence occur there is a public outcry that more is done to ensure the safety of campuses. Considering the social-ecological model as a violence prevention model (Krug, et al., 2002), postsecondary institutions are neglecting the social policy level of violence prevention. While competing rights, privacy regulations, and a myriad of other laws and regulations directly impact teams, little effort is made by institutions to influence the development and/or changes to such laws and regulations. The sexual assault of postsecondary students has been an issue garnering extensive attention by the Canadian media, student organizations, and violence prevention workers ("Interactive: Campus sexual assault reports," 2015, February 9; Kane, 2016, March 7). These actions have influenced numerous Canadian provincial governments to introduce legislation governing how institutions address sexual violence such as, Ontario's *Sexual Violence and Harassment Action Plan Act* (2016) or British Columbia's *Sexual Violence and Misconduct Policy Act* (2016). Such legislation required postsecondary institutions to implement policies and procedures to prevent and address sexual assault on campus. While such policies are necessary, the additional legislative requirements provide an additional layer of complexity for institutions to have a process to address a complex interpersonal crime that existing public policy has a difficult time in effectively addressing. If provincial or national associations of BITs were formed, teams could work collaboratively to research and lobby for reform in the various legal and public policy

structures within which teams operate in an effort to improve campus safety. However, as teams are comprised of institutional employees with existing roles and responsibilities, it remains challenging for team members to formalize their roles without impacting their day-day responsibilities.

7.6. Perceptions of Effectiveness

Throughout every stage of this research all participants described a voracious perception of multidisciplinary teams as being an effective method to address campus violence. Team members throughout this study discussed how the multidisciplinary nature of the team is the main factor contributing to the success of the BIT processes. Team members described that the diversity of backgrounds, both professional and personal, of team members as being critical to the effectiveness of the process. It was encouraging to see team members' accounts of the benefits of having different perspectives in the decision-making process as a main reason for the success of interventions and ultimately the work of the team. This appreciation of team diversity is aligned with the rationale for such a team, as it is "not just those physically present around the table, but includes those who can contribute information or expertise to facilitate the most effective understanding and response" (Deisinger, et al., 2008, p. 36). Additionally, in the 2016 NaBITA survey, team members described that the diversity of team membership as a main contributing factor to the success of teams (Van Brunt, 2016; Van Brunt & Murphy, 2016). This demonstrates an alignment between American and Canadian teams in their appreciation for the multidisciplinary nature as a key factor in the success of BIT teams.

This research was able to provide some perspective as to why Canadian BIT members view the multidisciplinary nature of the team as an important factor of the effectiveness of their work. They described how the expertise of others as being important when making an informed decision regarding a complex case. Often, it was not only the subject matter expertise that was deemed significant, but also the background of the team member that proved invaluable. BIT members who had conducted violence assessments in the past, or who had experience with a relevant external organization, were valued by other team members as they were viewed to provide have vital knowledge necessary to the team's assessment and decision-making

process. Therefore, while core team membership is most often predicated based upon role within the institution, teams would benefit from having an inventory of expertise of other campus members who may be called upon should a situation arise requiring such expertise. A simplified example of such a practice would be for teams to seek out faculty members within their institution who have an area of specialty in violence or crime prevention, as they could provide a level of subject matter expertise in assessing a case (Sokolow, et al., 2014). Teams could also look to the skills and backgrounds of other campus professionals such as accessibility advisors with a background in learning disabilities or a child and youth care educator with a background in working with at-risk youth. It behoves a BIT to build a resource list of internal and external experts who could both provide consultative and training support to the team on an as needed or subject matter expertise basis.

Team members consistently explained that the experience of the team addressing prior cases was a key reason for their improved effectiveness. BIT members described learning from past mistakes and learning how to better conduct their work. Team members also reported becoming more confident in their decisions as they completed more cases. While training is an important function, the findings of this study indicate participants believe that practice also improves performance; thus, teams should seek to identify methods to gain exposure to a variety of cases and practice decisions. For example, the use of scenarios and case studies could be used to practice and assess the team's protocols and processes. There are numerous sample scenarios available through the NaBITA organization however these are American based scenarios and could be adapted by Canadian professionals to create a set of appropriate scenarios that are relevant for Canadian institutions and educational context. Once again, if a provincial or national association existed for Canadian BIT teams, then a database of relevant Canadian scenarios could be created. By completing practice cases, teams can help build confidence with their practices and protocols in a safe way that provides the team the opportunity to learn without any possible negative outcomes occurring for the team. Having opportunities to practise in a safe setting may also reduce the stress some team members experience as a result of the pressure of making decisions with potentially serious outcomes. The more confidence BIT members have in their skills and protocols, the more the team is prepared for a potential serious and life-threatening case. Minimally, a professional association of provincial BIT teams could be

established. This would provide teams with a mechanism to share case studies in an anonymous way. This would permit teams to access the learning from the situations of other institutions.

Across all stages of this study, participants expressed that multidisciplinary teams are an effective way to address PSBs, which can be attributed to participants working in such teams. This research was designed to explore the perceptions of those who conduct BIT work in Canada. It is encouraging that American team members also reported the process as being effective (Van Brunt, 2016; Van Brunt & Murphy, 2016). Additionally, a study that looked at the perceptions of employees and students of the relevance of a BIT at an institution in the United States found that people believed that such teams were important even if they were not previously aware of their existence (Reese, 2013).

Overall, participants in this study have a strong belief that BITs provide an effective mechanism to improving campus safety. This finding aligns with other reports that have suggested the practice is an effective strategy. As Bennett (2015) states:

We can take solace in the 2013 “Gun Violence: Prediction, Prevention & Policy, APA Panel of Experts Report,” which found that behavioral threat assessment and management teams are “the most effective tool currently available to prevent workplace violence or insider threats (p. 7).

Therefore institutions that have adopted best practices in multidisciplinary teams are engaging in the most effective way to address campus violence that is currently available to institutions.

7.7. Summary of Findings

This study sought to provide insight into a previously unexplored Canadian higher education context, the experience of BIT team members. The following is a summary of the findings of the various research question of this study. In order to situate the experience of team members it was first necessary to understand “To what degree do institutions use BITs? Table 7.1 provides an overview of the major findings on the use of BITs as compared to the American research on which Stage 1 and Stage 2 of this research was modelled. Overall this research shows that the Canadian

institutions who participated in this study have adopted BIT teams, but not to the same degree as the United States.

Table 7.1 *Use of Behavioural Intervention Teams Canada and United States*

	Canada 2014 N=143 (36.4%)	US 2011 (Gamm, et al., 2011) N-1044 (18.0%)	US 2014 (Van Brunt, 2014) N= Unknown
Use	73.1%	96.7%	94.0%
Years in Operation (avg.)	4.28	4.26	-
Name	TAT – 39.5% BIT – 15.9%	TAT – 18.3% BIT – 48.6%	-
Membership (top 5)	Counselling – 90.6% Security – 86.8% Student Affairs – 79.2% Housing – 62.3% Health Services - 56.6%	Counselling – 87.4% Security – 79.4% Housing – 71.4% Student Affairs – 65.1% Student Conduct- 64.0%	Counselling – 92% Security – 88% Student Affairs – 75% Housing – 59% Academic Affairs - 53%
Chair	Student Affairs – 68.4% * use of co-chair model	Student Affairs – 41.0%	Student Affairs – 44.0%
Meeting Frequency	Weekly – 26.3% As-Needed – 62.4%	Weekly – 31.0% As-Needed – 29.0%	Weekly – 39.0% As-Needed – 10.0%

Additionally, those Canadian institutions with teams use the name Threat Assessment Team (TAT) more often, thus demonstrating that their teams have not yet evolved into BIT teams that serve a more preventative and early intervention mandate as compared to the assessment of identified threats. The threat assessment function of Canadian teams was further supported when considering how often teams meet. Over two thirds of Canadian institutions meet only as-needed which is significant lower than American institutions, which more aligns with the established best practices of NaBITA.

The second research question focused on “What institutional variables such as size, location, and type influence the intervention practices?” A chi-square test of significance of Stage 1 data found that there was a relationship between the sizes of the student body of an institution and whether or not it had a team, specifically that large institutions were significantly more likely to have a team than small institutions.

Third, in order to understand the experience of being a team member, this research had to understand “What barriers and limitations do members of BITs believe

exist for the success of interventions?” The results of Stage 1 and 3 found comparable themes that highlighted that challenges fell into four categories: team issues, institutional issues, case complexity, and legal/policy issues. These issues provided a unique series of internal and external pressures that team members had to face as part of their work.

The fourth question concerned “To what degree do members of BITs view their assessment team as effective?” To understand the effectiveness of the practice it was important to identify what team members believed to be successful interventions. Stage 3 interviews provided insight and found that successful interventions were those where the concerning behaviours ceased, no one was injured, and hopefully included the student of concern being able to continue their studies. With this in mind, over 80% of Stage 1 and Stage 2 participants believe the practice of BITs to be an effective mechanism to addressing PSB, and 100% of Stage 3 interviewees agree that the practice is effective. The interviews also provided insight to understanding what team members perceive to why they are effective. Team members identified that the multidisciplinary nature of team membership was a key factor to the success, and more specifically that the personal backgrounds and expertise of team members beyond their institutional role was key to the ability for the team to effectively assess and intervene on complex cases of PSB.

Finally, the main research question of this study was “What is the experience of members of BITs that address PSB within Canadian higher education?” Using SEM a robust understanding of how members are influenced by the various social systems and conversely how such systems influence the work of BIT members. The influences were plotted on a model as illustrated in Figure 7.1 (see page 176). The model highlights that all social systems serve to play a pivotal role in influencing the experience of BIT team members. The model illustrated that teams have not yet been able to influence the social policy frameworks within which they operate beyond the development of institutional policies. The overall experience of the team members was viewed to be an fulfilling experience as team members believe they are making a positive contribution to their institutions despite the work being stressful.

7.8. Recommendations for Team Operations

This research study provided a comprehensive understanding of the current operational practices that Canadian BIT teams have implemented and contrasted those with established practices outlined within the literature. As previously noted, the majority of the recommendations for what and how teams should operate are derived from guidelines that are rarely based upon research, which poses a challenge towards the validity of recommendations. Without provincial or national data collection of the types or instances of campus violence and/or BIT interventions there will remain a lack of opportunity to test the effectiveness of work that BITs conduct. However, this research provided clear indication that the leaders most often in charge of BITs, SSAO, and those serving as members of such teams strongly believe that having such teams represents an effective method for institutions to address worrisome behaviour and take action to prevent violence from occurring. In considering participants' strong confidence in the process, there exists recommendations for BIT team operations that can be beneficial to enhance operational practices of team.

This research combined with the best practice guidelines highlighted the important role that team membership has on the effectiveness of multidisciplinary teams. Canadian teams should have a core team of diverse professionals that includes between six to eight members. The best practice recommendations of membership (Sokolow & Lewis, 2009; Sokolow, et al., 2014) are similar to the roles present within Canadian teams; thus, the undisputed membership should include a student affairs leader, a safety services leader, a mental health professional, and the person responsible for student conduct or case management. Additional core BIT members should reflect the function and expertise needed within the team. For example, if the team will address both student and staff behaviours of concern, it would be necessary to have a member of the human resources leadership on the team. Additionally, if the institution provides on-campus housing, having a member from this unit would be an appropriate core team member to support student-cases. However, institutions should not limit their membership to individuals based solely upon their role within the institution, but consider the skill-set needed to address PSB. Team members who participated in this research described how an individual's personal background as well as institutional role enhanced the effectiveness of the team's work. Therefore, institutions should look to experts within

their institutions who have an expertise that would otherwise be unrepresented, such as faculty who specialize in violence risk assessment, staff with a crime prevention background, individuals who have mental health assessment background, or individuals who have experience working with marginalized populations.

Overall, when considering team members, BITs should possess diverse institutional knowledge and expertise and represent backgrounds in both mental health and community safety. Regardless of position, members of the BIT team should have the role overtly articulated within their duties so as to avoid over burdening employees with the important work of BIT. As BIT best practices recommend weekly meetings, it is important to recognize the commitment of such meeting within the expected workload of members. As the interventions and decisions of the team require documentation and follow-up work with various stakeholders, a member of the team should have the time and capacity conduct such work on behalf of the team. This dedicated resource reduces the workload burden on team members and would serve to reduce the work pressures expressed by team members.

The next fundamental operational reality that must be attended to by institutions is the leadership of the team. While NaBITA resources suggested that the SSAOs should lead a BIT team (Sokolow, et al., 2014; Sokolow, et al., 2009), the results of this research have found that co-leadership between student affairs and safety services may represent a more beneficial leadership model. As the main objective of BITs is to benefit from the diversity of perspectives, a co-leadership responsibility provides an opportunity for individuals with diverse skill sets to be accountable for decisions as well as training and operational practices. While no research has been done on the benefits of this model, a shared leadership model may provide multiple opportunities to enhance the effectiveness of the team. Whether a single or dual leadership model is employed, the leader should have access to a trusted legal source. The work of violence risk assessment is complex, and often the various legal duties of the institution may be in conflict with individual's rights. Thus, a team leader should be authorized to seek legal guidance on a case-by-case basis to help ensure an appropriate intervention is selected.

The work of BIT teams is complex and requires that the institutional community is aware of the role and function of the team so that team members can be effective. For this reason, institutions should establish clear policies and procedures that teams use to

inform community members about how they conduct their work. Policies serve to govern the actions of the institution and provide the legal framework that informs the community of the expectations that institutional stakeholders hold (Shanahan, et al., 2015). Thus, the work of BIT teams should be clearly supported through established institutional policies. A mandate recognized in policy provides a clear understanding across the institution of the mandate and function of the team and helps to create a culture of trust for the work of the team, which helps to reinforce the early reporting of behaviours of concern. BIT policies should articulate operating procedures that the team follows when addressing each case and should include record keeping requirements, reporting obligations, privacy expectations, reporting process, and decision-making processes. Team leaders can then use these procedures to establish their operating practices and training opportunities to prepare team members to possess the needed skills and knowledge to complete the mandate of the team. In addition, if membership by institutional role is formalized within policy, job descriptions for such positions should be updated to reflect the tasks and qualifications necessary to complete this additional task.

Finally, team members who took part in this research reported participation on a team was a rewarding experience that they enjoyed; however, having a responsibility to make decisions on potential violence that can cause harm to others does negatively affect team members' emotional wellbeing by increasing stress and personal fear. It is important for institutional leaders, such as presidents, vice presidents, and deans, to be aware not only of the important function that team members play in maintaining the safety of the campus community, but also to recognize that participation in such a team can have an impact on the team members themselves. While, all team members expressed the dedication they have to participating on a BIT, institutional leaders, and especially team and human resource leaders, should consider how to recognize the impact such work can have on those conducting the work. This could include access to additional employee benefits such as: employee assistance and counselling, personal check-ins with team leaders, access to additional professional development opportunities, options for time off after difficult cases, and even rotational membership to provide team members with a period of respite.

7.9. Enhancing the Personal Practice of the Researcher

Much like how participants in this study acknowledged learning from their involvement on their institution's team, conducting this research served to enhance the author's practice in many ways. Throughout the course of time that this research was being conducted, I worked on various teams at different institutions. One of the most notable ways that this research enhanced my practice was through the time to consult the vast amounts of American literature on the topic. I was able to dedicate extensive amounts of time to critically review the various research and resources on the topic of BIT teams. Had I not been conducting this research, I would not have had the same amount of time to dedicate towards reviewing the literature, nor would I have been able to present this literature to the team on which I was working. Conducting this research and discovering these resources helped inform and improve my team's practices. Having the opportunity to be exposed to the fulsomeness of the literature has helped me to become comfortable in making recommendations for training and resources that my team can utilize. Specifically, I was able to attend many of the violence risk assessment professional training sessions, which most team members would not be able to experience. Therefore, the knowledge gained throughout this study has provided me with a greater level of expertise than I would not have had had I not conducted this research. Having had the chance to conduct the interviews also helped to enhance my practice. Listening to events and incidents described by other BIT members, all of whom represented different roles and institutions, provided me with a rich understanding of their experiences and gave me an opportunity to appreciate the diversity of knowledge and practice, not unlike the appreciation team members have for serving with multidisciplinary teammates. This helped me to further appreciate the importance that people from different roles within the institutions bring to the team. The examples of cases that team members have experienced also gave me an opportunity to reflect on how our team may have addressed the same case. Finally, the knowledge, skills, and learning that I was able to gain through conducting this research have also enhanced my confidence when participating in difficult interventions. As described by interviewees, the more exposure or practice they had with the work the more confident they became in the team's decisions. I found the same to be true for me, as I gained more knowledge and exposure to other people's learning. I became more comfortable with behavioural intervention practices and better able to address similar cases within my own institution.

7.10. Future Research

The majority of research on campus violence has been case study data based upon unfortunate incidents of tragedy being used to provide insight to help prevent similar acts from occurring. BIT teams came to fruition as a result of such post-incident case reviews. As such, it is difficult to empirically assess the outcomes of BITs and to ascertain if the actions taken actively prevented an act of violence from occurring. Readdean (2016) proposed using a peer-based system review model that is currently employed within healthcare settings to assess performance. Readdean suggested that having a system of professionals who review the actions of BITs could provide a useful method to evaluate the performance of such teams. A pilot test of a peer based review model was tried within a private American institution. The study piloted the model with a sub-committee of the BIT team being tasked to review 22 randomly selected cases (7% of the annual cases) based upon established audit criteria (Readdean, 2016). The pilot provided an opportunity for the team to review and reflect on cases and identify areas in which improvement was possible. The phased peer-based review process saw improvements in areas of compliance such as chronological accounting of events and identification of participants. The pilot suggested that a peer-based model increased the conflict and tension of team members; therefore, caution should be exercised and further study is needed. Readdean's study demonstrated the complexity of assessing and evaluating the effectiveness of BIT teams, despite the common belief that teams are an effective method to prevent campus violence.

NaBITA has developed an assessment tool called the Core-Q10 (National Behavioral Intervention Team Association, 2014). This tool does not measure success based upon outcomes; rather, it is an evaluation of how the institution's team has adopted the 10 core principles of BIT teams as identified by NaBITA. The tool provides a series of questions that ask teams to rate whether or not a core quality element is present, in development, or not present. This tool helps teams to assess their practices against those of NaBITA's suggested best practices. It is important to note that the principles were established based upon NaBITA staff's assessment of research within the field. The tool is suggested to provide teams with opportunities to: assess the team against national standards, aid in securing funding, identify weaknesses of the team practices, and help prepare for future formalization of BIT functionality (Van Brunt,

2014b). The Core-Q10 was tested with four institutions' BIT teams to explore their perceptions of the instrument; these BIT members described the tool as being a useful way to structure a team's internal assessment of their activities (Van Brunt, 2014b). This tool provides a simplistic method to assess how a team has implemented a series of best practices. To date, there are no reliability or validity measures a team can use to assess team outcomes.

Most likely, research in campus violence will continue to rely upon case study data on institutions that have had incidents of campus violence. As BIT teams focus their actions on concerning behaviour and not simply incidents of targeted violence, future research should compare incidents of disruption and violence and explore the affect of BITs on occurrence and severity levels. While the United States has the Clery Act that requires all institutions to report their campus crime statistics, unfortunately, in Canada, there is no provincial or federal requirement or standard for reviewing violence or disruption on campus. Were Canadian institutions to collect and amalgamate such information, annual Canadian data could be compared for institutions before and after implementation of BIT teams. Teams that have been successful at intervening in potential violence can foreseeably be seen to have a reduction in incidents on a per capita basis. To enhance such research, teams could be assessed using the Core-Q10 assessment tool and compared to campus violence statistics to understand the impact of effective team processes and possible violence prevention outcomes.

Finally, there remains a gap in the literature on Canadian campus violence, prevention, and occurrences. There exists a need to further explore the types of student behaviours causing Canadian institutions concerns. With the findings of this research confirming that BIT teams are a common practice among Canadian institutions, further research on the types behaviours of concern being addressed and the types of interventions being implemented is necessary. Such research will enable Canadian institutions of higher education to use Canadian research to inform their practices and not rely upon American studies that represent a different educational and societal landscape and therefore most likely different manifestations of PSB.

7.11. Conclusion

This research sought to determine the use and perceived effectiveness of BIT teams as a mechanism for addressing PSB in Canada in order to understand the experience of team members. Using a multi-staged mixed method approach this research provided a window into the previously unknown experiences of BIT members. The results of this study highlighted that the majority of Canadian institutions have adopted the American practice of BIT teams and that much of the operational activities of teams are similar to recommendations for campus violence prevention. Canadian teams differ from their American counterparts mainly in the leadership structure and meeting frequency. Canadian teams often operate with a co-leadership model, whereas American teams tend to be led by the SSAO. Additionally Canadian teams were found to operate in an ad hoc manner and have not yet fully realized the potential of establishing a regular meeting structure. Moving away from an ad hoc meeting structure would help create a culture of reporting within the campus community and empower the team to better align with current best practices. The foundation for implementing multidisciplinary teams is to establish formalized systems that break down information silos and form a wider circle of care within the institution.

Despite Canadian teams not fully complying with American standards of practice, team members overwhelmingly viewed the BIT process as an effective method for addressing PSBs. Team members experienced challenges that could impact their effectiveness, and these mainly arise from the complexity of the work necessary to assess the risk of a person's behaviour within the multifaceted obligations that an institution has to its students, staff, and community. Team members described that these obstacles are not insurmountable and that the diversity of backgrounds and experience of their fellow team members are a cornerstone to the team's effectiveness. Participating on a BIT is an experience that team members unanimously acknowledged is personally fulfilling and enhanced their ability to complete their day-to-day work in their role within the institution. However, conducting the high-pressured work of violence assessment does cause additional stress and can impact the personal wellbeing of team members. Overall, Canadian team members are eager to learn and wish to implement best practices. This research provided a starting point for those tasked with leading their institution's BIT team.

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Appendixes

Appendix A: Senior Student Affairs Officer Survey

A National Study of the use of Behaviour Assessment Teams by Canadian Institutions of Higher Education

You are about to participate in a short survey as part of the **National Study of the use of Behaviour Assessment Teams by Canadian Institutions of Higher Education**. It should take you about 10 minutes.

Principal Investigator Chris Rogerson, Simon Fraser University, [telephone number]

I have been invited by Chris Rogerson, Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University, to participate in a research project entitled **A National Study of the Use of Behaviour Intervention Teams in Addressing Problematic Student Behaviour at Canadian Institutions of Higher Education** which encompasses the following:

Project Purpose

The purpose of this research is to understand the use of multi-disciplinary teams to address problematic student behaviour. The research will explore the following question: "What is the experience of the Behaviour Intervention Teams (BIT) as an intervention strategy when dealing with problematic student behaviour within Canadian higher education? This is being completed through a multi-staged national study to understand the frequency, membership, and effectiveness of such teams in order to help develop Canadian best practices in addressing problematic student behaviour to avoid campus tragedy.

Research Procedures

There are three main stages of this research. You have been invited to participate in Stage 1, and to help identify participants for Stage 2 and 3. The procedures for each stage are:

Stage 1: This stage is completing a short 16 question on-line survey that should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Upon completion of the questions should your institution have a multi-disciplinary team, you will be invited to include your institution within the second stage of the research. To do so you will be given a link to an additional single question survey that will take only 1 minute to complete.

Stage 2: This stage involves members of multi-disciplinary teams completing a 41 question on-line survey that will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. At the end of the survey participants will be invited to participate in stage 3 of this research by completing a separate 4 question on-line survey that will take about 2 minutes to complete.

Stage 3: The final stage of the research will consist of one-hour interviews that will be scheduled at the convenience of the participant.

Confidentiality:

Participation in this research study is strictly voluntary, and your responses will remain anonymous, in accordance with the legal and ethical responsibilities of the researcher set out by the Tri-Council Ethical Guidelines. Under no circumstances will answers on the survey be linked to the identity of any participants. All data collected through this survey will be stored on the secure SFU Survey Database, within a secure server in Canada. Data will be analyzed and reported as a summary to ensure there is no ability to identify individual participants or specific organizations. No participant or institutional identification will be used at any time. You will not be asked to disclose the name of individuals in the survey questionnaire. The information resulting from this research survey may be used in future publications or presentations, as well as my doctoral dissertation. Any identifying information will be removed prior to these publications or presentations. All data collected throughout all three stages of the research will be kept in a locked filing cabinet, in a locked office, accessible only to the researcher and my senior supervisor of this research. I understand that I may refuse to participate or withdraw my participation in this project at any time without consequence.

Benefits of Participation:

This research will help create a national understanding of the current practices used by institutions to address problematic student behaviour and gain insight into the effectiveness of Behaviour Intervention Teams. This research is significant to post-secondary institutions in Canada as there is no research conducted in Canada regarding the use of Behaviour Intervention Teams. The results will help present a comprehensive review of current methods used by Canadian institutions to address problematic student behaviour and help develop Canadian specific principles and practices for positively addressing such behaviour.

Remuneration/Compensation:

There is no remuneration or compensation for my participation.

Risks to Participants:

Overall, potential risks associated with participation in the study are considered minimal risk. There are no physical risks as a result of participation in this research project. As a participant I will be asked to provide information about my experience in addressing cases of problematic student behaviour. Completing the survey may cause participants to recall previous cases of problematic student behaviour that they had previously encountered.

Contact for More Information:

I understand that I may ask any questions I might have about the project with either the chief researcher Chris Rogerson, [telephone number] or [email address]. As a participant of this project, I can contact the lead researcher, Chris Rogers to receive a copy of the final report.

Contact for Concerns about the Study:

I understand that I may ask any questions or register any complaint I might have about the project with the Director, Office of Research Ethics via e-mail [email address] or phone [telephone number]. I have the right not to answer any questions and I have the right to withdraw my participation in the study at anytime. If you consent to participate as an informed participant you will be asked to do so within the survey. If not, you are not required to do anything further.

Q1 . In the email where you were invited to participate in this research you were provided an Letter of Informed Consent . By selecting YES below, you provide your consent to participate in this study. You understand that you can withdraw from the study at any time without any consequence to you. If you do not want to participate please select "NO" to exit the survey.

- Yes
 No

This section of this survey will focus on the institutional response to problematic student behaviour.

For the following questions the word "team" is defined as a general term that could describe a committee, task force, or group of institutional representatives. The term "problematic student behaviour" is defined as "high risk students who are distressed and causing major disruption for the institution" (Hollingsworth, et al., 2009, p. 44).

Q2 . Does your institution have a team that is used to address problematic student behaviour? If NO please proceed to question 11

- Yes
- No

Q3 . What is the name of the team that addresses problematic student behaviour?

Q4 . How many years has the team been in operation?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 9
- 10 or more
- Unknown

Q5 . Does the Chief Student Affairs position at your institution have oversight responsibility for this team?

- Yes
- No

Q6 . If you answered "no" to the question above, please indicate who has oversight responsibility.

Q7 . Considering the use of teams to address problematic student behaviour, to what extent do you agree with the following statements

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am confident our team is adequately meeting institutional expectations :	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am confident that our institution is meeting the reasonable professional standards to effectively manage our legal liabilities when dealing with problematic student behaviour :	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The team is effectively addressing problematic student behaviour for the institution :	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The team was created to make sure that the institution is minimizing its liability based upon risks associated with recent high profile violent acts committed on post secondary campuses :	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Within the past 5 years this institution has had to address an incident of problematic student behaviour that posed a significant risk to the safety of the institution. :	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe that the cases of problematic student behaviour the team addresses are becoming increasingly complex. :	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There has been an increase in the number of cases our team addresses. :	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q8 . What organizational unit has the responsibility to immediately responding to a student's actions (behaviour, writing, statements, etc) that pose a risk to the safety of others or the institution

- Student Services
- Safety Services
- Academic Affairs
- Human Resources
- Legal Affairs
- Other

Q9 . What organizational unit has the responsibility to decide how the institution will respond when a student's actions (behaviour, writing, statements, etc) that pose a risk to the safety of others or the institution

- Student Services
- Safety Services
- Academic Affairs
- Human Resource
- Legal Affairs
- Other

Q10 . What organizational unit has the responsibility to decide the disciplinary response when a student's actions (behaviour, writing, statements, etc) that pose a risk to the safety of others or the institution

- Student Services
- Safety Services
- Academic Affairs
- Human Resources
- Legal Affairs
- Other

Institution Demographics

The following questions are questions about the institution at which you work.

Please note that all demographic information collected will be aggregated to protect your confidentiality and that of your institution.

Q11 . Please chose the category of institution that best fits your institution

- Community College
- Primarily Undergraduate University
- Comprehensive University
- Medical Doctoral
- Polytechnique/Technical Institute
- University College
- Other

Q12 . In which province/territory is the institution located?

- British Columbia
- Alberta
- Saskatchewan
- Manitoba
- Ontario
- Quebec
- Newfoundland and Labrador
- Nova Scotia
- Prince Edward Island
- New Brunswick
- Yukon
- Northwest Territories
- Nunavut

Q13. What is the size of the FTE (Full Time Equivalent) student enrolment at your institution.

- less than 1,000
- 1,000 - 2,499
- 2,500 - 4,999
- 5,000 - 4,999
- 5,000 - 9,999
- 10, 000 - 14,999
- 15, 000 - 19,999
- 20,000 - 29,999
- 30,000 - 34,999
- 35,000 - 39,999

Q14. What is the population of the city in which the institution is located?

- 0 - 24 999
- 25 000 - 49 999
- 50 000 - 99 999
- 100 000 - 149 999
- 150 000 - 199 999
- 200 000 - 249 999
- 250 000 - 349 999
- over 350 000

Q15. Does your institution provide on campus student housing?

- Yes - Institution Operated
- Yes - Private Operated
- Yes - Mix of Institution and Private Operators
- No

Q16. How many students live on campus?

Q17. Is the position that you hold within the institution considered to be the Chief Student Affairs position?

- Yes
- No

Q18 . What is the title of your position?

Thank you for completing Stage 1 of this research. Please read below for information about participating in Stage 2 of this research.

Stage 2 Procedures

Within the next few weeks, a second survey is scheduled to be circulated. The desired participants for that survey would be individual members of those institutional teams who address problematic student behaviour. As the member of such teams is unknown, it is requested that if you indicated above that your institution has such a team that members will be invited to participate in a short 41 question survey.

To ensure the anonymity of your answers to this survey, a link will be available in the next question that you can use to answer a short 1 question survey. This is done separately to ensure the anonymity of your responses to this survey.

To anonymously participate in Stage 2 of this research please click on the link within the next question to answer a 1 question survey.

To receive the second survey link please click on the link below.

SURVEY LINK

Submit

Close

Appendix B: Senior Student Affairs Officer Letter of Invitation



FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Central City Galleria 5
250 – 13450 102nd Avenue
Surrey, BC, V5A 1S6

TEL [telephone number]
FAX [telephone number]

[email address]
www.educ.sfu.ca

Stage 1 - Senior Student Affairs Officer Survey

Study Name: A National Study of the use of Behavioural Intervention Teams in Addressing Problematic Student Behaviour at Canadian Institutions of Higher Education

Ethics Approval: 2013s0636

Principal Investigator

Chris Rogerson, Simon Fraser University, [telephone number]

Project Purpose

The purpose of this research is to understand the use of multi-disciplinary teams to address problematic student behaviour. The research will explore the following question: “What is the experience of the Behavioural Intervention Teams (BIT) as an intervention strategy when dealing with problematic student behaviour within Canadian higher education?” This is being completed through a multi-staged national study to understand the frequency, membership, and effectiveness of such teams in order to help develop Canadian best practices in addressing problematic student behaviour to avoid campus tragedy.

Research Procedures

There are three main stages of this research. You have been invited to participate in Stage 1, and to help identify participants for Stage 2 and 3. The procedures for each stage are:

Stage 1: This stage is completing a short 16 question on-line survey that should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Upon completion of the questions should your

institution have a multi-disciplinary team, you will be invited to include your institution within the second stage of the research. To do so you will be given a link to an additional single question survey that will take only 1 minute to complete.

Stage 2: This stage involves members of multi-disciplinary teams completing a 41 question on-line survey that will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. At the end of the survey participants will be invited to participate in stage 3 of this research by completing a separate 4 question on-line survey that will take about 2 minutes to complete.

Stage 3: The final stage of the research will consist of one-hour interviews that will be scheduled at the convenience of the participant.

Confidentiality:

Participation in this research study is strictly voluntary, and your responses will remain anonymous, in accordance with the legal and ethical responsibilities of the researcher set out by the Tri-Council Ethical Guidelines. Under no circumstances will answers on the survey be linked to the identity of any participants. All data collected through this survey will be stored on the secure SFU Survey Database, within a secure server in Canada. Data will be analyzed and reported as a summary to ensure there is no ability to identify individual participants or specific organizations. No participant or institutional identification will be used at any time. You will not be asked to disclose the name of individuals in the survey questionnaire. The information resulting from this research survey may be used in future publications or presentations, as well as my doctoral dissertation. Any identifying information will be removed prior to these publications or presentations. All data collected throughout all three stages of the research will be kept in a locked filing cabinet, in a locked office, accessible only to the researcher and my senior supervisor of this research.

I understand that I may refuse to participate or withdraw my participation in this project at any time without consequence.

Benefits of Participation:

This research will help create a national understanding of the current practices used by institutions to address problematic student behaviour and gain insight into the effectiveness of Behavioural Intervention Teams. This research is significant to post-secondary institutions in Canada as there is no research conducted in Canada regarding the use of Behavioural Intervention Teams. The results will help present a comprehensive review of current methods used by Canadian institutions to address problematic student behaviour and help develop Canadian specific principles and practices for positively addressing such behaviour.

Remuneration/Compensation:

There is no remuneration or compensation for my participation.

Risks to Participants:

Overall, potential risks associated with participation in the study are considered minimal risk. There are no physical risks as a result of participation in this research project.

As a participant I will be asked to provide information about my experience in addressing cases of problematic student behaviour. Completing the survey may cause participants to recall previous cases of problematic student behaviour that they had previously encountered.

Contact for More Information:

I understand that I may ask any questions I might have about the project with either the chief researcher Chris Rogerson, [telephone number] or [email address]. As a participant of this project, I can contact the lead researcher, Chris Rogers to receive a copy of the final report.

Contact for Concerns about the Study:

I understand that I may ask any questions or register any complaint I might have about the project with the Director, Office of Research Ethics via e-mail [email address] or phone [telephone number].

Appendix C: Senior Student Affairs Officer Informed Consent Form



FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Central City Galleria 5
250 – 13450 102nd Avenue
Surrey, BC, V5A 1S6

TEL [telephone number]
FAX [telephone number]

[email address]
www.educ.sfu.ca

Informed Consent: Stage 1 - Senior Student Affairs Officer Survey

Study Name: A National Study of the use of Behavioural Intervention Teams in Addressing Problematic Student Behaviour at Canadian Institutions of Higher Education

Ethics Approval: 2013s0636

Principal Investigator

Chris Rogerson, Simon Fraser University, [telephone number]

I have been invited by Chris Rogerson, Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University, to participate in a research project entitled **A National Study of the Use of Behavioural Intervention Teams in Addressing Problematic Student Behaviour at Canadian Institutions of Higher Education** which encompasses the following:

Project Purpose

The purpose of this research is to understand the use of multi-disciplinary teams to address problematic student behaviour. The research will explore the following question: "What is the experience of the Behavioural Intervention Teams (BIT) as an intervention strategy when dealing with problematic student behaviour within Canadian higher education?" This is being completed through a multi-staged national study to understand the frequency, membership, and effectiveness of such teams in order to help develop Canadian best practices in addressing problematic student behaviour to avoid campus tragedy.

Research Procedures

There are three main stages of this research. You have been invited to participate in

Stage 1, and to help identify participants for Stage 2 and 3. The procedures for each stage are:

Stage 1: This stage is completing a short 16 question on-line survey that should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Upon completion of the questions should your institution have a multi-disciplinary team, you will be invited to include your institution within the second stage of the research. To do so you will be given a link to an additional single question survey that will take only 1 minute to complete.

Stage 2: This stage involves members of multi-disciplinary teams completing a 41 question on-line survey that will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. At the end of the survey participants will be invited to participate in stage 3 of this research by completing a separate 4 question on-line survey that will take about 2 minutes to complete.

Stage 3: The final stage of the research will consist of one-hour interviews that will be scheduled at the convenience of the participant.

Confidentiality:

Participation in this research study is strictly voluntary, and your responses will remain anonymous, in accordance with the legal and ethical responsibilities of the researcher set out by the Tri-Council Ethical Guidelines. Under no circumstances will answers on the survey be linked to the identity of any participants. All data collected through this survey will be stored on the secure SFU Survey Database, within a secure server in Canada. Data will be analyzed and reported as a summary to ensure there is no ability to identify individual participants or specific organizations. No participant or institutional identification will be used at any time. You will not be asked to disclose the name of individuals in the survey questionnaire. The information resulting from this research survey may be used in future publications or presentations, as well as my doctoral dissertation. Any identifying information will be removed prior to these publications or presentations. All data collected throughout all three stages of the research will be kept in a locked filing cabinet, in a locked office, accessible only to the researcher and my senior supervisor of this research.

I understand that I may refuse to participate or withdraw my participation in this project at any time without consequence.

Benefits of Participation:

This research will help create a national understanding of the current practices used by institutions to address problematic student behaviour and gain insight into the effectiveness of Behavioural Intervention Teams. This research is significant to post-secondary institutions in Canada as there is no research conducted in Canada regarding the use of Behavioural Intervention Teams. The results will help present a comprehensive review of current methods used by Canadian institutions to address problematic student behaviour and help develop Canadian specific principles and practices for positively addressing such behaviour.

Remuneration/Compensation:

There is no remuneration or compensation for my participation.

Risks to Participants:

Overall, potential risks associated with participation in the study are considered minimal risk. There are no physical risks as a result of participation in this research project.

As a participant I will be asked to provide information about my experience in addressing cases of problematic student behaviour. Completing the survey may cause participants to recall previous cases of problematic student behaviour that they had previously encountered.

Contact for More Information:

I understand that I may ask any questions I might have about the project with either the chief researcher Chris Rogerson, [telephone number] or [email address]. As a participant of this project, I can contact the lead researcher, Chris Rogers to receive a copy of the final report.

Contact for Concerns about the Study:

I understand that I may ask any questions or register any complaint I might have about the project with the Director, Office of Research Ethics via e-mail [email address] or phone [telephone number].

I have the right not to answer any questions and I have the right to withdraw my participation in the study at anytime. If you consent to participate as an informed participant you will be asked to do so within the survey. If not, you are not required to do anything further.

Appendix D: Senior Student Affairs Officer Reminders

Reminder 1

Dear SSAO

On December 2, 2013 you received an email from me requesting your participation in a national study I am conducting as a part of my doctoral research. If you have already completed the survey I would like to sincerely thank you for your participation.

If you have not yet had an opportunity complete the online survey I would like to once again request that you assist me in studying this important area of work within the profession of Student Affairs. I have included my original email below should you wish to participate.

Sincerely

Reminder 2

Dear SSAO

This is the final email you will receive regarding the research on disruptive student behaviour. If you have already completed the survey you may ignore this email. If you have not yet completed the survey and still wish to participate, then please do so before the survey closes on Friday February 14, 2014.

The link can be found in the original email below.

Thank you again for your time.

Sincerely,

Appendix E: Senior Student Affairs Officer Email Survey

A National Study of the use of Behaviour Intervention Teams by Canadian Institutions of Higher Education

The following 1 question survey is to provide the contact information of a the chair of the multi-disciplinary team your institution uses in a manner that maintains the anonymity of your previous answers.

In the next question you are asked to provide the email for the person responsible for your institutions multi-disciplinary team. This email address will be used to send an invitation to participate in the second stage of this interview process. This stage involves:

A request for the person to send an invitation to participate to all members of their team. Each participant will be asked to complete a 41 question on-line survey that should take no longer than 20 minutes to complete.

Q1 . Please type the email address of the person responsible for the multi-disciplinary team at your institution. An invitation to participate in the second stage of this research will be sent to this email address within the next 4 weeks.

Submit

Appendix F: Letter of Invitation – Team Members



FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Central City Galleria 5
250 – 13450 102nd Avenue
Surrey, BC, V5A 1S6

TEL [telephone number]
FAX [telephone number]

[email address]
www.educ.sfu.ca

Stage 2 – Team Member Survey

Study Name: A National Study of the use of Behavioural Intervention Teams in Addressing Problematic Student Behaviour at Canadian Institutions of Higher Education

Ethics Approval: 2013s0636

Principal Investigator

Chris Rogerson, Simon Fraser University, [telephone number]

Project Purpose

The purpose of this research is to understand the use of multi-disciplinary teams to address problematic student behaviour. The research will explore the following question: “What is the experience of the Behavioural Intervention Teams (BIT) as an intervention strategy when dealing with problematic student behaviour within Canadian higher education?” This is being completed through a multi-staged national study to understand the frequency, membership, and effectiveness of such teams in order to help develop Canadian best practices in addressing problematic student behaviour to avoid campus tragedy.

Research Procedures

There are three main stages of this research. You have been invited to participate in Stage 2 and 3. The procedures for each stage are:

Stage 1: This stage was a short 16 question on-line survey that took approximately 10 minutes to complete. Upon completion of the questions participants with a multi-disciplinary team were invited to include their institution for the second stage of the research.

Stage 2: This stage involves members of multi-disciplinary teams completing a 41 question on-line survey that will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. At the end of the survey participants will be invited to participate in stage 3 of this research by completing a separate 4 question on-line survey that will take about 2 minutes to complete.

Stage 3: The final stage of the research will consist of one-hour interviews that will be scheduled at the convenience of the participant.

Confidentiality:

Participation in this research study is strictly voluntary, and your responses will remain anonymous, in accordance with the legal and ethical responsibilities of the researcher set out by the Tri-Council Ethical Guidelines. Under no circumstances will answers on the survey be linked to the identity of any participants. All data collected through this survey will be stored on the secure SFU Survey Database, within a secure server in Canada. Data will be analyzed and reported as a summary to ensure there is no ability to identify individual participants or specific organizations. No participant or institutional identification will be used at any time. You will not be asked to disclose the name of individuals in the survey questionnaire. The information resulting from this research survey may be used in future publications or presentations, as well as my doctoral dissertation. Any identifying information will be removed prior to these publications or presentations. All data collected throughout all three stages of the research will be kept in a locked filing cabinet, in a locked office, accessible only to the researcher and my senior supervisor of this research.

I understand that I may refuse to participate or withdraw my participation in this project at any time without consequence.

Benefits of Participation:

This research will help create a national understanding of the current practices used by institutions to address problematic student behaviour and gain insight into the effectiveness of Behavioural Intervention Teams. This research is significant to post-secondary institutions in Canada as there is no research conducted in Canada regarding the use of Behavioural Intervention Teams. The results will help present a comprehensive review of current methods used by Canadian institutions to address problematic student behaviour and help develop Canadian specific principles and practices for positively addressing such behaviour.

Remuneration/Compensation:

There is no remuneration or compensation for my participation.

Risks to Participants:

Overall, potential risks associated with participation in the study are considered minimal risk. There are no physical risks as a result of participation in this research project.

As a participant I will be asked to provide information about my experience in addressing cases of problematic student behaviour. Completing the survey may cause participants to recall previous cases of problematic student behaviour that they had previously encountered.

Contact for More Information:

I understand that I may ask any questions I might have about the project with either the chief researcher Chris Rogerson, [telephone number] or [email address]. As a participant of this project, I can contact the lead researcher, Chris Rogers to receive a copy of the final report.

Contact for Concerns about the Study:

I understand that I may ask any questions or register any complaint I might have about the project with the Director, Office of Research Ethics via e-mail [email address] or phone [telephone number].

Appendix G: Team Informed Consent Form



FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Central City Galleria 5
250 – 13450 102nd Avenue
Surrey, BC, V5A 1S6

TEL [telephone number]
FAX [telephone number]

[email address]
www.educ.sfu.ca

Informed Consent: Stage 2 – Team Member Survey

Study Name: A National Study of the use of Behavioural Intervention Teams in Addressing Problematic Student Behaviour at Canadian Institutions of Higher Education

Ethics Approval: 2013s0636

Principal Investigator

Chris Rogerson, Simon Fraser University, [telephone number]

I have been invited by Chris Rogerson, Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University, to participate in a research project entitled **A National Study of the Use of Behavioural Intervention Teams in Addressing Problematic Student Behaviour at Canadian Institutions of Higher Education** which encompasses the following:

Project Purpose

The purpose of this research is to understand the use of multi-disciplinary teams to address problematic student behaviour. The research will explore the following question: “What is the experience of the Behavioural Intervention Teams (BIT) as an intervention strategy when dealing with problematic student behaviour within Canadian higher education?” This is being completed through a multi-staged national study to understand the frequency, membership, and effectiveness of such teams in order to help develop Canadian best practices in addressing problematic student behaviour to avoid campus tragedy.

Research Procedures

There are three main stages of this research. You have been invited to participate in Stage 2 and 3. The procedures for each stage are:

Stage 1: This stage was a short 16 question on-line survey that took approximately 10

minutes to complete. Upon completion of the questions participants with a multi-disciplinary team were invited to include their institution for the second stage of the research.

Stage 2: This stage involves members of multi-disciplinary teams completing a 41 question on-line survey that will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. At the end of the survey participants will be invited to participate in stage 3 of this research by completing a separate 4 question on-line survey that will take about 2 minutes to complete.

Stage 3: The final stage of the research will consist of one-hour interviews that will be scheduled at the convenience of the participant.

Confidentiality:

Participation in this research study is strictly voluntary, and your responses will remain anonymous, in accordance with the legal and ethical responsibilities of the researcher set out by the Tri-Council Ethical Guidelines. Under no circumstances will answers on the survey be linked to the identity of any participants. All data collected through this survey will be stored on the secure SFU Survey Database, within a secure server in Canada. Data will be analyzed and reported as a summary to ensure there is no ability to identify individual participants or specific organizations. No participant or institutional identification will be used at any time. You will not be asked to disclose the name of individuals in the survey questionnaire. The information resulting from this research survey may be used in future publications or presentations, as well as my doctoral dissertation. Any identifying information will be removed prior to these publications or presentations. All data collected throughout all three stages of the research will be kept in a locked filing cabinet, in a locked office, accessible only to the researcher and my senior supervisor of this research.

I understand that I may refuse to participate or withdraw my participation in this project at any time without consequence.

Benefits of Participation:

This research will help create a national understanding of the current practices used by institutions to address problematic student behaviour and gain insight into the effectiveness of Behavioural Intervention Teams. This research is significant to post-secondary institutions in Canada as there is no research conducted in Canada regarding the use of Behavioural Intervention Teams. The results will help present a comprehensive review of current methods used by Canadian institutions to address problematic student behaviour and help develop Canadian specific principles and practices for positively addressing such behaviour.

Remuneration/Compensation:

There is no remuneration or compensation for my participation.

Risks to Participants:

Overall, potential risks associated with participation in the study are considered minimal risk. There are no physical risks as a result of participation in this research project.

As a participant I will be asked to provide information about my experience in addressing cases of problematic student behaviour. Completing the survey may cause participants to recall previous cases of problematic student behaviour that they had previously encountered.

Contact for More Information:

I understand that I may ask any questions I might have about the project with either the chief researcher Chris Rogerson, [telephone number] or [email address]. As a participant of this project, I can contact the lead researcher, Chris Rogers to receive a copy of the final report.

Contact for Concerns about the Study:

I understand that I may ask any questions or register any complaint I might have about the project with the Director, Office of Research Ethics via e-mail [email address] or phone [telephone number].

I have the right not to answer any questions and I have the right to withdraw my participation in the study at anytime. If you consent to participate as an informed participant you will be asked to do so within the survey. If not, you are not required to do anything further.

Appendix H: Team Survey Reminders

Reminder 1

Dear Team Member

I am writing as a gentle reminder to help circulate the second stage of my research to all members of your institution's team that addresses problematic student behaviour. Below is the original email that you were sent.

This survey is for all members of your multi-disciplinary team to complete. I ask that you forward this request to all members of your team inviting them to participate in this research. This survey will close at the end of the month and I hope, as many team members as possible are able to complete the survey prior to the research closing.

I thank you in advance for encouraging your colleagues to participate in this research.

Sincerely,

Reminder 2

Dear Team Member

I am contacting you one last time to ask that you assist me in asking members of your multi-disciplinary team to participate in this research project. It has come to my attention that some recipients may have received the invitation and were not aware that your institution chose to receive the invitation to this stage of the research. For this reason, I ask that you encourage your team to participate in the second stage of the research. I have attached the original documents that fully outline the research and the original email message. The survey will close on July 23rd, 2014.

To participate members are asked to complete a short online survey that should take no more than 15-20 minutes. At the end of the survey, you will have an option to participate in the final stage of the research project (a one hour interview). To participate in survey participants can go to XXXX.

If you have any questions you can contact me at XXX.

Sincerely,

Appendix I: Team Member Interview Survey

Opportunity to participate in an interview for Stage 3 of the National Student of the use of Behaviour Intervention Teams by Canadian Institutions of Higher Educaiton

Within the next few months, a small group of members of teams will be contacted to participate in an interview about their experience being a member of such teams.

Interviews will take approximately 1 hour of time and will be scheduled for a date that is convenient for the participant. You will be provided the opportunity to complete interviews either in person or using online methods. All interviews will be recorded and you will be provided with a transcript of the interview.

This research strives to respect the potential desire of institutions to maintain anonymity and respect the confidentiality of participants. For this reason, you have been asked to complete the following questions separate from your previous answers in Stage 2. The following questions provide your contact information so as you can participate in the third stage of research. A separate invitation to participate and informed consent will be sent to the email address provided.

If you are interested in potentially participating in an interview about your experiences as a member of a team are asked to submit your contact information by answering the next 4 questions. Only a small sample of interviews will be conducted. Participation is completely voluntary and confidential.

Q1 . Please answer the following in the space provided

First Name :	<input type="text"/>
Last Name :	<input type="text"/>
Email Address :	<input type="text"/>
Position Title :	<input type="text"/>
How many years have your worked in Higher Education :	<input type="text"/>

Q2 . In which province/territory is the institution located?

- British Columbia
- Alberta
- Saskatchewan
- Manitoba
- Ontraio
- Quebec
- New Foundland & Labrador
- Nova Scotia
- New Brunswick
- Prince Edward Island
- Yukon
- Northwest Territories
- Nunavut

Appendix J: Team Member Survey

A National Study of the use of Behaviour Intervention Teams by Canadian Institutions of Higher Education

You are about to participate in a short survey as part of the **National Study of the use of Behaviour Assessment Teams by Canadian Institutions of Higher Education**. It should take you about 20 minutes.

Principal Investigator Chris Rogerson, Simon Fraser University, [telephone number].

I have been invited by Chris Rogerson, Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University, to participate in a research project entitled A National Study of the Use of Behaviour Intervention Teams in Addressing Problematic Student Behaviour at Canadian Institutions of Higher Education which encompasses the following:

Project Purpose

The purpose of this research is to understand the use of multi-disciplinary teams to address problematic student behaviour. The research will explore the following question: "What is the experience of the Behaviour Intervention Teams (BIT) as an intervention strategy when dealing with problematic student behaviour within Canadian higher education? This is being completed through a multi-staged national study to understand the frequency, membership, and effectiveness of such teams in order to help develop Canadian best practices in addressing problematic student behaviour to avoid campus tragedy.

Research Procedures

There are three main stages of this research. You have been invited to participate in Stage 2 and 3. The procedures for each stage are:

Stage 1: This stage involved a short 18 question on-line survey. Upon completion of the questions institution that have a multi-disciplinary team completed a single question survey to participants for the second stage.

Stage 2: This stage involves members of multi-disciplinary teams completing a 41 question on-line survey that will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. At the end of the survey participants will be invited to participate in stage 3 of this research by completing a separate 4 question on-line survey that will take about 2 minutes to complete.

Stage 3: The final stage of the research will consist of one-hour interviews that will be scheduled at the convenience of the participant.

Confidentiality:

Participation in this research study is strictly voluntary, and your responses will remain anonymous, in accordance with the legal and ethical responsibilities of the researcher set out by the Tri-Council Ethical Guidelines. Under no circumstances will answers on the survey be linked to the identity of any participants. All data collected through this survey will be stored on the secure SFU Survey Database, within a secure server in Canada. Data will be analyzed and reported as a summary to ensure there is no ability to identify individual participants or specific organizations. No participant or institutional identification will be used at any time. You will not be asked to disclose the name of individuals in the survey questionnaire. The information resulting from this research survey may be used in future publications or presentations, as well as my doctoral dissertation. Any identifying information will be removed prior to these publications or presentations. All data collected throughout all three stages of the research will be kept in a locked filing cabinet, in a locked office, accessible only to the researcher and my senior supervisor of this research. I understand that I may refuse to participate or withdraw my participation in this project at any time without consequence.

Benefits of Participation:

This research will help create a national understanding of the current practices used by institutions to address problematic student behaviour and gain insight into the effectiveness of Behaviour Intervention Teams. This research is significant to post-secondary institutions in Canada as there is no research conducted in Canada regarding the use of Behaviour Intervention Teams. The results will help present a comprehensive review of current methods used by Canadian institutions to address problematic student behaviour and help develop Canadian specific principles and practices for positively addressing such behaviour.

Remuneration/Compensation:

There is no remuneration or compensation for my participation.

Risks to Participants:

Overall, potential risks associated with participation in the study are considered minimal risk. There are no physical risks as a result of participation in this research project. As a participant I will be asked to provide information about my experience in addressing cases of problematic student behaviour. Completing the survey may cause participants to recall previous cases of problematic student behaviour that they had previously encountered.

Contact for More Information:

I understand that I may ask any questions I might have about the project with either the chief researcher Chris Rogerson, [telephone number] or [email address]. As a participant of this project, I can contact the lead researcher, Chris Rogers to receive a copy of the final report.

Contact for Concerns about the Study:

I understand that I may ask any questions or register any complaint I might have about the project with the Director, Office of Research Ethics via e-mail [email address] or phone [telephone number]. I have the right not to answer any questions and I have the right to withdraw my participation in the study at anytime. If you consent to participate as an informed participant you will be asked to do so within the survey. If not, you are not required to do anything further.

Q1 . In the section above and by email where you were invited to participate in this research you were provided an Letter of Informed Consent . By selecting YES below, you provide your consent to participate in this study. You understand that you can withdraw from the study at any time without any consequence to you. If you do not want to participate please select "NO" to exit the survey.

- Yes
- No

You have been included as a participant in this research as you have been identified as being a member of a multi-disciplinary team that responds to problematic student behaviour.

For the purpose of this survey, the word "team" is defined as a general term that could describe a committee, task force, or group of institutional representatives

The following questions refer to case of student behaviour that could occur at any higher education. Please read the scenario below prior to answering the following questions.

Jeremiah is a 3rd year Arts student with a 2.25 GPA (C+ average). He has told his Academic Advisor that he does not want to be at University but his parents make him so that he can qualify to receive health care benefits. During his first semester Jeremiah registered with the Disability Center for various physical and mental health concerns after he had an outburst during a final exam. He had yelled at his professor that one of the questions was not fair, tore up the exam and stormed out of the room. Recently, the academic advisor has become concerned because Jeremiah has been sending many concerning emails. There have been about 20 emails in the past month with statements such as "I hate this place", "No one would care if I failed", "Everyone in my class think I am weird, and they do not even know me". The last email concerned the advisor to the point of forwarding the information on. The email stated "I just don't care anymore and I really hope something bad does not happen again".

Q2 . If the above case was brought to your attention of the actions listed below which would be you consider most important first action that you would do. (Please check only the first action)

- Refer the case to Campus Safety Services
- Refer the case to Counselling Services
- Refer the case to local Police Agency
- Refer the case to community mental health services
- Refer the case to the campus student behaviour team
- Refer the case to student conduct administrator
- Monitor
- Do nothing
- None of the above

Q3 . Please describe why you chose this as your FIRST action to the previous question.

Q4 . If the above case was brought to your attention of the actions listed below which would be you consider most important second action that you would do. (Please check only the second action)

- Refer the case to student judicial affairs system for adjudication
- Refer the case to campus security/safety services for intervention
- Refer the case to a multi-disciplinary committee (Behaviour Assessment Team, Early Alert, etc) team to assess and respond
- Refer the case to campus mental health system
- Refer the case to campus legal affairs department
- Refer the case to the local authorities (police/RCMP)
- Monitor
- Meet with the student yourself
- Other

Q5 . Please describe why you chose this as your SECOND action

The next section of this survey will focus on how your institution responds to incidents of problematic student behaviour.

The term "problematic student behaviour" is defined as a high risk students who are distressed and causing major disruption for the institution.

Q6 . What is the name of the team that addresses problematic student behaviour?

Q7 . What function does your team serve? Please check all that apply

- Making referrals for students in crisis
- Assessing at-risk students
- Responding to a crisis that threatens the well-being of a student or students
- Sharing information among appropriate offices
- Initiation of internal review of crisis situation
- Ensuring appropriate follow-through with student
- Identifying student behaviours that disrupt the learning environment
- Serving as a source of information to faculty and staff
- Keeping records on students considered at-risk or who are in crisis
- Dealing with students having difficulty academically
- Responding to student behaviour that is disruptive to the institution
- Responding to incidents where the person of concern is a faculty or staff member

Q8 . Please list any other functions not appearing in the previous list

Q9 . What types of behaviour do you address as a member of this team? Please check all that apply

- Classroom disruption
- inappropriate communications
- suicidal threats
- Threats of violence to others
- Stalking behaviours
- Failing grades
- Financial difficulties
- Diagnosed mental health disorders
- Emotional distress
- Other

Q10 . Please list any other behaviours not appearing in the previous list

Q11 . Does your team use any instruments or tools to assess problematic student behaviour?

- Yes
- No

Q12 . If you answered yes to the previous question, please list the title of all instruments used.

Q13 . Who is on your team? Please select all that apply

- Vice President of Students
- Dean of Students
- Director Housing and Residence Life
- Director of Counselling Center
- Director of Department of Public Safety
- Faculty Representative
- Director of Campus Health Services
- Student Conduct Officer
- Other

Q14 . Please list other members of the team (please only list titles not names)

Q15 . Who chairs your team?

- Vice President Students Affairs
- Dean of Students
- Director of Housing and Residence Life
- Director of Counselling Center
- Director of the Department of Public Safety
- Faculty Representative
- Director of Campus Health Services
- Student Conduct Officer
- Other

Q16 . If you selected Other as the Chair of your team please state the title of the position that chairs your team (please list title and not the name of the person)

Q17 . How often does your team meet?

- Weekly
- Twice a Month
- Monthly
- On an As-Needed basis

**Q18 . How is your team made aware of problematic student behaviour?
Please select all that apply**

- Members bring forward cases
- Incident reports from the Department of Campus Safety
- Institutional electronic reporting form
- Institutional phone report line
- Local Emergency Services (RCMP, Police, etc)
- Campus Risk Management department
- Other

Q19 . Please list any other methods cases are brought to the team.

Q20 . When a new case is brought to the attention of the team, what documentation or information is made available to members? Please check all that apply

- Incident Reports
- Student Transcripts
- Student Conduct Record
- Official student record
- Student Demographic information
- Known access records of campus resources (non-health related services such as academic advising, peer support, clubs membership etc)
- Known access records of campus health services (such as medical centre, counselling services, or disability services)
- Communications received (such as emails, letters, or social media posts)
- Academic Dishonesty status
- Admissions records
- Other

Q21 . Please list any other documents or information that members of the team access.

Q22 . Does the team keep records of meetings?

- Yes
- No

Q23 . Does your team keep records of the students discussed?

- Yes
- No

Q24 . If your team keep records please specify who has access to them? Please check all that apply

- All members
- Chair only
- Vice President Student Affairs
- Dean of Students
- Director of Housing and Residence Life
- Director of Counselling Center
- Director of he Department of Public Safety
- Director of Campus Health Services
- Student Conduct Officer
- Other

Q25 . Please list any additional positions who have access to meeting records.

Q26 . Please describe how your team keeps records of information discussed at meetings.

Q27 . Does your team receive any training?

- Yes
- No

Q28 . If yes, please describe what kind of training, from whom it is provided, and the frequency with which it is provided.

Q29 . If you have any comments about the role that institutional teams have in addressing problematic student behaviour please feel free to comment below.

The following questions are about the institution at which you work.

All information collected will be summarized so no institutional specific information can be identified.

Q30 . Please chose the category of institution that best fits your institution

- Community College
- Primarily Undergraduate University
- Comprehensive University
- Medical Doctoral
- Polytechnique/Technical Institute
- University College

Q31 . In which province/territory is the institution located?

- British Columbia
- Alberta
- Saskatchewan
- Manitoba
- Ontario
- Quebec
- Newfoundland and Labrador
- Nova Scotia
- Prince Edward Island
- New Brunswick
- Yukon
- Northwest Territories
- Nunavut

Q32 . What is the size of the FTE (Full Time Equivalent) student enrolment at your institution.

- less than 1,000
- 1,000 - 2, 499
- 2,500 - 4,999
- 5,000 - 9,999
- 10,000 - 14,999
- 15, 000 - 19,999
- 20, 000 - 29,999
- 30,000 - 39,999
- Above 40,000

Q33 . What is the population of the city in which the institution is located?

- 0 - 24 999
- 25 000 - 49 999
- 50 000 - 99 999
- 100 000 - 149 999
- 150 000 - 199 999
- 200 000 - 249 999
- 250 000 - 349 999
- over 350 000

Q34 . Does your institution provide on campus student housing?

- Yes - Institution Operated
- Yes - Private Operated
- Yes - Mix of Institution and Private Operators
- No

The following questions are about you as a member of the team.

All information collected will be summarized so no individual can be identified.

Q35 . Which institutional department best describes the unit for whom you work.

- Vice President Students Affairs
- Dean of Students
- Director of Housing and Residence Life
- Director of Counselling Center
- Director of the Department of Public Safety
- Faculty Representative
- Director of Campus Health Services
- Student Conduct Officer
- Other

Q36 . If you answered Other above please list the department to which you belong

Q37 . When a new case is brought to the team, what questions do you want answered to best assess the case? Please list all that you believe important.

Q38 . What is the highest level of education that you have achieved.

- High School
- College Diploma
- Bachelors Degree
- Masters Degree
- Doctorate Degree

Q39 . How many years have your worked in a post-secondary environment?

- 1-3
- 4-6
- 7-9
- 10-13
- 14-16
- 17-19
- 20 or more

Q40 . Has your team ever included any of the following non-institutional members to participate in a meeting? (Check all that apply)

- Police Officer
- Medical Doctor
- Mental Health professional
- Lawyer
- Probation officer
- Parent or family member of the student
- Friend or Peer of Student
- Witness of Incident
- Other

Q41 . Considering the use of your institutions team to address problematic student behaviour, to what extent do you agree with the following statements

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am confident our team is adequately meeting institutional expectations :	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am confident that our institution is meeting the reasonable professional standards to effectively manage our legal liabilities when dealing with problematic student behaviour :	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The team is effectively addressing problematic student behaviour on campus :	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The team was created to make sure that the institution is minimizing its liability based upon risks associated with recent high profile violent acts committed on post secondary campuses :	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Within the past 5 years this institution has had to address an incident of problematic student behaviour that posed a significant risk to the safety of the institution. :	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My position is necessary to the goals of the team :	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am satisfied with the protocols used by the team to assess problematic student behaviour :	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am satisfied with the training I receive for the work of this team :	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe that the cases of problematic student behaviour the team addresses are becoming increasingly complex :	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There has been an increase in the number of cases our team addresses :	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The next stage of this research will be to conduct interviews with members of a team such as the one of which you are a member.

Within the next few months, a small group of members of such teams will be contacted to participate in an interview about their experience being a member of such teams. Interviews will take approximately 1 hour of time and will be scheduled for a date that is convenient for the participant. This research strives to respect the potential desire of institutions to maintain anonymity and respect the confidentiality of participants. For this reason, participants in this stage are asked not to place any identifying information within this survey.

If you are interested in participating in an interview about your experiences as a member of a team are asked to submit your contact information in a short survey. The link is provided in the next question. Only a small sample of interviews will be conducted. Participation is completely voluntary and confidential. More information is provided in the next survey.

To be included as a potential interview participant please click on the link below

SURVEY LINK

Q3 . Which institutional department best describes the unit for whom you work.

- Campus Risk Management department
- Campus Safety and Security
- Counselling Services
- Health Services
- Residence
- Vice President Students Affairs
- Legal Affairs
- Faculty Representative
- Student Conduct Officer
- Other

Q4 . How many years have you served as a member of a team responsible for addressing problematic student behaviour

- 1-3
- 4-6
- 7-9
- 10-13
- 14 or more

Submit

Appendix K: Letter of Invitation – Interview Participants



FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Central City Galleria 5
250 – 13450 102nd Avenue
Surrey, BC, V5A 1S6

TEL [telephone number]
FAX [telephone number]

[email address]
www.educ.sfu.ca

Stage 3 – Team Member Interviews

Study Name: A National Study of the use of Behavioural Intervention Teams in Addressing Problematic Student Behaviour at Canadian Institutions of Higher Education

Ethics Approval: 2013s0636

Principal Investigator

Chris Rogerson, Simon Fraser University, [telephone number]

Project Purpose

The purpose of this research is to understand the use of multi-disciplinary teams to address problematic student behaviour. The research will explore the following question: “What is the experience of the Behavioural Intervention Teams (BIT) as an intervention strategy when dealing with problematic student behaviour within Canadian higher education?” This is being completed through a multi-staged national study to understand the frequency, membership, and effectiveness of such teams in order to help develop Canadian best practices in addressing problematic student behaviour to avoid campus tragedy.

Research Procedures

There are three main stages of this research. You have been invited to participate in Stage 3. The procedures for each stage are:

Stage 1: This stage was a short 16 question on-line survey that took approximately 10 minutes to complete. Upon completion of the questions participants with a multi-disciplinary team were invited to include their institution for the second stage of the research.

Stage 2: This stage involved members of multi-disciplinary teams completing a 41 question on-line survey that took approximately 20 minutes to complete. At the end of the survey you were invited to participate in this of this research by completing a separate 4 question on-line survey.

Stage 3: The final stage of the research will consist of one-hour interviews that will be scheduled at the convenience of the participant. The interview time and location will be set up so as to be convenient for you. You will have the choice between in-person or online methods. Interviews will be audio recorded and will be transcribed and a copy of the transcription will be sent to you.

As a part of the interview, conducted by the lead researcher, you will be asked about your experiences as a member of such a team and your factors that help or hinder the process. The following questions will be asked as part of the interview however additional questions may emerge through the conversation:

- 1- You belong to a Behavioural Intervention Team at your institution. Can you please tell me about your team.
 - a. What is the name of the team?
 - b. What is the main function of the team
 - c. How often does your team meet
 - d. Including yourself how many people are on the team?
 - e. How long as your team been in operation?
- 2- Can you please outline for me how your team functions
 - a. How often do you meet?
 - b. What is the protocol used to assess a student?
 - c. How are records kept?
 - d. Is there any training provided?
- 3- Please talk about the workload of your team.
 - a. Approximately how many cases are discussed a year?
 - b. Is the number of cases increasing or decreasing?
 - c. How many meetings are cases talk about?
- 4- When a case is discussed what tools (policies, assessment protocols, etc.) are used to decide the intervention of the institution?
- 5- What challenges does the team face in accomplishing its mandate?
 - a. Is there funding provided?
- 6- I want to ask you to think of a case that your team has met about within the past year that you believe the outcome was successful.
 - a. What about this case makes it successful
 - b. Please describe what the team did to achieve this result
 - c. What do you believe were the key factors in this success?
- 7- Discuss how the work of the team is preventing large scale campus violence?
- 8- Overall please discuss what your experience as being a member of this committee.

Confidentiality:

Participation in this research study is strictly voluntary, and your responses will remain anonymous, in accordance with the legal and ethical responsibilities of the researcher set out by the Tri-Council Ethical Guidelines. Under no circumstances will answers on the survey be linked to the identity of any participants. All data collected through this survey will be stored on the secure SFU Survey Database, within a secure server in Canada. Data will be analyzed and reported as a summary to ensure there is no ability to identify individual participants or specific organizations. No participant or institutional identification will be used at any time.

The identity of all participants will be kept confidential. The interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed. All interview data will be coded using pseudonyms to maintain the anonymity of participants. You will not be asked to disclose the name of individuals in the survey questionnaire. The information resulting from this research may be used in future publications or presentations, as well as my doctoral dissertation. Any identifying information will be removed prior to these publications or presentations. All data collected throughout all three stages of the research will be kept in a locked filing cabinet, in a locked office, accessible only to the researcher and my senior supervisor of this research.

I understand that I may refuse to participate or withdraw my participation in this project at any time without consequence.

Benefits of Participation:

This research will help create a national understanding of the current practices used by institutions to address problematic student behaviour and gain insight into the effectiveness of Behavioural Intervention Teams. This research is significant to post-secondary institutions in Canada as there is no research conducted in Canada regarding the use of Behavioural Intervention Teams. The results will help present a comprehensive review of current methods used by Canadian institutions to address problematic student behaviour and help develop Canadian specific principles and practices for positively addressing such behaviour.

Remuneration/Compensation:

There is no remuneration or compensation for my participation.

Risks to Participants:

Overall, potential risks associated with participation in the study are considered minimal risk. There are no physical risks as a result of participation in this research project.

As a participant I will be asked to provide information about my experience in addressing cases of problematic student behaviour. Completing the survey may cause participants to recall previous cases of problematic student behaviour that they had previously encountered.

Contact for More Information:

I understand that I may ask any questions I might have about the project with either the chief researcher Chris Rogerson, [telephone number] or [email address]. As a participant of this project, I can contact the lead researcher, Chris Rogers to receive a copy of the final report.

Contact for Concerns about the Study:

I understand that I may ask any questions or register any complaint I might have about the project with the Director, Office of Research Ethics via e-mail [email address] or phone [telephone number].

Appendix L: Interview Informed Consent Form



FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Central City Galleria 5
250 – 13450 102nd Avenue
Surrey, BC, V5A 1S6

TEL [telephone number]
FAX [telephone number]

[email address]
www.educ.sfu.ca

Informed Consent: Stage 3 – Team Member Interviews

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Principal Investigator

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Stage 2: This stage involved members of multi-disciplinary teams completing a 41 question on-line survey that took approximately 20 minutes to complete. At the end of the survey you were invited to participate in this of this research by completing a separate 4 question on-line survey.

Stage 3: The final stage of the research will consist of one-hour interviews that will be scheduled at the convenience of the participant. The interview time and location will be set up so as to be convenient for you. You will have the choice between in-person or online methods. Interviews will be audio recorded and will be transcribed and a copy of the transcription will be sent to you.

Confidentiality:

Participation in this research study is strictly voluntary, and your responses will remain anonymous, in accordance with the legal and ethical responsibilities of the researcher set out by the Tri-Council Ethical Guidelines. Under no circumstances will answers on the survey be linked to the identity of any participants. All data collected through this survey will be stored on the secure SFU Survey Database, within a secure server in Canada. Data will be analyzed and reported as a summary to ensure there is no ability to identify individual participants or specific organizations. No participant or institutional identification will be used at any time.

The identity of all participants will be kept confidential. The interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed. All interview data will be coded using pseudonyms to maintain the anonymity of participants. You will not be asked to disclose the name of individuals in the survey questionnaire. The information resulting from this research may be used in future publications or presentations, as well as my doctoral dissertation. Any identifying information will be removed prior to these publications or presentations. All data collected throughout all three stages of the research will be kept in a locked filing cabinet, in a locked office, accessible only to the researcher and my senior supervisor of this research.

I understand that I may refuse to participate or withdraw my participation in this project at any time without consequence.

Benefits of Participation:

This research will help create a national understanding of the current practices used by institutions to address problematic student behaviour and gain insight into the effectiveness of Behavioural Intervention Teams. This research is significant to post-secondary institutions in Canada as there is no research conducted in Canada regarding the use of Behavioural Intervention Teams. The results will help present a comprehensive review of current methods used by Canadian institutions to address problematic student behaviour and help develop Canadian specific principles and practices for positively addressing such behaviour.

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Contact for More Information:

I understand that I may ask any questions I might have about the project with either the chief researcher Chris Rogerson, [telephone number] or [email address]. As a participant of this project, I can contact the lead researcher, Chris Rogers to receive a copy of the final report.

Contact for Concerns about the Study:

I understand that I may ask any questions or register any complaint I might have about the project with the Director, Office of Research Ethics via e-mail [email address] or phone [telephone number].

I have the right not to answer any questions and I have the right to withdraw my participation in the study at anytime. If you consent to participate as an informed participant you will be asked to do so within the survey. If not, you are not required to do anything further.

Appendix M: Office of Research Ethics Certificate



OFFICE OF
RESEARCH ETHICS

**CERTIFICATE
SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF RESEARCH ETHICS (ORE)**

SFU GRADUATE STUDENT

This e-document certifies that on DATE: June 29, 2013

NAME: Chris Rogerson

Student Number: 301024950

has completed the ORE graduate student tutorial in Research Ethics and can now proceed to the ORE online application form.

Email: [Email Address]

Completion CODE: 0f710370

Please attach this Certificate to the ORE Application Form

CODE Certification