



Information Sources for K-12 Tabletop Exercise

Initial Report

Olivia McSweeney, a senior, overheard Justine Jones, a sophomore, talking to friends in the cafeteria and she thought she heard her say, “I think it would be cool if there was a school shooting at our school. I think we should plan one.” Olivia said she was walking by the table and isn’t entirely certain she heard it correctly, but it worried her and she thought she should tell a teacher about it. The teacher then told the school principal, who notified the threat assessment team.

General information from Justine’s student file: Justine is 15 years old, a sophomore, and has maintained a 3.5 GPA since the start of her freshman year. She does not have an IEP nor does she have any academic accommodations. She is listed as living with her mother and father in a middle-income section of the suburb. She has an older brother, Timothy Jones, who is a senior at the same school. She does not have any disciplinary infractions listed in her student record. She has been a member of the junior varsity softball team since her freshman year. She is not listed as belonging to any student clubs or other sports teams.

Olivia McSweeney – follow up interview

When you speak with her, Olivia repeats what you learned in the initial report. She also mentions that she thinks she heard Justine mention something about the Columbine shooters. She says she doesn’t remember what the other girls said – but knows that one was Madison Reynolds and the other is Ally Shepard (both sophomores, like Justine). Olivia also says that she thinks that things are tough at Justine’s house right now because she knows Justine’s older brother, Timothy, and he told Olivia that his parents are going through a messy divorce and he tries to stay out of the house as much as possible.

Current Teachers

Marilyn Waters, English teacher. She noted that Justine has turned in some writing assignments recently that were “darker” than her usual writing style. Her essays sound more pessimistic and negative in tone, but nothing that the teacher considers alarming.

Ron Caldwell, Science teacher. He said that Justine is doing poorly in his class but refuses to ask for help. He has offered to meet with her privately to help her through some of the concepts but while she has done that in the past, she has not agreed to do so now.

Byron Matthews, Math teacher. He says he hasn't noticed anything unusual about Justine, except that she sits in a different seat than she used to a few weeks ago. She used to sit next to Taylor Thompson and would pass notes to him, but now she sits at the opposite side of the room.

Regina Smith, Social Studies teacher. She said that Justine seems to really like her class and has been doing well all semester.

Becky Rodriguez, Spanish teacher. She says that Justine is an average student and that she hasn't noticed anything unusual about her recently.

Sports Team – softball coach

Coach Daniels is thinking about dropping Justine from the team because of her attitude. He says she has been defiant and moody.

Friends

Madison Reynolds. She tells you that Justine was dumped by her boyfriend, Taylor, a few weeks ago and has been "really bummed" ever since. Madison tried making her feel better, but they got in a huge fight and they haven't been as close since. Madison also said she knew that a few months ago Justine was having some major problems at home because her father moved out and her parents were going through a messy divorce. Justine's mother relied on Justine to keep the house clean and get herself and her little brother to school every day, while she stayed in bed. Justine's older brother, Timothy, stayed away from the house as much as possible during those months, often sleeping at a friend's house.

Ally Shepard – She said that she and Justine have become closer recently because Justine's parents got divorced and her parents are divorced too. She said that Justine's mother has been dating a guy that Justine thinks is "creepy." He is always asking Justine to hug him or sit on his lap when her mother isn't home. Ally told Justine she should shoot the guy if he lays a hand on her. She said, "it would make a great after-school special."

Family / Parents / Brother

Patricia Jones, Justine's mother, insists that nothing is wrong. She acknowledges that she and her husband recently got divorced but said that Justine was “unfazed” by the whole thing. Patricia says she is sure the comment about Columbine was just Justine's way of trying to get attention. She says Justine is being a typical teenager, moody and sullen.

Jack Jones, Justine's father A call into Justine's father initially goes unreturned. He calls back a day later to offer his assistance in helping Justine. He confirms that he and his wife have been separated for a month after several months of intense fighting. He does not know anything about the current dynamics at the house, as he moved out a month ago. But he is concerned about Justine's welfare and has offered to help in any way the school suggests.

Timothy, Justine's older brother, says Justine is fine, and recently they've been spending more time together because she's taken an interest in going to the firing range with him. He has a few handguns and shotguns he got from his father, and Justine wants to learn how to use them.

Internet Research / Social Media Search

Justine's Instagram page has posts with song lyrics about suicide and lost love, and recent posts (within the past week) that say, “Do you ever feel like giving up?” and “I don't know how much more I can take.” Comments from her friends, Madison Reynolds and Ally Shepard, say “Things will get better.” And “You'll be alright. Call me later.”

School Staff

Cafeteria worker, Sue Munson. Justine talks to her from time to time at the end of the school day when she doesn't want to go home. Sue has noticed that Justine has become more withdrawn and despondent. She still stops by to see Sue, but lately it seems as if she barely speaks. She looks as if she is going to cry most of the time but doesn't. Last week she asked Sue “does it ever get any better – or is life always this hard?” Sue told her to cheer up and look on the bright side.

Ex-boyfriend

Taylor Thompson. Said Justine used to be fun, then became “needy and pathetic” when her parents' marriage started falling apart. Taylor said he dumped Justine because she wasn't fun anymore.

Locker Search

A search of Justine's locker (conducted by school personnel) reveals textbooks, a notebook with pages of poems and song lyrics, mostly about lost love, disappointment, and suicide, a list of "People I Hate" – which includes Justine's ex-boyfriend, her mother, and her mother's new boyfriend. The search also yields a prescription bottle (with Justine's name on it) with several pills of Strattera, a medication used to treat ADD/ADHD. The bottle includes an FDA warning that taking Strattera may increase the risk in children of thinking about suicide.

Student of concern - Justine

(first interview) When team members initially talk to Justine, she is defensive and said that she "didn't mean anything" by talking about wanting to plan a shooting at her school. She said she was only joking and only meant that school was so boring, something like a shooting would really shake things up.

(second interview) When team members approach Justine again with Justine's social studies teacher (or Sue Munson, the cafeteria worker), Justine's demeanor changes. She says she wasn't thinking seriously about a school shooting but says she has been reading more and more about Harris and Klebold (the Columbine school shooters) because they committed suicide and she thinks she knows how they felt. She says that since her father moved out and her parents got divorced, and then her boyfriend broke up with her, she has felt that life is not worth living anymore. She says she just wants to be with her father and can't stand being with her mother and her creepy boyfriend. When you ask Justine if she wants help, she breaks down in tears and says yes.