

How We Investigate

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Prevent Mass Violence

Together, we can prevent tragedy.

Research has found that mass shooters don't just snap.

They spend time thinking about violence and they plan, prepare, and often display indicators before their attacks. This means there are opportunities to identify someone who is on a pathway to violence - and prevent their attack.

Studies have also proven that **before** most mass attacks, someone observed concerning behaviors that were signs the person was on a path to violence. The people who noticed were often family, friends, schoolmates, coworkers, neighbors, or associates.

YOU may be in a unique position to observe these signs in someone you know. Educating yourself on what to look for can be the **key** to preventing an attack of mass violence in your community.

"When you know something is wrong but you don't want to say it, talk to someone about it. **Report it.** Even if they're your friends, brother, family. Don't let that hold you back from doing the right thing."

Statement by a close friend of an active shooter

See What

No single behavior means someone will commit violence, but research has identified behaviors that may indicate a person is moving towards violence.

The earlier a person's concerning behaviors are noticed, the more options are available to get the person help.

Together with other concerning behaviors, new or inappropriate interest in weapons may increase concern for violence against others.

Common Concerning Behaviors

- Comments, jokes, or threats about violent plans
- Repeated or detailed fantasies about violence
- Comments about hurting themselves or others
- Creating a document, video, suicide note, or other item to explain or claim credit for future violence
- Seeing violence as a way to solve their problems
- Unusual difficulty coping with stress
- Reduced interest in hobbies and other activities
- Worsening performance at school or work
- Increasing isolation from family, friends, or others
- Angry outbursts or physical aggression
- Increasingly troublesome interactions with others
- Obsessive interest in prior attackers or attacks
- Bizarre or unexpected change in appearance, including dress or hygiene
- Asking questions about or testing security at a possible target
- Changing vocabulary, style of speech, or how they act in a way that reflects a hardened point of view or new sense of purpose associated with violent extremist causes, particularly after a catalyzing event

Tell Who

Talk to Someone You Trust

If you are worried that someone you know may be displaying concerning behaviors, the most important thing is to tell someone.

Be the key to preventing violence by talking to someone you trust. This could be a school administrator, employee assistance peer, coach, religious leader, or someone else you respect. A positive outcome is possible when people work together to assist someone who is struggling.

Contact Law Enforcement

If you believe someone is planning or preparing for violence, think about contacting police, visiting your nearest **FBI field office**, or reporting it at tips.fbi.gov.

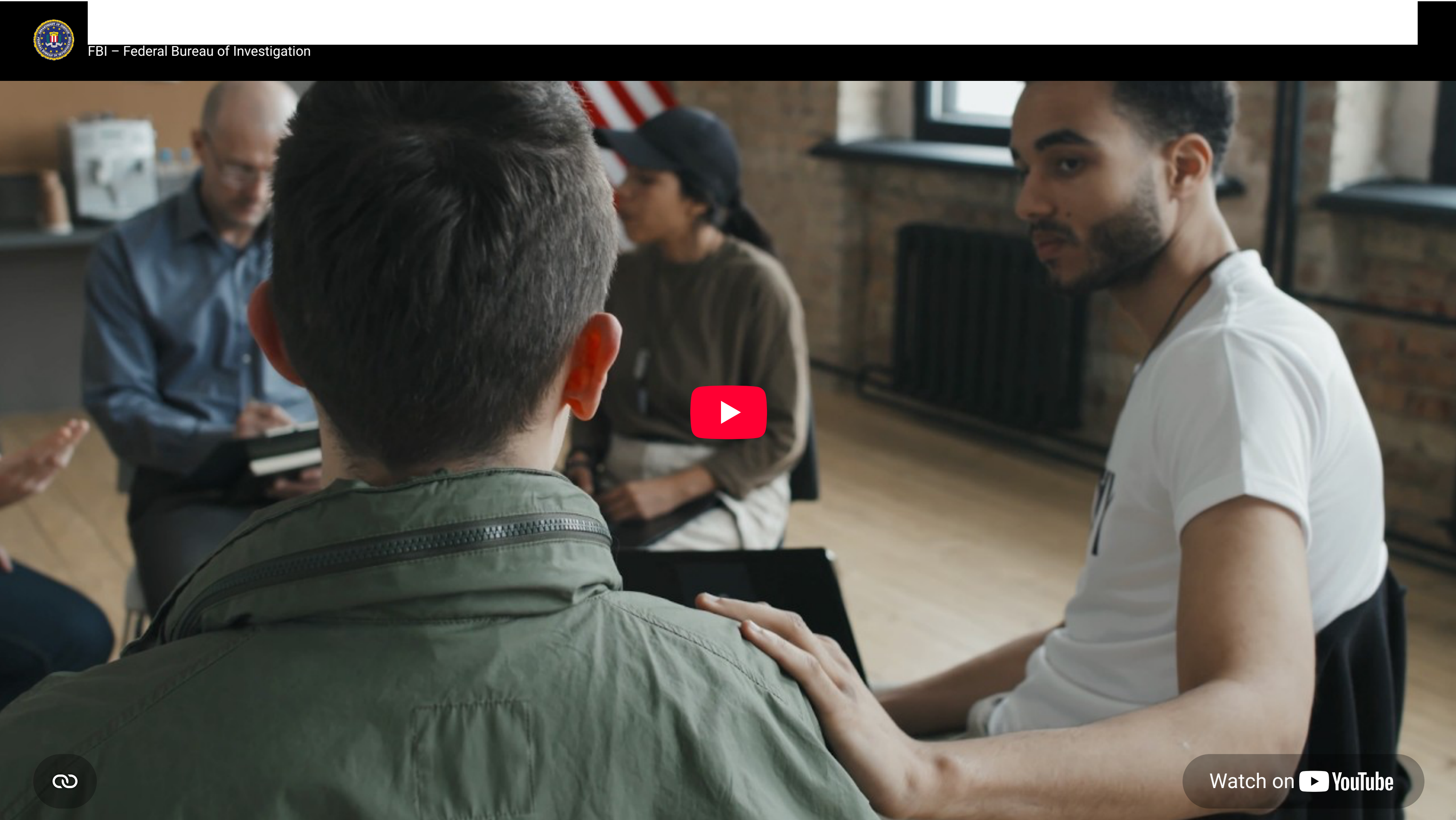
Law enforcement can work with other professionals to provide needed resources to individuals in or approaching crisis before violence is pursued.

Challenge to All

Be aware of those who are struggling and play an active role in putting them on the right path. Help them be seen and heard in a way that shows there are other options and outcomes available. Mass violence is a community issue that requires a community approach. Let's work together to move individuals off the pathway to violence and on the pathway to hope.

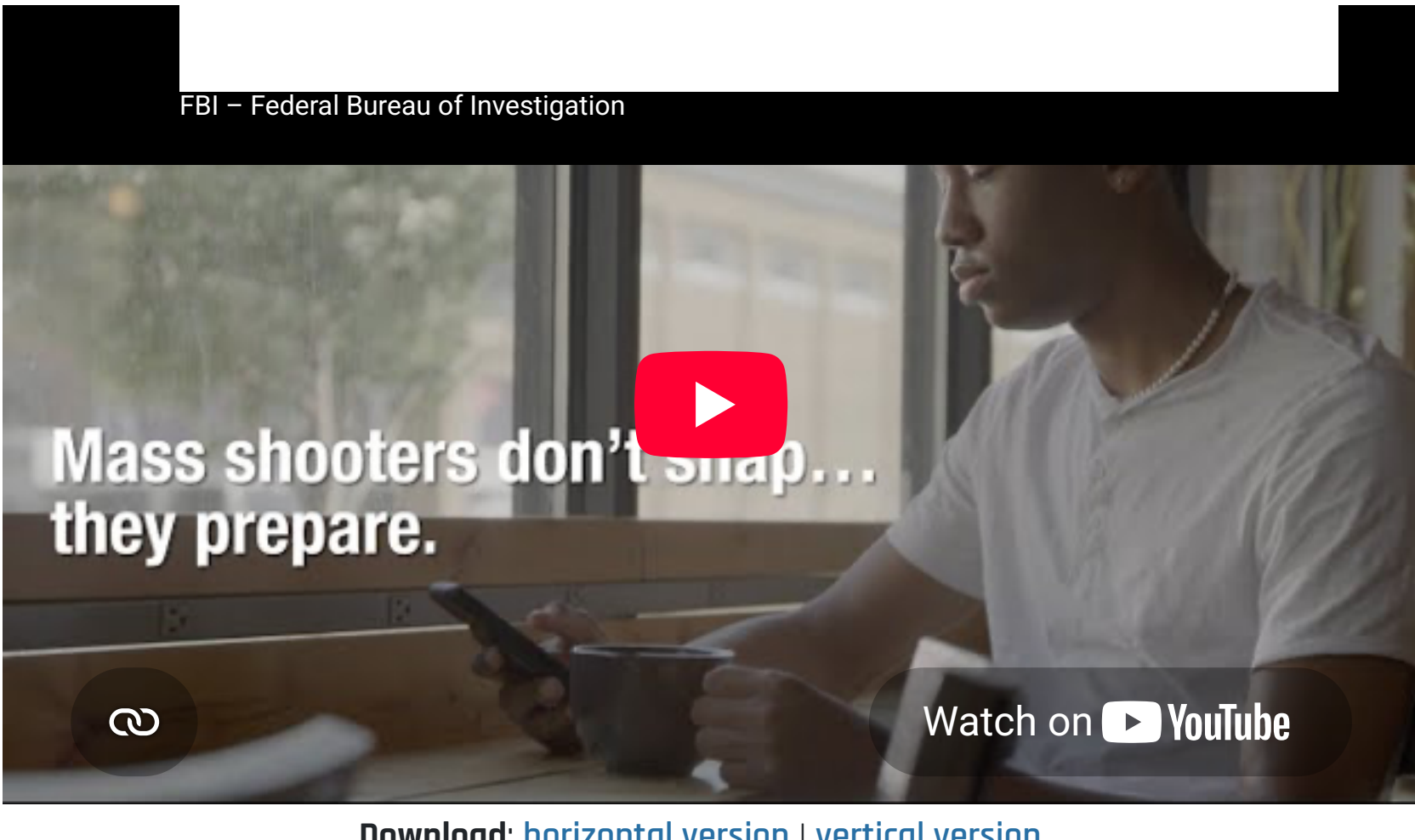


Video PSAs



Studies have proven that before most mass attacks, someone observed concerning behaviors that were signs the person was on a path to violence. You may be in a unique position to observe these signs in someone you know. Knowing the signs and sharing your concerns could be the key to preventing an attack of mass violence in your community. Learn more in this video, and by visiting our page at fbi.gov/prevent.

[Transcript](#) / [Visit Video Source](#)



Public service announcements (PSAs) from the FBI's Behavioral Analysis Unit encourage people to pay attention to signs that may show someone is potentially on a path to committing mass violence and to report the behavior to someone they trust who can help.

Resources

Active Shooter Safety



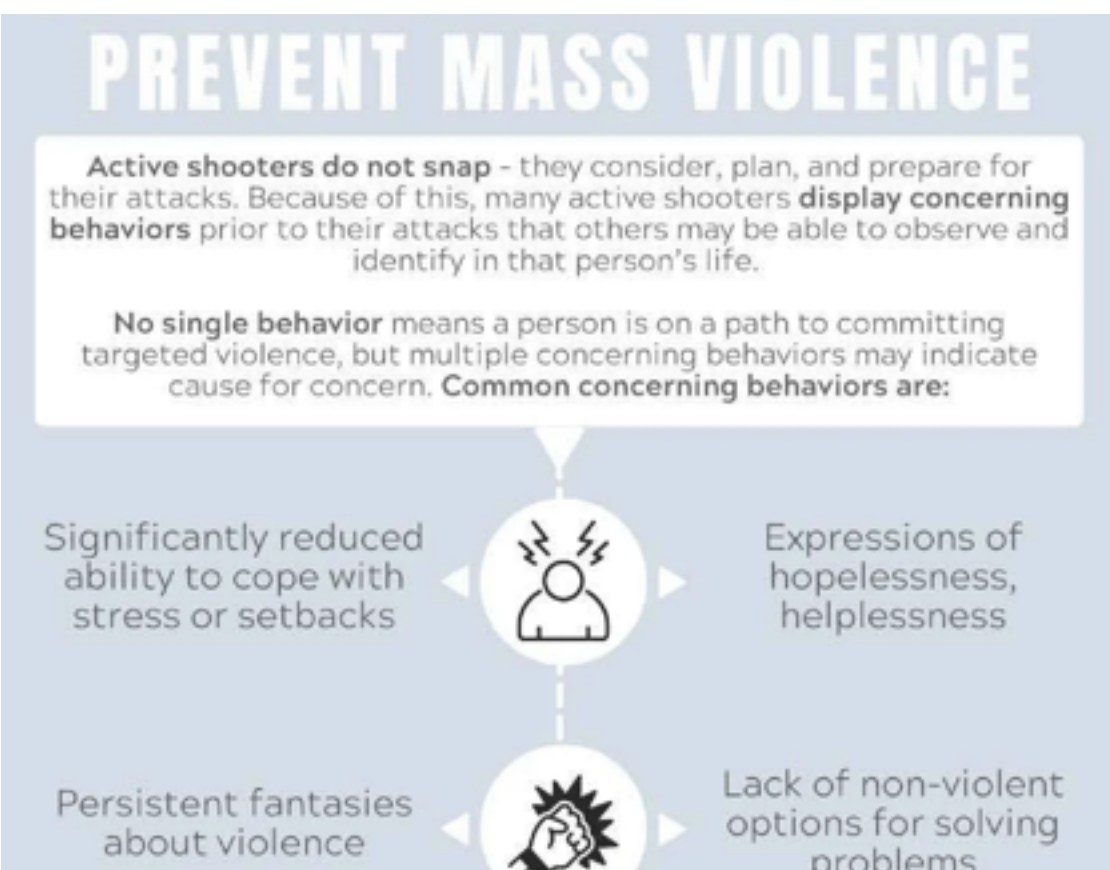
The FBI continues its commitment to working with its partners to protect schools, workplaces, houses of worship, transportation centers, other public gathering sites, and communities from active shooters. [Details](#)

Brochures



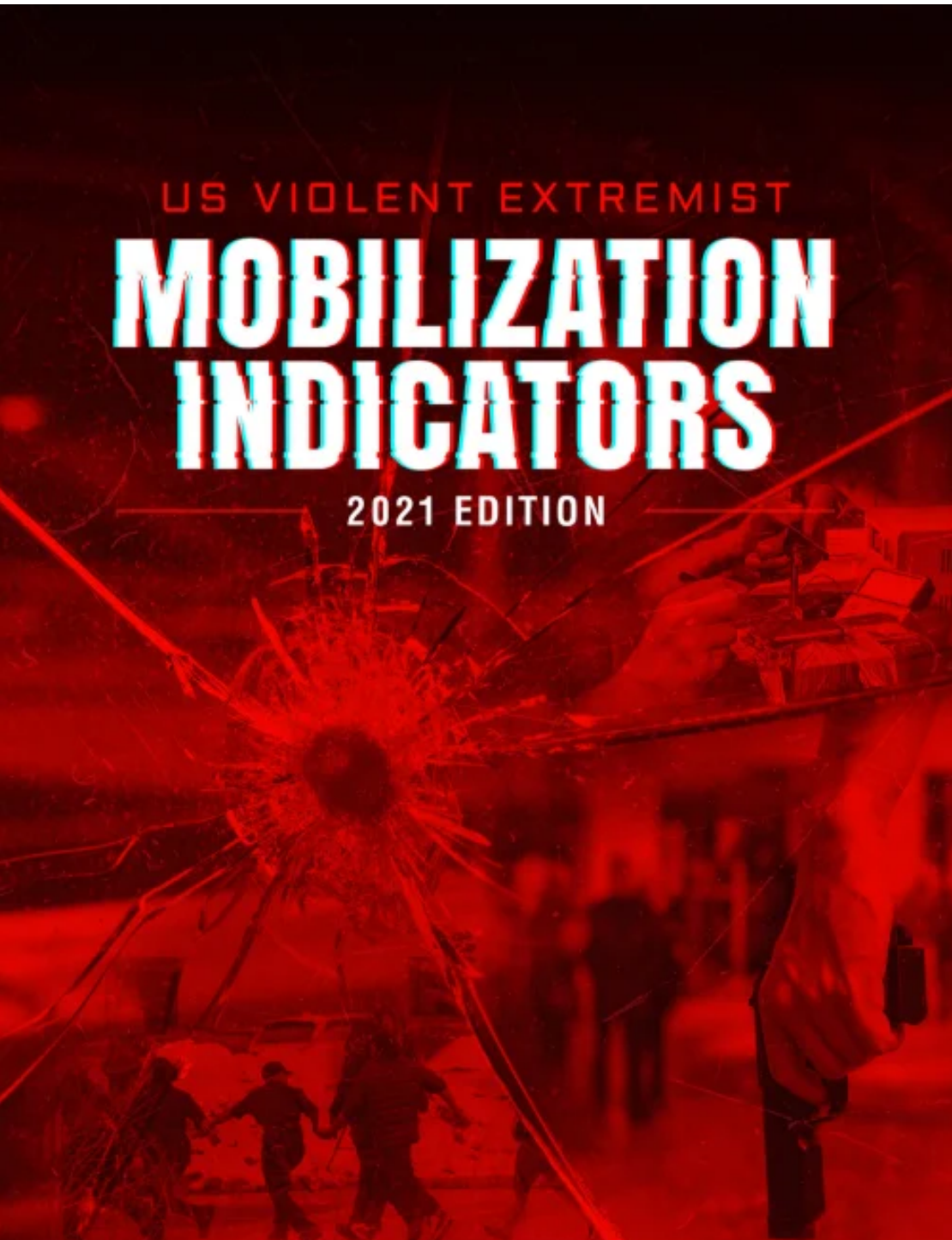
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Infographics



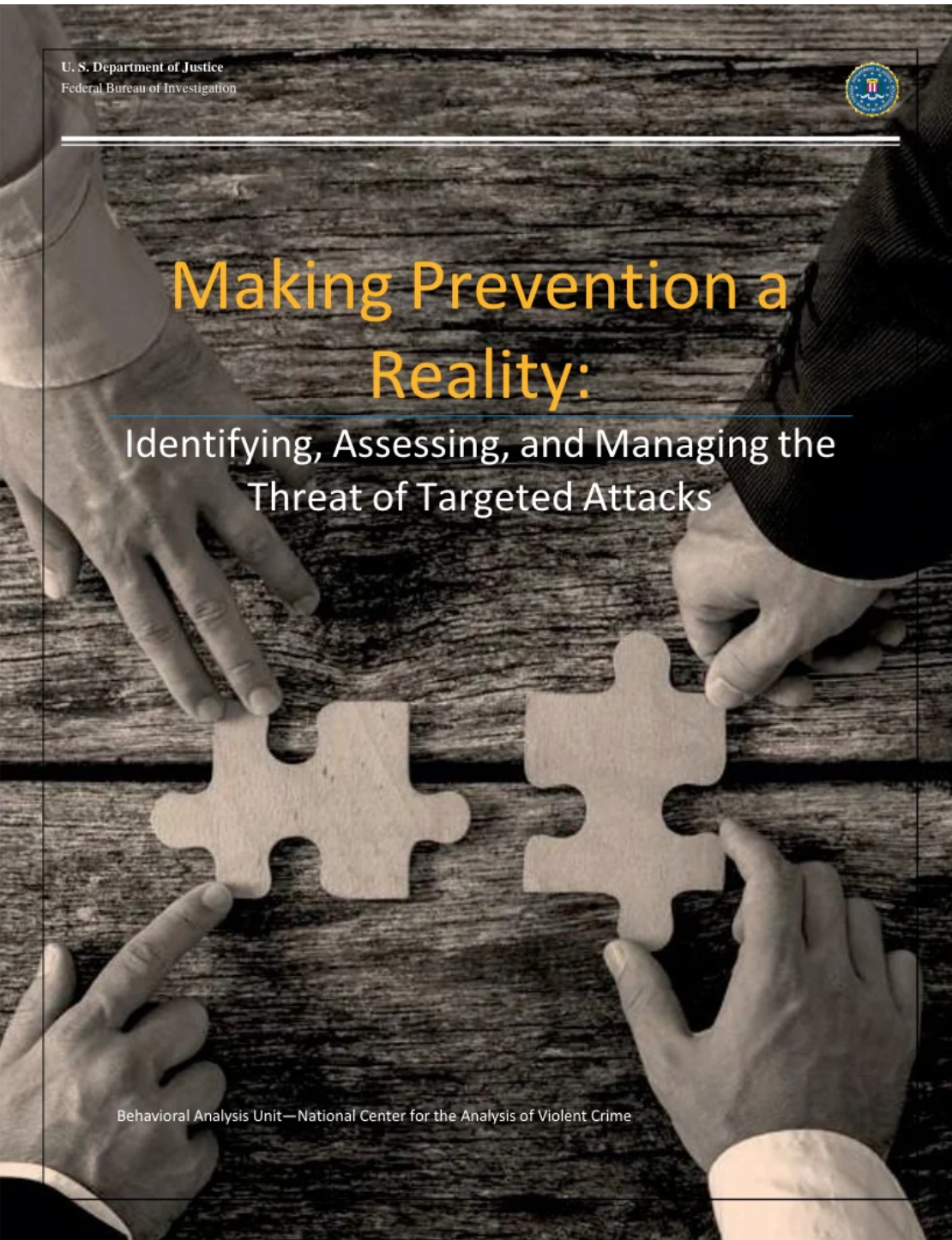
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Research: Mobilization Indicators



Report aims to inform about both threats of violence and contextual behaviors that suggest an individual is mobilizing to violence. [Details](#) (PDF)

Research: Making Prevention a Reality



This report, a practical guide on assessing and managing the threat of targeted violence, contains concrete strategies to help communities prevent these types of incidents. [Details](#) (PDF)

Background: Behavioral Analysis



Experts in the FBI's Behavioral Analysis Units (BAUs) work a variety of cases across the country, from terrorism and cybercrime to violent crimes against children and adults. [Details](#)

Related News

BAU Launches 'Prevent Mass Violence' Campaign

In bid to prevent mass attacks, Behavioral Analysis Unit asks public to talk to someone you trust if you notice concerning behaviors.

Team Approach to Keeping Potential Attackers Off 'Path to Violence'

A threat assessment team in San Antonio meets three times a week to discuss and evaluate cases they believe could—if ignored—devolve into acts of mass violence.

FBI Releases 2023 Active Shooter Incidents in the United States Report

The FBI is releasing the 2023 Active Shooter Incidents in the United States report to provide an overview...

Inside the FBI Podcast: Active Shooter Incidents

On this episode of Inside the FBI, we discuss the FBI's report on active shooter incidents in...

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