

## CASE STUDY

Name: Graham

Age: 15

School: Santa Monica High School

### **I. IDENTIFYING INFORMATION & REASON FOR REFERRAL:**

Graham is a fifteen-year-old male who is a 10<sup>th</sup> grade student at Santa Monica High School. He was referred for a threat assessment evaluation pursuant to a pending school expulsion. Graham is accused of threatening violence at his school with another classmate in a manner similar to what happened at Columbine. This matter was also brought to the attention of the State Police, included Graham being charged with Threatening-Second Degree and is pending in Juvenile Court.

### **II. THE EVALUATION CONSISTED OF:**

Clinical Interview of Graham

Personality Assessment Inventory-Adolescent Version

Structured Assessment of Violence Risk of Youth

#### Collateral Contacts:

- Interview with Graham's Father
- Telephone Interview with Jane, Santa Monica High School Counselor

#### Record Review:

- State of California Police Records (33 pages)
- Review of Graham's Facebook account
- Review of ifunny.com website
- Psychiatric Evaluation by Psychiatrist
- Mental Health & Psychosocial Assessment by Therapist, LCSW
- Psychological Evaluation & Addendum by Psychologist

### **IV. PSYCHOSOCIAL BACKGROUND:**

**Background History:** Graham was born in Seattle, Washington. A few months after he was born he believes his family moved to Santa Barbara, California. This included his mother, his father, and older brother Luke (18), who is currently in college. Graham described his parents by informing that his mother is Japanese, and was raised there until graduate school which is where his parents met. Later they wed. He perceived his parent's having a good relationship and being a "close" family. Similarly, he perceives having a good relationship with both parents.

Both of Graham's parents are college professors, and he explained that the move to Santa Barbara resulted in growing up on a college campus. He was initially home schooled through third grade. At that time he entered Santa Barbara Public School. He played in

the town baseball league, and summers were spent on family vacations. Graham described an easy transition to public school from being home-schooled.

The following year, the family moved to Santa Monica, CA, where his parents took new positions as professors. Graham was able to attend the attached prep school at no cost. He described a more rigorous academic environment. He made friends easily, but was not engaged in any structured sports or activities. Weekends were spent with other children on campus.

Approximately one year later, the family relocated to a new home in the area. Graham began 5<sup>th</sup> grade at the public school. He said he made friends easily, started playing tennis, and adjusted to the move without difficulty. He began taking private tennis lesson as well, and eventually began playing baseball again. Graham spoke fondly of his middle school years. He stated that he developed his sense of humor, gained a broader worldview, and enjoyed learning.

Graham approached high school enthusiastically. He was in all Honors classes his freshman year and finished his freshman year with straight A's. He joined the high school swim team, and he had plenty of friends. He and his best friend swim and watch Anime'.

Graham prefers PC gaming, and participating in "strategy games" such as League of Legends<sup>1</sup>. Regarding television, he watches superhero shows. Prior to his arrest Graham reported having a cell phone and laptop. These were seized by the State Police. Music interests include popular artists such as Imagine Dragons and EDM music.

Graham reported that he is learning Spanish, and his mother taught him Japanese when he was younger. The family celebrates some Islamic holidays per his father's traditions.

Regarding social media, Graham mainly uses Facebook. He logged into his account during the evaluation and it was reviewed with him. There was no inappropriate content viewed on his account text or images.

**Education:** Graham is currently a 10<sup>th</sup> grader at Santa Monica High School. His first quarter grades included four Honors classes, 1 AP class, and 3D Printing. He had two absences and no tardies. There were no teacher comments, and no behavioral sanctions noted in his educational record. He earned the following grades:

Algebra II: A  
Western Humanities: A+  
English II: B+  
3D Printing: A-  
AP Biology: B+  
Mandarin Chinese: B+

---

<sup>1</sup> This game had a fairly decent review for teenage users on commonsensemedia.org.

**Substance Use:** Graham reported no experimentation with tobacco, alcohol, over-the-counter medications, or illicit substances.

**Arrest Circumstances:** Graham was arrested and charged with making a threat that he and another student were going to come to the school with guns similar to the way the Columbine shooters behaved. At a classmate's Halloween party, he and another peer dressed up as Eric and Dylan, the Columbine shooters and were overheard by peers making these statements. Someone called the police. Graham described the evolution of the circumstances that resulted in his arrest. His description was consistent with the police statements he made. In review, he stated that the intention behind his and his friend's conduct was for a reaction/attention, and that no harm was ever intended or actually planned.

This is Graham's first arrest.

**Medical/Mental Health History:** Graham has no remarkable medical history. He is not currently taking any prescription medication.

Graham has no history of pediatric mental illness, diagnosis, or treatment.

## **V. CLINICAL FINDINGS:**

**Psychological Functioning:** Graham has no history of pediatric mental health problems. The months leading up to this evaluation did not reveal any new emergence of psychological symptoms associated with mental illness.

Graham said he has learned a lot from this experience. For example, he stated, "I've learned that what you do in real life is much different than what you can do on the Internet. Everything is monitored digitally. I thought it was private. It's not. Anything you say can be looked at. Joking about Columbine and stuff. It has a much bigger impact than we were really aware of."

Graham reported no history of suicidal ideation or violent thinking. Specifically, he stated that he never had any intention, or plan to harm others. At the time of the evaluation, he reported no suicidal or homicidal ideation.

**Personality Testing:** Graham's results on the PAI-A were valid. He had no clinical elevations, or even moderate elevations on the clinical scales. Test results indicate a positive self-concept, resiliency, and healthy view of himself. Interpersonally, Graham is independent, practical, and competitive. He is less warm and extraverted relative to other peers. Treatment scales indicate that Graham may take time to build trust with a therapist. Having a therapist who connects with him intellectually at first, is likely to facilitate a good working rapport.

## **VI. THREAT ASSESSMENT & VIOLENCE RISK:**

Graham's personal experience and access to firearms included one experience playing paintball, and having two bb guns.

***SAVRY: Structured Assessment of Violence Risk in Youth:***