

1/29/2021

DHS OTVTP Choose Your Own Adventure Outline

- We propose creating 5 story branches, each with 3 video scenes that advance the story, for a total of 15 filmed scenes.
- Bystanders are presented with 3 difficult choices that approximate real-life decisions at the end of each scene.
- At the end of each branch, after viewers have made three choices impacting the potential radicalization of others, a DHS employee reviews the path they have chosen and highlights key learnings in an interview that expands on how radicalization and potential violence may occur in the scenarios.

Bystanders: high-school teammate, mother of teammate, girlfriend; friend, neighbor, bartender; younger sister (19 years old), college chemistry professor, roommate; preacher, bakery employee, hairdresser; old high school friend, mother, boyfriend

Branch 1: Racial/Ethnic Racialization Student Story

Radicalization Suspect: High-school student

Bystanders: Teammate, parent of teammate, girlfriend

PROFILE SETUP:

(Visually we see a portrait of our protagonist, Jamie, along with stock footage that you would associate with a teenage boy, sports equipment, game console, etc. Sound FX help build Jamie's environment.)



AVO: This is Jamie, he grew up in suburban climate with a diverse group of friends, but now as he's moved into senior year of high school, he's not hanging out with the same friends anymore. He's gaming online late at night constantly and his grades have tumbled. His parents got divorced sophomore year and he doesn't talk to them anymore. After another disappointing report card, his mother noticed he was playing online war games more and more alone in his room and could overhear some of the mean and degrading language he and the other players were using.

Scene 1A: Boy's locker room

You're in the locker room at school, and your teammate, Jamie, a white freshman, gets bumped by Asif, an ethnic minority teammate. They have angry words in front of you and their other teammates, and Jamie ends up shoving Asif into a locker.

Teammate Bystander Choices:

- Choice 1A1 – Talk to the coach about Jamie's change in behavior
- Choice 1A2 – Ask Jamie about his aggressive behavior toward minorities
- Choice 1A3 – Walk away

Viewer is then presented with an individualized narrative slide based on his/her choice...

1A1 Narrative: By talking to the coach you could be helping, but you can't always know what the results of your actions may be.

After the locker room incident, tensions among the team continue to escalate. Next week at practice...

1A2 Narrative: Approaching Jamie directly might reveal important insights into his behavior change.

After the locker room incident, tensions among the team continue to escalate. Next week at practice...

1A3 Narrative: By walking away you made an active decision not to help Asif and also to allow Jamie to engage in aggressive behavior. This choice could lead to further incidents, with Jamie feeling empowered and Asif feeling isolated and threatened.

After the locker room incident, tensions among the team continue to escalate. Next week at practice...

Scene 1B: Soccer field

You're a parent of one of the players on Jamie's team watching the team do practice drills when Jamie and Asif have a verbal argument. Then Jamie goes into a profanity laced tirade for several minutes, hurling racial epithets. As the parent of a teammate who's seen Jamie play for over five years, you're struck by the thought that the Jamie you knew would not say those things.

Parent of Teammate Bystander Choices:

- Choice 1B1 – Talk to coach to see if he's also noticed any behavioral changes
- Choice 1B2 – Call Jamie's parents to check in to see how he's been doing
- Choice 1B3 – Contact the school counselor to find out about Jamie's background and report incident

Viewer is then presented with an individualized narrative slide based on his/her choice...

1B1 Narrative: By reaching out to the coach you may encourage him think harder about Jamie's outburst.

1B2 Narrative: Calling Jamie's parents might help you collectively identify the reason for Jamie's behavior change.

1B3 Narrative: Contacting the school counselor will put Jamie's behavior on the school's radar, so they can monitor the situation.

Scene 1C: Jamie's Car

You are Jamie's girlfriend and Jamie has become more aggressive and verbally abusive in your relationship. You get into an argument and as Jamie is yelling at you, he flashes a gun that he

borrowed from one of his new friends. You are startled and uncomfortable, so you ask Jamie to drop you back off at home.

Girlfriend Bystander Choices:

- Choice 1C1 – Ask him what’s behind the need to have a gun
- Choice 1C2 – Ask a mutual, long-term friend if he’s noticed any behavior changes
- Choice 1C3 – Call authorities to share your concerns

Viewer is then presented with an individualized narrative slide based on his/her choice...

1C1 Narrative: Asking Jamie about his motives may make him more confrontational.

1C2 Narrative: Calling Jamie’s old friends should give you greater insight into Jamie’s behavior changes.

1C3 Narrative: Contacting the authorities would be appropriate if you’re aware he has a gun that was not bought legally. In any event, they may have advice about how to address your concerns.

DHS OVERVIEW: Based on the choices that were made we have an interview style video with a DHS employee that discusses the path taken and what you could have done to make the situation better.

Branch 2: Anti-gov/authority Abusive Parent/Stepdad

Radicalization Suspect: Pete, Late-30s, white man

Bystanders: Friend, neighbor, bartender

PROFILE SETUP:

(Visually we see a portrait of our protagonist, Pete, along with stock footage that you would associate with a suburban dad, lawn mower, lazy boy, etc. Sound FX help build Pete's environment.)



AVO: This is Pete, a married guy with two small children. He's been in the neighborhood for five years but hasn't really gotten to know any of the neighbors. He works nine to five and he's often seen hanging out at the local bar afterwards. He seems like a quiet guy and mostly keeps to himself.

Scene 2A: Chris' home

You are Pete's friend, Chris, sitting in front of your computer looking at Pete's social media posts. You've been friends online for a couple of years, and Pete has always seemed like a decent guy, but recently you've noticed changes in his behavior online that alarm you. You've even seen him post on some radical sites with violent tendencies.

Friend Bystander Choices:

- Choice 2A1 – Contact Pete's wife and ask if she's noticed any new activities
- Choice 2A2 – Wait until you see Pete at softball next week to ask if he's really interested in these new groups
- Choice 2A3 – Keep closer tabs on Pete's online activity

Viewer is then presented with an individualized narrative slide based on his/her choice...

Scene 2B: Inside home / in the backyard

You are Pete's neighbor. You hear loud noises coming from the house next door, so you step outside to look over the hedge. You see Pete yelling at his wife in the kitchen and making threatening gestures and then he storms out of the house into the backyard, all of which you've never seen him do before.

Neighbor Bystander Choices:

- Choice 2B1 – Reach out to Pete's wife to ask her what's going on
- Choice 2B2 – Walk over and ask Pete what's up
- Choice 2B3 – Be more attentive to the activities next door

Viewer is then presented with an individualized narrative slide based on his/her choice...

Scene 2C: In a bar

You are a bartender and Pete is a regular patron at your bar, but tonight he's come in with a group of strangers. You're never seen him be violent, but as you serve drinks to him, you notice his new group of friends talking about their plans to head to a political rally. Then you overhear them talking about "messing with" counter protesters.

Bartender Bystander Choices:

- Choice 2C1 – Discreetly pull Pete aside and ask, "How did you meet these new friends?"
- Choice 2C2 – Call Pete's old drinking buddy and ask him about Pete's behavior change
- Choice 2C3 – Ask the other bartenders and your manager if they've noticed any changes in his behavior lately

Viewer is then presented with an individualized narrative slide based on his/her choice...

DHS OVERVIEW: Based on the choices that were made we have video that discusses the path taken and what you could have done to make the situation better.

Branch 3: Younger Animal Rights/Environmental Advocate

Radicalization Suspect: Jane, 21 years old, moved out of the house recently

Bystanders: younger sister (19 years old), college chemistry professor, roommate

PROFILE SETUP:

(Visually we see a portrait of our protagonist, Jane, along with stock footage that you would associate with a young woman, schoolbooks and computer, etc. Sound FX help build Jamie's environment.)



AVO: This is Jane, a young woman in her 20's living on campus at the college she attends nearby. She's always been an animal lover and a vegetarian, but she's recently adopted a vegan lifestyle after reading about the meat processing industry. She also saw a movie highlighting animal cruelty in the agricultural business and has become militant about food and animal rights, and other issues like testing.

Scene 3A: Jane's parent's home

You are Jane's sister and you're stunned as she angrily accuses your mom of animal cruelty for serving the family burgers. Your big sister has always seemed composed and level-headed, but you notice how her voice now escalates wildly. She seems like a different person. Jane mentions recently joining a group that you know has a reputation for holding controversial protests. Jane storms out of the room in a huff.

Sibling Bystander Choices:

- Choice 3A1 – Ask your parents what they think about Jane's behavior
- Choice 3A2 – Ask your sister quietly what has prompted the change
- Choice 3A3 – Look into the group that Jane talked about in order to understand her behavior change

Viewer is then presented with an individualized narrative slide based on his/her choice...

Scene 3B: College classroom

You are Jane's professor. For the last several weeks, you've noticed Jane take an increased interest in your class, which is unusual because she didn't have an interest in chemistry before

this quarter's series on incendiary materials. She's also been staying after class to research incendiary devices. You notice a strange patch on Jane's jacket and look up the group online, taking note of its dramatic practices.

College Professor Bystander Choices:

- Choice 3B1 – Ask Jane's student advisor if she's noticed any change in behavior
- Choice 3B2 – Schedule a casual meeting with Jane to see how things are going
- Choice 3B3 - Contact campus security and ask them what to do

Viewer is then presented with an individualized narrative slide based on his/her choice...

Scene 3C: Dorm room

As Jamie's roommate, you notice that she's been hanging out with a new group of friends and that they often talk about animal cruelty and how to fight back with protests and things like explosives. You've also observed Jane's new interest in her chemistry class and know that she's conducted combustible experiments in her room. You are increasingly worried about her potential radicalization to violence. Could she be considering taking action? You've never thought of Jane as a violent person before, but now you have questions.

Roommate Bystander Choices:

- Choice 3C1 – Contact your RA to ask what you should do
- Choice 3C2 – Keep a closer eye on her movements and her online activity
- Choice 3C3 - Reach out to older friends to see if they have noticed any changes in behavior

Viewer is then presented with an individualized narrative slide based on his/her choice...

DHS OVERVIEW: Based on the choices that were made we have video that discusses the path taken and what you could have done to make the situation better.

Branch 4: Middle-Aged Pro-Life Advocate

Radicalization Suspect: Ann, mid-40s woman

Bystanders: Preacher, bakery employee, primary care doctor

PROFILE SETUP:

(Visually we see a portrait of our protagonist, Ann, along with stock footage that you would associate with a suburban Mom, laundry, minivan, etc. Sound FX help build Jamie's environment.)



AVO: This is Ann, a resident of Elkville in rural America. Ann has always been religious but since the death of her mother, she's become increasingly devout. She's a regular in the small-town community, active in several church groups. While she has always been protective of her four kids, she has become increasingly more concerned about the welfare of other children including the unborn.

Scene 4A: Prayer group discussion

You're the preacher at Elkville's only church. You notice that one of your members, Ann, has become increasingly more fervent about her pro-life stance. You see her and another parishioner in a heated discussion during a prayer group. Ann asks you directly if the bible justifies violence in defense of life.

Preacher Bystander Choices:

- Choice 4A1 - Schedule counseling with Ann on church teachings and violence prevention
- Choice 4A2 - Talk with Ann's husband about whether or not he's noticed any changes in behavior
- Choice 4A3 – Reach out to talk to a member of her church group to ask about her recent interests

Viewer is then presented with an individualized narrative slide based on his/her choice...

Scene 4B: Ribbon-cutting

You are an employee at a new bakery about to open in Elkville. As the mayor walks up to the ribbon at the bakery entrance, you hear another attendee yell, "baby killer" towards them. You

turn to find the shouter and are shocked to see that it's Ann, a woman who you've always known to be empathetic in the past. Once at home you...

Employee Bystander Choices:

- Choice 4B1 – Call Ann's husband to discuss what you just witnessed and check to see if everything has been okay lately
- Choice 4B2 - Contact Ann's preacher and ask about her behavior
- Choice 4B3 – Stop by Ann's house to chat and see how she's doing

Viewer is then presented with an individualized narrative slide based on his/her choice...

Scene 4C: Hair Salon

You've been Ann's hairdresser for years. During one of Ann's visits, she brings up pro-life arguments and begins ranting, saying that something should be done to put a stop to the planned parenthood office in the next county. She shares videos of violent protests on her phone and you notice increasingly more militant language from Ann. After you wrap up the appointment, you...

Hairdresser Bystander Choices:

- Choice 4C1 – Call the sheriff to ask him about when you should be concerned about radicalization
- Choice 4C2 – Talk to your coworkers and staff about the conversation and ask if they've noticed anything different lately
- Choice 4C3 – Go online to research the groups that Ann was talking about

Viewer is then presented with an individualized narrative slide based on his/her choice...

DHS OVERVIEW: Based on the choices that were made we have video that discusses the path taken and what you could have done to make the situation better.

Branch 5: Old High School Friend and Budding Conspiracy Theorist

Radicalization Suspect: Courtney, mid-30s, divorced

Bystanders: Old high school friend, mother, boyfriend

PROFILE SETUP:

(Visually we see a portrait of our protagonist, Courtney, along with stock footage that you would associate with a suburban Mom, laundry, minivan, etc. Sound FX help build Courtney's environment.)



AVO: This is Courtney. She is a divorced mother of two, in her late 30s. Her children have always been her world, but after moving to a new city she has made a new group of friends and has joined volunteer groups for underprivileged youth. She has become fixated on conspiracy theories regarding government connections to child abuse and trafficking.

Scene 3A: High school friend's home

You're Courtney's high school friend and as you scroll through your social media feed, you start to notice increasingly strange posts from Courtney. She is beginning to spread conspiracy theories, and the level of anger in her posts is rising more and more.

Old Friend Bystander Choices:

- Choice 5A1 – Monitor Courtney's posts and other conversations
- Choice 5A2 – Check in with her ex-husband to see if he's noticed any changes in behavior
- Choice 5A3 – Send Courtney a private message to ask how things are going in the new city

Viewer is then presented with an individualized narrative slide based on his/her choice...

Scene 5B: Courtney's dining room

You're Courtney's mother, and you're spending the weekend with your daughter. You notice that she is increasingly angry at several specific public figures, accusing them of what appears to you as wild conspiracies, including hurting children. You notice her long-time boyfriend, who has always been accessible and supportive, seems frustrated with the talk and leaves the room each time she brings it up.

Mother Bystander Choices:

- Choice 5B1 – Ask Courtney what’s been going on and why she seems to be more angry lately
- Choice 5B2 – Pull her long-time boyfriend aside later to discuss where these theories may be coming from, and how they may be able to productively discuss them
- Choice 5B3 – Call a crisis hotline to learn more about what you could do to help

Viewer is then presented with an individualized narrative slide based on his/her choice...

Scene 5C: Courtney’s kitchen

As Courtney’s boyfriend, you often share her laptop to update your fantasy football lineup or check in on your favorite sites. This time, though, you happen upon a series of other open browser windows—each one seems to get more bizarre and frightening about conspiracies involving political figures. Courtney’s searches seem to indicate a path towards violence.

Boyfriend Bystander Choices:

- Choice 5C1 – Open a dialogue about what she is reading about, try to find out more about her concerns
- Choice 5C2 – Call her parents to see if they’ve noticed any change in behavior
- Choice 5C3 – Resolve to follow Courtney’s online behavior more closely

Viewer is then presented with an individualized narrative slide based on his/her choice...

DHS OVERVIEW: Based on the choices that were made we have video that discusses the path taken and what you could have done to make the situation better.