The Tri-Municipal Community Violence Threat Risk Assessment and Intervention Protocol

A Collaborative Response to
Keeping Our Children and Community Safe

December 2015

PROTOCOL PARTNERS

Aboriginal Parent Link – Native Counselling Services of Alberta

Alberta Health Services – Children s' Mental Health

Alberta Human Services – Children & Family Services

Alberta Parenting for the Future

Canadian Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response (CCTATR)

City of Spruce Grove

Evergreen Catholic Separate Regional School Division No. 2

Grande Yellowhead Public School Division

Living Waters Christian Academy

Mother Earth Children's Charter School

Parkland County

Parkland School Division No. 70

RCMP

St. Matthew Lutheran Christian Academy

Town of Stony Plain

Unlimited Potential Community Services

Additional community partners will be engaged as broader community training occurs and the protocol expands to more comprehensively address the need for collaborative crisis and trauma response in schools.

Contents

INTRODUCTION

This document has been prepared as a support to:

- Ensure a coordinated approach between partner agencies.
- Promote dialogue, establish effective relationships and create shared understandings between the partner agencies.

This document outlines the common principles, varied resources, and certain obligations and procedures that are required by provincial and federal legislation (eg. the *Alberta Human Rights Act,* the *Child First Act*, the *Child Youth and Family Enhancement Act*, the *Criminal Code*, the *Education Act*, the *Health Information Act*, and the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*).

VISION

All partners are accountable to the protocol's purpose and have a shared obligation to actively take steps to prevent traumatic events in schools and the community.

The partners agree to work together for the common goal of threat reduction and school and community safety by proactively sharing information, advice, and support that assists in the prevention of a potential traumatic event.

MISSION

All partner organizations will take a zero tolerance stand for not responding to any form of violence or threat of violence that impacts the quality of life for children and youth.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Prevention of youth violence is a community responsibility as it is everybody's duty to report.
- Open and collaborative community partnerships help to ensure that the right child gets the right support at the right time.
- Through consultation and information sharing with local cross-sector agencies and other specialized agencies, threatening and/or violent behaviour will be analyzed to guide school-based and community-based risk reduction and child/youth support planning.
- Proactive strategies to recognize early warning signs and initiate/reinforce violence reduction in schools and the community are encouraged and supported.

KEY INFORMATION ABOUT VIOLENCE THREAT RISK ASSESSMENT

Responding to Threat Making Behaviour

The *Tri-Municipal Community Threat Risk Assessment and Intervention Protocol* is based upon the Canadian Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response (CCTATR) model of Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA). VTRA follows a three step process:

- Stage 1 – Immediate risk reducing intervention, data collection, and initial assessment.
- Stage 2 – Comprehensive risk assessment and intervention by a multidisciplinary team.
- Stage 3 – Intervention by a mental health professional in a clinical setting.

The work of the CCTATR reflects scientific research conducted by a number of disciplines including medical and mental health professionals, law enforcement, and specialists in the field of threat management.

Partner Responsibilities

- All protocol partners will, at all times, take actions seen as necessary to ensure immediate risk reduction, without delay, regardless of the involvement or availability of other community partners.

Threatening and Violent Behaviour for VTRA Response

- Examples of high-risk behaviours addressed in this protocol include but are not limited to:
  - Serious violence or violence with the intent to harm or kill
  - Verbal/written threats to kill others (clear, direct, plausible)
  - Internet, web site, social media threats to kill others
  - Possession of weapons (including replicas)
  - Bomb threats (making and/or detonating explosive devices)
  - Fire setting
  - Sexual intimidation or assault
  - Gang related intimidation and violence
- The student behaviour that activates the VTRA Team will have been observed in or will potentially affect the safety of the school and/or community.

VTRA Team Membership

- The Community VTRA Team will be made up of:
  - School Division VTRA Contact
  - Children & Family Services VTRA Contact
  - RCMP VTRA Contact
  - Additional Community VTRA Members may be added, if available, at the discretion of VTRA Team.
- The School VTRA Team will be made up of:
  - Principal and/or Assistant Principal(s)
  - Appropriate Student Services (inclusive education and/or counseling) staff members.
  - The classroom teacher(s).
  - Additional School VTRA Members may be added at the discretion of an administrator (ex. Educational Assistant, Aboriginal Support Worker, bus driver, staff witnesses, etc.).
  - Smaller schools may contact the Division VTRA Contact to assist.

Un-Authored Threats

- Un-authored threats are typically threats to commit a violent act against an individual(s), specific group, or site (ex. the school). They may be found written on bathroom walls or stalls, spray painted on the side of schools, posted on the internet, letters left in a conspicuous place (teacher's desk), etc.
- In the field of school-based child and adolescent violence threat/risk assessment, the lack of ownership (authorship) of the threat generally denotes a lack of commitment. Nevertheless, there are steps that should be followed:
    - Assess the un-authored threat.
    - Attempt to identify the threat maker.
    - Avoid or minimize the crisis/trauma response.
- VTRA Teams should consider the following in determining the initial level of risk based on the current data (ex. language of the threat, location, etc.):
    - Language of Commitment
        - Amount of detail
            - Location where the violence is to occur, target(s), date and time the violence is to occur, justification, etc.
        - Threatened to do what with what
            - "kill", "shoot", "ruin your life", etc.
        - Method of delivery of the threat.
            - Who found/received the threat? When did they receive it? Where did they receive it? Who else did they tell? Who else knows about it?
        - Is the threat clear, direct, and plausible?
    - Identifying the Threat Maker
        - In many cases the author is never found but steps can be taken to identify who the authors are:
            - Handwriting analysis
            - Word usage (phrases and expressions that may be unique to a particular person or group of people (club, team, gang, etc.)
            - Spelling (errors or modifications unique to an individual or group).

Worrisome Behaviours

Worrisome behaviours are those that cause concern for members of the school or community that may indicate a student is moving toward risk of serious violent behaviour. The majority of high risk behaviour for children and youth fall into this category. Worrisome behaviours include but are not limited to:

- Writing stories, journal entries, blog posts
- Social media messaging
- Drawing pictures

- Making vague threatening statements
- Unusual interest in fire
- Significant change in anti-social behaviours (a change in baseline)

In keeping with the zero tolerance for not responding to threat related behaviour, all worrisome behaviours will be communicated to the Principal for consultation. In these cases, the VTRA Team is not formally activated. The School VTRA Team Members determine whether or not some formal action/assessment should occur, for example informally contacting the RCMP VTRA Contact. If further data is obtained that suggests the student has been violent, uttered threats, or is in possession of a weapon, then the School VTRA Team is activated to deal with the new data.

VTRA and Suspension from School

In most cases, unless the individual of concern already poses an imminent risk or obvious safety concern (eg. brandishing a weapon), the School Based VTRA Team is activated and the _Stage 1 – Violence/Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Report Form (Appendix B)_ data is collected in a timely and reasonable manner. The Principal will oversee sanctions and suspensions as laid out in the _Education Act_.

A poorly timed "out of school" suspension can be a very risky response as the suspension is often viewed as by a high-risk student as the "last straw". It is during the suspension that many threat makers decide to finalize a plan to terrorize a school or attack a specific target. This can include suicidal or homicidal acts. The suspension does not "cause" the violence to occur but creates the necessary "context" for the high-risk student who is already struggling with suicidal and/or homicidal ideation to take the final step from planning to taking action.

VTRA is Not a Disciplinary Measure

It is not appropriate for an administrator to tell a student of concern that if they engage in similar behaviour again, that they will "do a threat assessment" on them. This is contrary to the purpose of VTRA. The purpose of VTRA is to determine the plausibility of risk by engaging in a Stage 1 VTRA Response at minimum.

If suspension is necessary, a critical question beyond 'when to suspend' is 'where to suspend'. The isolation and disconnection felt by high-risk students during an out of school suspension may be exacerbated if steps are not taken to keep the student connected with healthy adult supports.

Criminal Charges

Public safety forms part of the primary mandate of the RCMP. The police officer assigned to the VTRA Team will assist with identifying any potential offenses or charges and ensure an police

investigation is initiated by the police force of jurisdiction. The police officer may still continue to participate as an active member of the VTRA Team.

An RCMP investigation does not prevent the remaining members from continuing on with data collection relative to the VTRA process. Good communication between the RCMP and VTRA Team is important so as not to compromise an investigation/prosecution or place unnecessary strain on a victim. It is understood that collaboration with the RCMP and VTRA Team members will be ongoing.

Early Elementary Aged Children and VTRA

If there is a significant increase in baseline behaviour, weapons possession, or clear, direct, and plausible threats, the Stage 1 VTRA process will be activated and possibly the Community VTRA Team. When younger students engage in violent or threat related behaviour, developmental and exceptionality issues need to be taken into consideration. Generally speaking, most threat related behaviour exhibited by elementary aged students would fall into the category of "worrisome behaviours". However, just because a student is elementary age, does not mean that they cannot pose a risk.

Students with Diverse Learning Needs and VTRA

The Stage 2 VTRA Team process will not be activated when students with diverse learning needs engage in threat-making or aggressive behaviours that are typical to their "baseline". In other words, if their conduct is consistent with their diagnoses and how their symptoms have been known to typically present in them, then the Community VTRA Team will not be called upon to conduct an assessment.

However, if the student with diverse needs moves beyond their typical baseline and is engaged in high risk behaviour warranting a VTRA response, then the Community VTRA Team would be activated following the Stage 1 VTRA response. The role of the Community VTRA Team would be to assist in determining why there has been an increase in the baseline behaviour and if the student poses a risk to self or others.

The process of data collection and assessment is not modified other than to ensure appropriate interviewing strategies with the student with diverse needs. Staff members from the school and division levels responsible for program planning and service delivery must consult to the VTRA Teams in these cases.

There are times when the student with diverse needs has had a "slow but steady" increase in the frequency and intensity of their violent or acting out behaviours. In these cases, there may not be a single incident prompting a Stage 1 VTRA response. In the school response, information may emerge that requires some or all of the response of the Community VTRA Team. The Principal should contact the School Division VTRA Contact to discuss the case and

collaboratively determine if a full or partial response from the Community VTRA Team is the appropriate approach.

As a note of caution, sometimes school and community members may under react to a serious threat posed by a student with diverse needs. They may assume that all of their behaviours are as a result of their symptoms rather than consider that a student with diverse needs can move along "the pathway to justification" as well. The same dynamics that can also be factors in contributing to the violence in the general student population can be factors in contributing to the violence potential of the student with diverse needs independent of their challenges.

Supporting the Targeted or Victimized Child/Youth or Staff Member

The Principal and/or the Division VTRA Contact are responsible for ensuring that the recipient(s), victim(s), or target(s) of the threats are assessed and that services are provided as necessary. As the threat may be directed towards one or more child/youth, an entire class, or the school population, the circumstances will dictate how far reaching the intervention may be. The Division VTRA Contact in consultation with the School Administration should determine if crisis counselling or a Trauma Follow Up Team is needed to re-establish calm.

There may be cases where the recipient of the threat has been engaged in high risk behaviours that may have lead to the threat(s) in the first place. In those situations, the recipient of the threat(s) may also need to be assessed following the VTRA model.

Community Based Referrals

When a community partner determines the need to activate the VTRA process, the partner will contact:

- The School Division VTRA Contact for the school that the youth attends.
- If the school the youth attends is unknown, contact the VTRA Division Contact for Parkland School Division to assist in determining the youth's school.
- If the student is not a Parkland student, contact Evergreen, and then the private schools. VTRA School Division Contacts will assist through this process.

VTRA Meeting Procedures

Whenever possible, the Stage 2 VTRA Team meetings will occur at the respective school division office. In most cases the lead partner will be the respective school division, led by the School Division VTRA Contact.

Need for Training

This protocol is not a substitute for training in the field of Violence Threat Risk Assessment. The protocol is intended for use by multidisciplinary teams trained in the theory and practice of child/youth violence threat risk assessment. The need for training from the CCTATR will be reviewed annually and provided as needed.

ACTIVATION OF THE VIOLENCE THREAT RISK ASSESSMENT TEAMS - PROCESS AND PROCEDURES

NOTE: This section of the protocol has been reproduced in checklist form for school use and is available as *Appendix B: Stage 1 – Violence/Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Process and Report Form*, *Appendix C: Stage 2 – Violence/Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Process and Report Form*, and *Appendix D: Violence/Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Intervention Plan*.

Stage One – Violence/Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Process

The Stage One process occurs primarily at the school level and is managed by the School Based VTRA Team. An administrator will take the lead for the process and team members will assist. The primary focus for stage one is immediate risk reducing intervention, data collection, and initial assessment.

- Address immediate risk.
    - Call 911 if necessary.
    - Implement lockdown procedures if needed as per school procedures.
    - Address any immediate risk factors, if they exist.
    - Ensure you know the whereabouts of the threat maker(s) and target(s).
    - If necessary, appropriately monitor and/or detain the student(s) of concern until the police member of the team is present.
    - Do not allow student(s) of interest access to coats, back backs, desks, lockers, etc.
    - Determine if the threat maker has immediate access to the means (knife, gun, etc.)
- Mitigate risk.
    - Secure the environment.
    - If appropriate, check back packs, lockers, etc.
- Contact RCMP VTRA Member.
    - Share initial data and police will determine if a history of weapons possession, use, or violence is noted in police accessible records.
    - The Bedroom Dynamic – Must be attended to in each incident.
        - The RCMP "owns" the bedroom dynamic and will take the lead on making decisions related to this.
        - High Profile Incidents – The RCMP VTRA Officer will visit the home prior to the Stage 2 Meeting.
        - Low Profile Incidents – Request that the parents examine the student's bedroom and any other personal spaces (internet history, back yard fort, etc.) and report back any concerning discoveries.

- Activate VTRA Stage 1.
  - Notify the Division VTRA Team Contact.
- Data Collection
  - Determine who will strategically interview sources of data including all participants directly and indirectly involved as well as "hard" data collection as outlined below.
  - Immediate data may be obtained from multiple sources and should include:
    - Reporter(s)
    - Target(s)
    - Witnesses
    - Teachers and other school staff (secretaries, educational assistants, bus drivers, etc.)
    - Parents/caregivers (call both parents)
    - Check the student(s) locker, desk, backpack, recent textbooks, assignments, binders, cars, etc. for data consistent with the threat making or threat-related behaviour.
    - Activities – internet histories, diaries, notebooks, etc.
    - Current school records – attendance, report cards, IPP, etc.
  - Additional information may be collected from the following sources if more data is needed.
    - Friends, classmates, acquaintances
    - Current and previous school records (call the sending school)
- Parent Notification
  - Check the student's file to verify guardianship and any other legal flags that may relate to the family.
  - Notify the threat makers(s) and target(s) parent(s) or guardian(s) at the earliest opportunity.
  - For all parents, ask about
    - Their perspective on this incident.
    - Any recent behavioural changes, any contextual factors that might be at play with the student.
  - For the threat maker, discuss the bedroom dynamic and how to proceed as per the conversation with the RCMP VTRA Contact.
    - Expect the RCMP VTRA Contact to call.
    - Request that they investigate the home (bedroom, any other personal spaces, internet history, and personal electronic devices) to ascertain if there are any indicators or evidence of threat making behaviour and/or violence.
  - For the threat maker, indicate that the data collection component of the VTRA process seeks information regarding the student and that parents can provide helpful information.
    - Ask to book a meeting or telephone conversation once school based data is collected.

- Semi-Structured Interviews & Reporting
  - As a team, complete the Stage 1 – Violence/Threat Risk Assessment Report Form
- Determination of Risk
  - The School Based VTRA Team members collate the data and discuss all relevant information in regard to the threat maker.
  - RCMP VTRA Member will be included in the discussion of high profile incidents.
  - As a team, ask these questions:
    - To what extent does the student pose a threat to school/student safety?
    - Does the student pose a threat to himself/herself or someone outside the school (eg. family)?
  - Using the indicators provided on the VTRA Report Form, determine a level of risk.
- Decide on a Course of Action
  - With the input of *all* School Based VTRA Team members, decide on a course of action.
  - Is there risk reducing interventions that need to be put into place <u>immediately</u>?
  - Low to Medium Level of Concern
    - Implement an Intervention Plan
    - The student can likely be managed at school with appropriate school based interventions.
    - Contact the Division VTRA Team Contact to advise of the outcome of the Stage 1 VTRA.
  - Medium to High Level of Concern
    - The School Based VTRA Team has determined that at Stage 2 Threat Assessment is needed.
    - Contact the Division VTRA Team Contact to activate the Stage 2 VTRA.
- Developing an Intervention Plan
  - Low to Medium
    - Use the *Appendix D: Violence/Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Intervention Plan* form to address all concerns identified during the Stage 1 Assessment.
  - Medium to High
    - Implement any needed interventions to support the student until the Stage 2 meeting takes place.

Stage Two – Violence/Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Process

The Stage Two process occurs primarily at a school division level and is managed by the Division VTRA Contact. The focus for stage two is a comprehensive risk evaluation by a multidisciplinary team. Members of the Community VTRA Team collaborate with the School Based VTRA Team and the parents to gain a deep understanding of the child with the goal of creating a comprehensive intervention plan.

- Review Stage 1 Data Collection with School Based VTRA Lead
  - Questions about the information gathered?
  - How to address any legal flags or family issues or concerns that may be present?
  - Confirm the parents have been advised that the Stage 2 VTRA has been activated and that the Division VTRA Contact will be contacting them.
  - Who are the significant people for the student and who should attend the Stage 2 meeting (family members, teachers, bus drivers, therapists, etc.)?
  - Advise the school to notify their Superintendent of the Stage 2 activation.
  - Advise to provide advance copies (if applicable) to the Division VTRA Contact of:
    - Stage One Data Collection
    - Current IPP
    - Psychological testing reports
- VTRA Interagency Contact
  - Contact RCMP VTRA Contact
    - The RCMP "own" the bedroom dynamic and take the lead in decision making.
    - Do not make the RCMP Contact your agent by requesting them to search the bedroom.
    - Discuss the bedroom dynamic, what has been done, and how to proceed with this case.
    - Any other factors to consider in addressing this case.
  - Contact Child & Family Services VTRA Contact
    - Based on initial information, are there any significant factors to consider in addressing this case?
  - Forward any VTRA related documents in advance of the meeting to be reviewed prior.
    - Ensure security standards are in place for confidential information.
- Stage 2 Meeting Details
  - The Division VTRA Contact books a date, time and location for the meeting and ensures all participants are aware.
- Parent Contact for Stage 2 by the Division VTRA Contact
  - Confirm that the School Administrator has indicated he/she would be receiving this phone call.
  - Explain the VTRA process.
  - Indicate the goal is to create an intervention plan to support the student, family, and/or school.
  - Discuss the multi-disciplinary assessment and participation of RCMP and CFS.
  - Discuss the participation of any other agency personnel involved with the student.
  - Obtain verbal consent to begin contacting these agencies.

- Forward a consent form for their signature and request that it is returned asap to allow for contacting personnel.
- Discuss bedroom dynamic.
  - Will RCMP attend to discuss?
  - Will parent be checking on the honor system? If so, ask them to check
    - Bedroom
    - Internet history
    - Personal devices – texts, history, photos, etc.
    - Private spaces (forts, etc.)
- Advise that this may feel like an onerous process but that it is done in the spirit of supporting the student to become a healthier individual and ensure the school remains safe for both him/her and the students and staff.
- Confirm date, time, and location of meeting.
- Speak to both parents and any step-parents.
- Advise they are permitted to bring a support person if they wish.
- Stage 2 Risk Assessment Meeting – Part One: Preparation
  - VTRA Team, School Based Personnel and any other agency personnel meet to plan the content of the meeting.
  - What consent has been provided by the parents?
  - What are the issues of concern?
  - Are there any specific items that need to be questioned with the parents?
  - Do we need further information from the student?
  - Complete the first section of the Stage 2 report form regarding school dynamics.
  - Possibly complete Series Four – Target Typology
- Stage 2 Risk Assessment Meeting – Part Two: Data Collection
  - Invite the parents to join the meeting.
  - Welcome and Introductions
  - Prior to meeting start…
    - Ask parent to sign Consent to Release Information if it has not already been provided.
    - Circulate the attendance sheet for signatures.
    - Indicate the purpose of the meeting is to gain a deep understanding of the student and the circumstances related to the incident to create a comprehensive intervention plan to support the student, family, and/or school.
    - Indicate VTRA is a formal process that works best when we act informally with each other. An open conversation provides the best information and understanding.
    - Indicate that we are seeking multiple perspectives on the student, so many questions will be asked of both home and school.

- o Collectively complete the Stage 2 VTRA Report Form.
- o Upon completion of form, thank parents for their participation.
- o Advise parents who will be contacting them by when to discuss the intervention plan.
- Stage 2 Risk Assessment Meeting – Part Three: Determination of Risk & Intervention
  - o Debrief the meeting.
  - o Complete the Assessment of Risk Factors.
  - o Determine level of risk based upon criteria provided in the VTRA Report Form.
  - o Use the *Appendix D: Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Intervention Plan* form to collectively address all concerns identified during the Stage 2 Assessment.
- Intervention Follow-Up
  - o The Division VTRA Contact and School VTRA Contact will follow up with the Intervention Plan in partnership.
    - ▪ The role of the Division VTRA Contact is to facilitate any interagency supports and assist the School VTRA Contact.
    - ▪ The role of the School VTRA Contact is to be the point of contact for the family regarding implementation of the supports and to monitor that the interventions are put in place.
  - o The Division VTRA Contact arranges the meeting at the appropriate location (usually the school).

Stage Three – Clinical Intervention

- o If at any time during the VTRA process it becomes apparent that a student is in need of intervention by a mental health professional in a clinical setting due to concerns of harm to self or others designate a member of the VTRA Team to work with the family to ensure this happens immediately.

CRISIS AND TRAUMA MANAGEMENT

If the language of a threat is **low risk** and only a few people are aware of the incident, there is usually no need to notify the students, staff and/or parents. In some schools and communities, the unnecessary communication of "threat-related" incident will cause more damage than good.

If the language of the threat is **low risk** but several students, staff, and others are aware of the incident and it appears to be elevating the anxiety of some in the school, then all student, staff, and parents should be notified. Each school/agency should follow their appropriate communications protocol. Ultimately information that will be shared will be determined by the Superintendent.

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Sample Letter

Dear Parents,
You may be aware that information was received by school officials that resulted in the Tri-Municipal Community Threat Assessment and Intervention Protocol being activated. This was a precautionary measure only as the incident was not one that posed significant risk to students or staff. However, as part of our ongoing commitment to ensuring a safe learning environment we take all issues that may affect school safety seriously.

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If the threat is more specific and deemed to be a **moderate to high risk** and includes names of particular targets, then those targeted must be notified. In the case of student targets, parents or caregivers must be notified pending any unique circumstances. If the case is only known to a few and threat selection is very clear and specific, then the rest of the students and staff would only be notified if they are directly related to the case.

If the threat is deemed **moderate to high risk** but several students and staff members outside of the target group are aware, then all students, staff and parents should be notified in general terms that an incident is under investigation and the school is following the lead of the RCMP. Ensure everyone that all students and staff are safe and that they situation is being managed collaboratively as part of the multi-disciplinary VTRA protocol. Again, schools/agencies should follow their appropriate communication procedures.

Whether the threat is high risk or not, if the school and community are responding traumatically, then it is appropriate to move into a trauma response mode following the appropriate school/agency procedures. This could involve bringing in additional support people (counselling staff, administrative support, security staff, etc.), closing the school for the remainder of the day, etc.

COMMUNICATIONS

Safe schools are schools that promote open communication in a culture of information sharing and reporting of concerns. Throughout the entire school community, school administrators, teachers, support staff, students and parents must have the support to openly voice concerns about school safety.

Responsible Reporting

All staff and students must be advised that any person in a school community having knowledge of high-risk student behaviour or having reasonable grounds to believe there is potential for high-risk or violent behaviour should promptly report the information to the school principal or another staff member. Actively teach students that seeking adult support for worrisome behaviour is not "ratting or snitching" but rather a social responsibility for the well-being of all. School staffs need to actively counter the "code of silence".

Fair Notice

The *Tri-Municipal Community Violence Threat Risk Assessment and Intervention Protocol* partners are committed to keeping our schools and community safe for all people. As a result, schools and partner community agencies will respond to youth behaviours that pose a potential risk to other members of the community.

School divisions will provide fair notice letters to parents of students annually. Partner agencies will also provide fair notice letters in a timely fashion to their clients/participants. See *Appendix F: Fair Notice Parent Brochure*. It is recommended that, if possible, information about the *Tri Municipal Community Violence Threat Risk Assessment and Intervention Protocol* be posted on their web site. It is the responsibility of each agency to communicate fair notice as appropriate for their site.

Communicating with Parents

Information should always be communicated for the purpose of modelling openness, promoting credibility, and reducing/mitigating an increase in system anxiety. General parent communication should be handled as outlined in school/agency procedures. Consider an in person meeting with several school/agency personnel attending for high anxiety situations rather than a letter. However, for parents directly involved with the incident, communication should be more personal, either by telephone or in person.

Communicating with the Media

When a case draws or has the potential to garner high profile media attention, formal communication should be collaborative between school administration, school division administration and RCMP. The release of information will take into consideration those

statutes guiding the release of information. Additionally, timing and content of the release must take into account police investigations so as not to jeopardize the investigation or the safety of any. All media releases will be prepared collaboratively and released jointly with the agency involved and the RCMP.

Again schools/agencies should follow their communication procedures. VTRA Team or staff members should not independently communicate with the media. Any communication that does take place with the media should model "calmness and leadership".

In high profile cases, media communications can become burdensome while at the same time trying to manage the welfare of the students and/or staff involved with the situation. Ideally, supervisors for frontline staff will come forward to offer assistance with this task. However, frontline staff should seek out assistance when needed.

Community Partners

Communication within each organization will be the responsibility of that *Tri-Municipal Community Violence Threat Risk Assessment and Intervention Protocol* partner. An advisory committee will meet at least twice annually to review VTRA practices, organize training from the CCTATR, and recommend needed revisions to the protocol.

Documentation

Each protocol partner will be responsible for documenting and storing information as required by the agency or by law. Sharing results of the VTRA process with parent/guardians and students will be the responsibility of the school division in consultation with protocol partners.

CONSENT AND INFORMATION SHARING

The general intent of access to information and protection of privacy legislation is to regulate the collection, use, and disclosure of personal information. Whenever possible and reasonable, consent to disclose personal information should be obtained. Valid consent does not exist unless the individual knows what he or she is consenting to and understands the consequences of the intended disclosure. The partners collaborating on the *Tri-Municipal Community Violence Threat Risk Assessment and Intervention Protocol* are committed to the sharing of relevant information to the extent authorized by law.

Section 126(6) of the Youth Criminal Justice Act enables information in a Youth Criminal Justice Act record to be shared, within the access period, with any professional or other person engaged in the supervision or care of young person, including the representative of any school board, or school or any other educational or training institution only in limited circumstances. Information may be shared to ensure the safety of staff, students or to facilitate rehabilitation

of the young person or to ensure compliance with a youth justice court order or any order of the provincial director respecting reintegration leave. Such sharing of information does not require the young person's consent.

All participants in the VTRA process are bound by the legislation and/or policy that guides their agency or organization regarding confidentiality and information sharing. It is their responsibility to know their legislation, take it into account, and guide their actions accordingly.

ANNUAL TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Annual Meetings

- Fall Meeting
    - Introduction of Protocol Partner Contacts
    - Professional development activity
    - Review upcoming training needs at all school sites and agencies.
    - Review Calendar of Events for the Year
- Spring Meeting
    - Review VTRA activities and statistics for the year.
    - Review any changes to legislation that could impact the protocol.
    - Review VTRA Protocol to ensure relevancy.
    - Professional development activity.
    - Determine VTRA Chairperson for next school year.
    - Determine Fall and Spring meeting dates for next school year.

Leadership

- At the spring meeting each year, one of the Protocol Partners Contacts will volunteer to take the role of Chairperson for the following school year.
- Leadership Tasks
    - Coordinate Fall and Spring meetings.
    - Identify VTRA Partners Contacts for the upcoming year and distribute membership list. (August/early September)
    - Inventory training needs for schools and agencies.
    - Liaise with local VTRA Trainers to ensure training needs are met.

Building Capacity

- VTRA training from the CCTATR will be provided on an ongoing basis. This could include:
    - Level One Training (two days)
    - Level Two Training (two days)
    - VTRA Introduction (three hours)

HELPFUL LINKS

211 Resource Lists
>http://www.211edmonton.com/resources/lists.php

Addiction & Mental Health Edmonton Zone Index to Services
>http://psychiatry.med.ualberta.ca/NewsEvents/Documents/AMH%20Index%20to%20Services%20Feb21,%202013.pdf

The Do's and Don'ts of Calling 911
>http://globalnews.ca/news/509277/the-dos-and-donts-of-dialling-911/

The Green Book Online (Parkland and Area Support Agencies Directory)
>http://www.sprucegrove.org/Assets/pdf/reports/directory.pdf

Information Sharing for Human Service Providers in the Alberta Public Sector
>http://justice.alberta.ca/programs_services/families/Documents/doc_ACYI__RedGreen.pdf

List of Chat Acronyms and Text Message Shorthand
>http://www.netlingo.com/acronyms.php

Legislation

Alberta Human Rights Act
>http://www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca/about/legislation.asp

Child First Act
>http://humanservices.alberta.ca/16594.html

Criminal Code of Canada
>http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-46/

Education Act
>http://www.education.alberta.ca/department/policy/education-act.aspx

Health Information Act
>http://www.qp.alberta.ca/1266.cfm?page=H05.cfm&leg_type=Acts&isbncln=9780779724758

Privacy Act
>http://www.priv.gc.ca/leg_c/r_o_a_e.asp

Youth Justice Act
>http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/cj-jp/yj-jj/ycja-lsjpa/index.html

APPENDIX A: Definitions

CCTATR	Canadian Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response
CFS	Child & Family Services
Community Response (Stage 2)	The inter-agency process of determining the level of risk for threatening or violent behaviour. At this stage a multi-disciplinary intervention plan is also created.
Empty Vessel	The relationship between the child/youth of concern and his/her connection to healthy adult supports and other social/cultural aspects of his/her personality.
FCSS	Family and Community Services
Fluidity	The flow between suicidal thoughts and/or actions and homicidal thoughts and/or actions.
FSCD	Family Supports for Children with Disabilities. This is a department of Child & Family Services.
Genogram	A diagram expressing the relationships within a family.
High Risk Behaviours	Behaviours that express a plausible intent to do harm or act out violently against someone or something.
Informed Consent	Ensuring the participant knows what he/she is consenting to and the risks and benefits of giving that consent.
Risk Assessment	The process of determining if a child/youth of concern may pose a risk to some unknown target(s) at some unknown period of time.
School Based Response (Stage 1)	Ensuring immediate risk reduction, collection of data, and initial assessment.
Stage 3 Clinical Intervention	Ensure that a student is provided services by a mental health professional in a clinical setting.
Threat	Any expression of intent to do harm or act out violently against someone or something. Threats may be spoken, written, drawn, posted online or made by gesture. Threats may be direct, indirect, conditional or veiled.
Threat Assessment	The process of determining if a threat maker actually poses a risk to the target they have threatened.

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Worrisome Behaviours | Behaviours that cause concern and may indicate that a child/youth is moving toward a greater risk of violent behaviour but are not overtly threatening or violent.

APPENDIX B: Stage 1 – Violence/Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Process and Report Form

> **It is not a Stage 1 VTRA if there is imminent danger or the threat is time sensitive.**
> For example, they said they were coming back to get her with a knife.
> ## In these types of cases
> ## Call 911.

General Information

When does a school activate a Stage 1 VTRA?	Notes
Examples of high-risk behaviours addressed include but are not limited to: • Serious violence or violence with the intent to harm or kill • Verbal/written threats to kill others (clear, direct, plausible) • Internet, web site, social media threats to kill others • Possession of weapons (including replicas) • Bomb threats (making and/or detonating explosive devices) • Fire setting • Sexual intimidation or assault • Gang related intimidation and violence	
Three Primary Hypotheses in VTRA	**Notes**
Formulate an idea of what you think you will discover as you learn more about those involved in the incident: 1. Is it a conscious or unconscious "Cry for Help"? 2. Conspiracy of two or more. Who else knows about it? Who else is involved? 3. Is there any evidence of fluidity? (Suicidal and/or homicidal behaviour)	
Key VTRA Considerations	**Notes**
• Guard against **under reaction** to indicators that someone is moving on a pathway to serious violence. • Avoid the uni-dimensional assessment. The more perspectives and information about a student, the clearer the understanding of his/her motivations. • Serious violence is an **evolutionary process**. No one just 'snaps'.	

• The **pathway to violence** is not a straight line. • The **quote that kills**. "He's a good kid with no history." • **Baseline** – Is this typical behaviour? If not, can evolution be inferred? • **Empty vessel** – What is the child filling him/herself with? • **Who else** is concerned by the behaviour of the threat maker? Are there more involved? Puppet master? • **Fluidity** – If a student is suicidal/homicidal how committed are they to the act? Are they primed? • **Imitators vs. Innovators** – As most are imitators, seek predictors based upon the circumstances. • **Threat assessment trumps suspension**.	
Stage 1 VTRA Process	**Notes**
Work through the steps following this handout. There will be information to assist you along the way. Photos and copies of documents are helpful if Stage 2 is activated or future incidents occur. 1. Address immediate risk. 2. Mitigate risk. 3. Contact RCMP VTRA Member. 4. Activate VTRA Stage 1. 5. Data Collection 6. Parent Notification 7. Semi-Structured Interviews & Reporting 8. Determination of Risk 9. Decide on a Course of Action 10. Develop an Intervention Plan While these steps are generally sequential, they are not necessarily discreet. If common sense dictates starting one step, before the previous is complete, do so.	

How long should a Stage 1 VTRA take?

- High profile incident – To be completed the same day, possibly within an hour or two.
- Lower profile incident – To be completed ideally within a day. Two days at most.
- Following the process and collecting all the data will likely take a couple of hours. In complex situations, likely more.
- Remember to access your School Based VTRA Team for assistance. As well, contact the Division VTRA Contact for support if needed.

Recordkeeping

- Stage 1
   - This form and any related information that is attached to it are considered transitory documents and would generally be destroyed at the end of the school year.

- o If a situation carries beyond the end of a school year (eg. the matter is still before the courts, etc.), the document is carried over for one more school year.
- Stage 2
  - o Documents added to the Student Record at the Division level are kept on file until the student is age 30.

VTRA Process

Done	Step One – Immediate Risk (School Administrator)	Notes
	Initiate appropriate emergency procedures (lockdown, evacuation, etc.). Make sure you know the whereabouts of the target(s) and threat maker(s) and address any immediate risk factors if they exist. - If necessary, appropriately monitor and/or detain the student(s) of concern until the police member of the team is present. - Do not allow "students of interest" access to coats, backpacks, desks, or lockers. - Determine if the threat maker has immediate access to the means (knife, gun, etc.).	

Done	Step Two – Mitigate Risk (School Administrator)	Notes
	If appropriate, check the locker, backpack, desk, etc.	

Done	Step Three – Contact RCMP VTRA Member (School Administrator)	Notes
	Share initial data and police will determine if a history of weapons possession, use, or violence is noted in police accessible records. - RCMP Officer - High Schools - Telephone Number - cell - RCMP Officer (1st contact) - K-9 Schools - Telephone Number – cell - Telephone Number – office - RCMP Officer (2nd contact) - K-9 Schools - Telephone Number – cell - Telephone Number – office You will need to provide the following: - Name of student - Date of birth	

Done		Notes

	• Parents names
	
	 • The Bedroom Dynamic – Must be attended to in each incident.
	     o The RCMP "owns" the bedroom dynamic and will take the lead on making decisions related to this.
	     o Do not make the RCMP officer an 'agent' by requesting them to look in the bedroom.
	     o High Profile Incidents – The RCMP VTRA Officer will visit the home prior to the Stage 2 Meeting.
	     o Low Profile Incidents – Request that the parents examine the student's bedroom and any other personal spaces (internet history, back yard fort, etc.) and report back any concerning discoveries.	

Done	Step Four – Activate VTRA Stage 1 (School Administrator)	Notes

	Notify the Division VTRA Team Contact
	 • Name
	     o Telephone Number – office
	     o Telephone Number – cell
	 Be prepared to share the following information:
	 • The details of the incident.
	 • The name of the threat maker and targets
	 • Stage 1 progress and possible needed supports.	

Done	Step Five – Interviews & Data Collection (School Based VTRA Team) High Profile Incidents - RCMP VTRA Member	Notes
	Determine who will strategically interview sources of data including all participants directly and indirectly involved as well as "hard" data collection as outlined below. Immediate data may be obtained from multiple sources and should include: ☐ Reporter(s) ☐ Target(s) ☐ Witnesses ☐ Teachers and other school staff (secretaries, educational assistants, bus drivers, etc.) ☐ Parents/caregivers (call both parents) ☐ Check the student(s) locker, desk, backpack, recent textbooks, assignments, binders, cars,	

Done		Notes
	etc. for data consistent with the threat making or threat-related behaviour. ☐ Activities – internet histories, diaries, notebooks, etc. ☐ Current school records – attendance, report cards, IPP, etc. Additional information may be collected from the following sources if more data is needed: ☐ Friends, classmates, acquaintances ☐ Current and previous school records (call the sending school) **Pre-Interview Considerations** • When possible, interview the Threat Maker(s) or Student of Concern **after** initial data has been collected such as locker check, interviewing the individual who reported the threat as well as the police member doing an occurrence check for prior police contacts. This will help to avoid the "uni-dimensional assessment" and provide the interviewer(s) with data to develop case specific hypotheses and verbatim questions that can be asked in a strategic VTRA interview to test those hypotheses. • There should <u>never</u> be more than two people in the room interviewing the Threat Maker or Student of Concern. • Remember to distinguish between <u>Assessing the Threat</u> versus <u>Assessing the Threat Maker</u>.	

Done	Step Six – Parent Notification (School Administrator)	Notes
	☐ Check the student's file to verify guardianship and any other legal flags that may relate to the family. ☐ Notify the threat makers(s) and target(s) parent(s) or guardian(s) at the earliest opportunity. ☐ Parents/guardians of the target(s) have been notified of the situation and the VTRA process. ☐ Parents/guardians of the threat maker(s) have been notified of the situation and the Stage 1 VTRA data collection phase. ☐ Parents/guardians have NOT been notified because – Ask about ☐ Their perspective on this incident.	

Done		Notes
	☐ Any recent behavioural changes, any contextual factors that might be at play with the student. Discuss the bedroom dynamic and how to proceed as per the conversation with the RCMP VTRA Contact. ☐ Expect the RCMP VTRA Contact to call. ☐ Request that they investigate the home (bedroom, any other personal spaces, internet history, and personal electronic devices) to ascertain if there are any indicators or evidence of threat making behaviour and/or violence. For the threat maker, indicate that the data collection component of the VTRA process seeks information regarding the student that parents can provide helpful information. • Ask to book a meeting or telephone conversation once school based data is collected.	
Done	**Step Seven – Semi-Structured Interview Format** **(School Based VTRA Team)**	**Notes**
	As a team, complete STAGE 1 – VIOLENCE/THREAT RISK ASSESSMENT (VTRA) REPORT FORM.	

STAGE 1 – VIOLENCE/THREAT RISK ASSESSMENT (VTRA) REPORT FORM

Student: **School:**

Birthdate: **ASN:**   **Grade:**   **Age:**

Parents Names: **Date of Incident:**

Stage 1 VTRA Team Members:

Determination of Risk:

Series One – The Incident	
Questions	**Notes**
1. Where did the incident happen? When? What happened?	
2. How did it come to the interviewee's attention?	
3. What was the specific language of the threat? Detail of the weapon? Gesture(s) made?	
4. Was there stated: • **(J)** Justification for the threat? • **(M)** Means to carry out the threat? • **(C)** Consequences weighed out (I don't care if I live or die)? • **(C)** Conditions that could lower the level of risk (eg. unless you take that Facebook post down, I will stick my knife in your throat!)?	
5. Who was present?	
6. Under what circumstances did the incident occur?	
7. What was the perceived motivation or cause of the incident?	
8. What was the response of the target (if present) at the time of the incident? • Did he/she add to or detract from the justification process?	
9. What was the response of others who were present at the time of the incident? • Did he/she add to or detract from the justification process?	

Series Two – The Attack Related Behaviours	
Questions	**Notes**
1. Has the student (subject) sought out information consistent with their threat making or threat related behaviour?	
2. Have there been any communications suggesting ideas or intentions to attack a target currently or in the past?	
3. Has the student (subject) attempted to gain access to weapons or do they have access to weapons they have threatened to use?	
4. Has the student developed a plan? If so, how general or specific is it (time, date, target selection, site selection, journal of justification, maps, floor plans, etc.)?	
5. Has the student (subject) been engaging in suspicious behaviours such as appearing to show an inordinate interest in alarm systems, sprinkler systems, video surveillance, in schools or elsewhere, schedules and locations of police or security patrol?	
6. Has the student engaged in rehearsal behaviours including packing or brandishing fake but realistic looking weapons, air rifles, pistols, or engaged in fire setting (eg. Lighting fire to cardboard tubes, cut and taped to look like a pipe bomb.)?	
7. Is there any evidence of attack related behaviours in the student's locker, back pack, car trunk, etc. at school? Or in the bedroom, shed, garage, etc. at home?	
8. Have others been forewarned of a pending attack or told not to come to school because "something big is going to happen?"	

Series Three – Threat Maker Typology	
NOTE: In Stage 1 VTRA, history of violence is a significant risk enhancer, but the best predictor of future violent behaviour is an **increase or shift in baseline**. This may also include an individual who has become more withdrawn or quiet as opposed to acting out.	
Questions	**Notes**
1. Does the threat maker (subject) have a history of violence or threats of violence? If yes, what is his/her past: • **(HTS)** History of Human Target Selection? • **(SS)** History of Site Selection? • **(F)** Frequency of Violence or Threats? • **(I)** Intensity of Violence or Threats? • **(R)** Recency?	
2. In the case at hand, what is his/her current: • (HTS) Human Target Selection? • (SS) Site Selection? • Does it denote a significant increase in **BASELINE** behaviour?	
3. Does the threat maker (subject) have a history of depression or suicidal thinking/behaviour?	
4. Is there evidence of fluidity in his/her writings, drawings, or verbalizations?	
5. Does the threat maker have access to weapons? At home? From others outside of home?	
6. Does the threat maker (subject) use drugs or alcohol? Is there evidence it is a risk enhancing factor in the case at hand?	
7. Is there a mental health diagnosis or evidence of a mental health diagnosis that may be a risk enhancing factor in the case at hand?	
8. Are intervention services of any sort in place? If so what are the details of that service? If not now, previously?	
9. Does the threat maker (subject) have a history of trauma including car accidents, falls, exposed to violence, abuse, etc.?	

Series Four – The Target Typology

NOTE: Remember in some cases the target is a higher risk for violence than the threat maker with the most common case being where the threat maker is the victim of bullying and the target is the bully.

Questions	Notes
1. Does the target have a history of violence or threats of violence? If yes, what is his/her past: • **(FIR)** What is the frequency, intensity, and recency of the violence? • **(HSS)** What has been the past human target selection? • **(SS)** What has been the past site selection?	
2. Is there evidence the target has instigated the current situation?	

Series Five – Peer Dynamics

Questions	Notes
1. Are others involved in the incident that may be intentionally or unintentionally be contributing to the justification process?	
2. Who is in the threat maker's (subject's) peer structure and where does the threat maker (subject) fit (eg. Leader, co-leader, follower)?	
3. Is there a difference between the threat maker's individual baseline and the peer group's baseline behaviour?	
4. Who is in the target's peer structure and where does the target fit (eg. Leader, co-leader, follower)?	
5. Is there a peer who could assist with the plan or obtain the weapons necessary for the attack?	

Series Six – The Empty Vessel	
Questions	**Notes**
1. Does the threat maker (subject) have a healthy relationship with a mature adult?	
2. Does the threat maker (subject) have **inordinate** knowledge or interest versus a **general** knowledge or interest in violent events, themes, or incidents including prior school based attacks?	
3. How has the threat maker (subject) responded to prior violent incidents (local, national, etc.)?	
4. What type of violent games, movies, books, music, internet searches, etc. does the threat maker (subject) fill him/herself with?	
5. Is there evidence that what they are filling themselves with is influencing their behaviour? **(Imitators vs. Innovators?)**	
6. What related themes are present in their writings, drawings, etc.?	
7. Is there evidence of fluidity and/or religiosity?	
Series Seven – Contextual Factors (Triggers)	
Questions	**Notes**
1. Has the threat maker experienced a recent loss, such as the death of a family member or friend, a recent break up, rejection by a peer or peer group, been cut from a sports team, received a rejection notice from a college, university, military, etc.?	
2. Have his/her parents just divorced or separated?	
3. Is he/she the victim of abuse? Has the abuse been dormant but resurfaced at this time?	
4. Is he/she being initiated into a gang? Is it voluntary or forced recruitment?	
5. Has he/she recently been in an argument or fight with a parent/caregiver or someone close to him/her?	
6. Has he/she recently been charged with an offence or suspended or expelled from school?	
7. Is the place where he/she been suspended to likely increase or decrease his/her level of risk?	

Series Eight – Family Dynamics	
Questions	**Notes**
1. How many homes does the threat maker (subject) reside in (shared custody, goes back and forth from parent to grandparents' home)?	
2. Is the threat maker (subject) connected to a healthy/mature adult in the home?	
3. Who all lives in the family home (full-time and part-time)? Has anyone entered or left the home who may be influencing level of risk?	
4. Who seems to be in charge of the family and how often are they around?	
5. Has the threat maker (subject) engaged in violence or threats of violence towards their siblings or parent(s)/caregiver(s)? If yes, what is the frequency, intensity, and recency **(FIR)** of the violence and what form does it take?	
6. What is the historical baseline at home? What is the current baseline at home? Is there evidence of evolution at home?	
7. Are parent(s)/caregiver(s) concerned for their own safety or the safety of their children or others?	
8. Does the threat maker's (subject's) level of risk (at home, at school, or in the community) cycle according to who is in the home (eg. Student is low risk for violence when his father is home but is high risk during the times when his father travels away from home for work)?	
9. Is there a history of mental health disorders in the family?	
10. Is there a history of drug or alcohol abuse in the family?	

Series Nine – Genogram

This is a diagram of the family structure. It is only needed if complex family connections exist.

Done	Step Eight – Determination of Risk (School Based VTRA Team) High Profile Incidents - RCMP VTRA Member
	School Based VTRA Team members collate the data and discuss all relevant information in regard to the threat maker. RCMP VTRA Member will be included in high profile incidents. As a team, ask these questions: • To what extent does the student pose a threat to school/student safety? • Does the student pose a threat to himself/herself or someone outside the school (eg. family)? The Stage 1 VTRA Assessment is an overall assessment of current level of risk and is a precursor (if necessary) to a more comprehensive Stage 2 Risk Evaluation. **Low Level of Concern** Risk to the target(s), students, staff, and school safety is minimal. ☐ Threat is vague and indirect. ☐ Information contained within the threat is inconsistent, implausible or lacks detail; threat lacks realism. ☐ Available information suggests that the person is <u>unlikely</u> to carry out the threat or become violent. ☐ Within the general range for typical baseline behaviour for the threat maker. ☐ Categorization of low risk does not imply "no risk" but indicates the individual is at little risk for violence. Monitoring of the matter may be appropriate. **Medium Level of Concern** The threat could be carried out, although it may not appear entirely realistic. Violent action is possible. ☐ Threat is more plausible and concrete than a low level threat. Wording in the threat and information gathered suggests that some thought has been given to how the threat will be carried out (eg. possible place and time). ☐ No clear indication that the student of concern has taken preparatory steps (eg. weapon seeking) although there may be an ambiguous or inconclusive reference point to that possibility. There may be specific statement seeking to convey that the threat is not empty. "I'm serious." ☐ There are moderate or lingering concerns about the student's potential to act violently. ☐ There is an increase in baseline behaviour. ☐ Categorization of risk indicates the threat maker is at an <u>elevated</u> risk for violence. ☐ Those measures currently in place or further measures, including monitoring, are required in an effort to manage the threat maker's future risk. **High Level of Concern** The threat or situation of concern appears to pose an imminent and serious danger to the safety of others. ☐ Threat is specific and plausible. There is an identified target. Student has the capacity to act on the threat.

	☐ Information suggests concrete steps have been taken toward acting on the threat. For example, information indicates that the student has acquired or practiced with a weapon or has had a victim under surveillance. ☐ Information suggests strong concern about the student's potential to act violently. ☐ Significant increase in baseline behaviour. ☐ Categorization of risk indicates the threat maker is at high or imminent risk for violence. ☐ Immediate intervention is required to prevent an act of violence from occurring. Remember to note the determination of risk on the front page of the report form. * Sources for the above categorizations represent the work of the FBI, Durham Regional Police Service, Ontario Provincial Police Threat Assessment Unit, and the Canadian Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response.	
Done	**Step Nine – Decide on a Course of Action (School Based VTRA Team)**	**Notes**
	Is there risk reducing interventions that need to be put into place immediately? With the input of *all* School Based VTRA Team members, decide on a course of action. **Low to Medium Level of Concern** • Implement an Intervention Plan • The student can likely be managed at school with appropriate school based interventions. • Contact the Division VTRA Team Contact, (Name & Telephone Number) to advise of the outcome of the Stage 1 VTRA. **Medium to High Level of Concern** • The School Based VTRA Team has determined that at Stage 2 Threat Assessment is needed. • Contact the Division VTRA Team Contact, (Name & Telephone Number) to activate the Stage 2 VTRA.	
Done	**Step Ten: Develop an Intervention Plan (School Based VTRA Team)**	**Notes**
	Low to Medium • Use the Violence Threat Risk Assessment Intervention Plan form to address all concerns identified during the Stage 1 Assessment. Medium to High • Implement any needed interventions to support the student until the Stage 2 meeting takes place.	

APPENDIX C: Stage 2 – Violence/Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Process and Report Form

Three Primary Hypotheses in VTRA
Formulate an idea of what you think you will discover as you learn more about those involved in the incident: 1. Is it a conscious or unconscious "Cry for Help"? 2. Conspiracy of two or more. Who else knows about it? Who else is involved? 3. Is there any evidence of fluidity? (Suicidal and/or homicidal behaviour)

Key VTRA Considerations
• Guard against **under reaction** to indicators that someone is moving on a pathway to serious violence. • Avoid the uni-dimensional assessment. The more perspectives and information about a student, the clearer the understanding of his/her motivations. • Serious violence is an **evolutionary process**. No one just 'snaps'. • The **pathway to violence** is not a straight line. • The **quote that kills**. "He's a good kid with no history." • **Baseline** – Is this typical behaviour? If not, can evolution be inferred? • **Empty vessel** – What is the child filling him/herself with? • **Who else** is concerned by the behaviour of the threat maker? Are there more involved? Puppet master? • **Fluidity** – If a student is suicidal/homicidal how committed are they to the act? Are they primed? • **Imitators vs. Innovators** – As most are imitators, seek predictors based upon the circumstances. • **Threat assessment trumps suspension**.

Stage 2 VTRA Process

Done	Step One – Review Stage 1 Data Collection with School Based VTRA Lead (Division VTRA Contact)	Notes
	• Questions about the information gathered? • How to address any legal flags or family issues or concerns that may be present? • Confirm the parents have been advised that the Stage 2 VTRA has been activated and that the Division VTRA Contact will be contacting them. • Who are the significant people for the student and who should attend the Stage 2 meeting (family members, teachers, bus drivers, therapists, etc.)? • Advise the school to notify the Area Superintendent of the Stage 2 activation. • Advise to provide copies (if applicable) of:	

Done	Step Two – VTRA Interagency Contact (Community VTRA Team)	Notes
	○ Stage 1 Data Collection ○ Current IPP ○ Psychological testing reports • Compare calendars for meeting date.	

Done	Step Two – VTRA Interagency Contact (Community VTRA Team)	Notes
	• Contact RCMP ○ The RCMP "own" the bedroom dynamic and take the lead in decision making. ○ Do not make the RCMP Contact your agent by requesting them to search the bedroom. ○ Discuss the bedroom dynamic and how to proceed with this case. ○ Any other factors to consider in addressing this case? ○ Compare calendars for meeting date. • Contact Child & Family Services ○ Based on initial information, are there any significant factors to consider in addressing this case? ○ Compare calendars for meeting date. • Forward any documents in advance of the meeting to be reviewed prior. ○ Ensure security standards are in place for confidential information.	

	Step Three - Stage 2 Meeting Details (Division VTRA Contact)	
	• School Division – • School Division – • RCMP – • CFS – • Administrator – • Mom – • Dad – • • • • Date – Time – Location – Book a meeting space and ensure that all are contacted and confirm their participation.	

Done	Step Four – Contact Parent (Division VTRA Contact)	Notes
	• Confirm that the School Administrator has indicated that the parent would be receiving this phone call. • Explain the VTRA process. • Indicate the goal is to create an intervention plan to support the student, family, and/or school. • Discuss the multi-disciplinary assessment and participation of RCMP and CFS. • Seek consent for participation of any other agency personnel involved with the student. o Forward a consent form for their signature and request that it is returned asap to allow for contacting personnel. • Discuss bedroom dynamic. o Will RCMP attend to discuss? o Will parent be checking on the honor system? If so, ask them to check ▪ Bedroom ▪ Internet history ▪ Personal devices – texts, history, photos, etc. ▪ Private spaces (forts, etc.) • Advise that this may feel like an onerous process but that it is done in the spirit of supporting the student to become a healthier individual and ensure the school remains safe for both him/her and the students and staff. • Confirm date, time, and location of meeting. • Advise it is permitted to bring a support person if they wish. • Speak to both parents and any step-parents.	
Done	Step Five – Stage 2 Risk Evaluation Meeting – Part One: Preparation (Community & School VTRA Teams)	Notes
	• VTRA Team, School Based Personnel and any other agency personnel meet. • What consent has been provided by the parents? • What are the issues of concern? • Are there any specific items that need to be questioned with the parents? • Do we need further information from the student? • Complete the first section of the Stage 2 form regarding school dynamics.	

Done		Notes
	• Possibly complete Series Four – Target Typology	
Done	**Step Six – Stage 2 Risk Evaluation Meeting – Part Two: Data Collection (Community & School VTRA Teams)**	**Notes**

	• Invite the parents to have them join the meeting.
	• Welcome and Introductions
	• Prior to meeting start…
	    o Ask parent to sign Consent to Release Information if not provided previously
	    o Circulate attendance sheet for signatures.
	    o Declare Intent – The purpose of the meeting is to gain a deep understanding of the student and the circumstances related to the incident to create a comprehensive intervention plan to support the student, family, and/or school.
	    o VTRA is a formal process that works best when we act informally with each other. An open conversation provides the best information and understanding.
	    o Seek multiple perspectives on the student, so many questions will be asked of both home and school.
	• Collectively complete the Stage 2 VTRA Report Form (attached).
	• Upon completion of form, thank parents for their participation.
	• Advise parents who will be contacting them by when to discuss the intervention plan.	

Done	**Step Seven – Stage 2 Risk Evaluation Meeting – Part Three: Intervention (Community & School VTRA Teams)**	**Notes**
	• Debrief the meeting. • Assess the Risk Factors. • Determine level of risk. • Collectively complete intervention plan.	
Done	**Step Eight – Intervention Plan Follow-Up (Division VTRA & School VTRA Contacts)**	**Notes**

- The role of the Division VTRA Contact is to facilitate any interagency supports and assist the School VTRA Contact. - The role of the School VTRA Contact is to be the point of contact for the family regarding implementation of the supports and to monitor that the interventions are put in place. - The Division VTRA Contact arranges the meeting at the appropriate location (usually the school).	

NOTE: In the Stage 2 form, the questions that also appear in the Stage 1 form have been italicized. The questions that are specific to Stage 2 have been bolded.

STAGE 2 – VIOLENCE/THREAT RISK ASSESSMENT (VTRA) REPORT FORM

Student: **School:**

Birthdate: **ASN:**   **Grade:**   **Age:**

Parents Names: **Date of Incident:**

Attending the Meeting:

Determination of Risk:

School Dynamics & Structure	
Questions	**Notes**
1. **What is the history of trauma in the school and community?**	
2. **Is the current incident occurring in a defined international, national, or local critical period?**	

3. **Is the flow of information typically open between all levels of the system?**
    a. **Naturally Open**
    b. **Naturally Closed**
    c. **Traumatically Open**
    d. **Traumatically Closed**	

4. **Is the flow of information in this case open or is some other dynamic influencing this particular case? (eg. Did the event occur while the witnesses were out back smoking weed and they don't want to implicate themselves?)**	
5. **Could parent(s) be adding or maintaining the justification process?**	
6. **Could staff member(s) be adding to or maintaining the justification process?**	
7. **If several staff members or parents seem to be under reaction or over reacting, is there an underlying "human systems dynamic" driving the behaviour?**	

Series One – The Incident	
Questions	**Notes**
1. What happened? Where did the incident happen? When?	
2. How did it come to the Team's attention?	
3. What was the specific language of the threat? Detail of the weapon? Gesture(s) made?	
4. Was the threat direct, indirect, conditional or veiled? Was it clear, direct, and/or plausible?	
5. Was there stated: • *(J) Justification for the threat?* • *(M) Means to carry out the threat?* • *(C) Consequences weighed out (I don't care if I live or die)?* • *(C) Conditions that could lower the level of risk (eg. unless you take that Facebook post down, I will stick my knife in your throat!)?*	J – M – C – C –
6. Who was present?	
7. Under what circumstances did the incident occur?	
8. Was any violence provoked or unprovoked?	
9. Was intent to harm present?	
10. Were weapons brandished or used during the incident?	
11. What was the perceived motivation or cause of the incident?	
12. What was the response of the target (if present) at the time of the incident? • *Did he/she add to or detract from the justification process?*	
13. What was the response of others who were present at the time of the incident? • *Did he/she add to or detract from the justification process?*	

Series Two – The Attack Related Behaviours	
Questions	**Notes**
1. Has the student (subject) sought out information consistent with their threat making or threat related behaviour?	
2. Have there been any communications suggesting ideas or intentions to attack a target currently or in the past?	
3. Has the student (subject) attempted to gain access to weapons or do they have access to weapons they have threatened to use?	
4. Has the student developed a plan? If so, how general or specific is it (time, date, target selection, site selection, journal of justification, maps, floor plans, etc.)?	
5. Has the student (subject) been engaging in suspicious behaviours such as appearing to show an inordinate interest in alarm systems, sprinkler systems, video surveillance, in schools or elsewhere, schedules and locations of police or security patrol?	
6. Has the student engaged in rehearsal behaviours including packing or brandishing fake but realistic looking weapons, air rifles, pistols, or engaged in fire setting (eg. Lighting fire to cardboard tubes, cut and taped to look like a pipe bomb.)?	
7. Is there any evidence of attack related behaviours in the student's locker, back pack, car trunk, etc. at school? Or in the bedroom, shed, garage, etc. at home?	
8. Have others been forewarned of a pending attack or told not to come to school because "something big is going to happen?"	

Series Three – Threat Maker Typology	
Questions	**Notes**

1. **Does the threat maker (subject) appear to be more:**
   a. **Traditional Predominately Behavioural Type?**
   b. **Traditional Predominately Cognitive Type?**
   c. **Mixed Type?**
   d. **Non-Traditional?**	

2. *Does the threat maker (subject) have a history of violence or threats of violence? If yes, what is his/her past:* • *(HTS) History of Human Target Selection?* • *(SS) History of Site Selection?* • *(F) Frequency of Violence or Threats?* • *(I) Intensity of Violence or Threats?* • *(R) Recency?*	HTS – SS – F – I – R –
3. **Does the F, I, R of this incident denote a significant increase in the behavioural baseline of the student?**	
4. *In the case at hand, what is his/her current:* • *(HTS) Human Target Selection?* • *(SS) Site Selection?* • *Does it denote a significant increase in BASELINE behaviour?*	
5. **Have they primarily engaged in instrumental violence or affective violence?**	
6. *Does the threat maker (subject) have a history of depression or suicidal thinking/behaviour?*	
7. *Is there evidence of fluidity in his/her writings, drawings, or verbalizations?*	
8. *Does the threat maker have access to weapons? At home? From others outside of home?*	
9. *Does the threat maker (subject) use drugs or alcohol? Is there evidence it is a risk enhancing factor in the case at hand?*	
10. *Is there a mental health diagnosis or evidence of a mental health diagnosis that may be a risk enhancing factor in the case at hand?*	
11. *Are intervention services of any sort in place? If so what are the details of that service? If not now, previously?*	
12. *Does the threat maker (subject) have a history of trauma including car accidents, falls, exposed to violence, abuse, etc.?*	
13. *Is the threat maker open and honest about the incident?*	
14. **Do they feel justified in attacking the target?**	
15. **Have they dehumanized the target?**	

Series Four – The Target Typology	
NOTE: *Remember in some cases the target is a higher risk for violence than the threat maker with the most common case being where the threat maker is the victim of bullying and the target is the bully.*	
Questions	**Notes**
1. *Does the target have a history of violence or threats of violence? If yes, what is his/her past:* • *(FIR) What is the frequency, intensity, and recency of the violence?* • *(HSS) What has been the past human target selection?* • *(SS) What has been the past site selection?*	
2. *Is there evidence the target has instigated the current situation?*	
3. **Does he/she have a history of depression or suicidal thinking/behaviour?**	
4. **Is there evidence of fluidity?**	
5. **Are they open and honest about the incident?**	
6. **Is there evidence of an increase in his/her baseline behaviour?**	
7. **Does he/she feel justified in attacking the threat maker?**	
8. **Has he/she dehumanized the threat maker?**	

Series Five – Peer Dynamics and Structure	
Questions	**Notes**
1. **Was there a clear victim and perpetrator dyad with power imbalance (age, size, social standing, etc.)?**	
2. *Are others involved in the incident that may be intentionally or unintentionally be contributing to the justification process?*	
3. **Is the target more at risk for perpetrating violence than the threat maker?**	
4. *Who is in the threat maker's (subject's) peer structure and where does the threat maker (subject) fit (eg. Leader, co-leader, follower)?*	
5. **Are there others in the threat maker's peer structure that may be directly or indirectly influencing the threat maker and is their baseline behaviour higher or lower than the threat makers?**	
6. *Is there a difference between the threat maker's individual baseline and the peer group's baseline behaviour?*	
7. *Who is in the target's peer structure and where does the target fit (eg. Leader, co-leader, follower)?*	
8. **Are there others in the target's peer structure that may be directly or indirectly influencing the target and is their baseline behaviour higher or lower than the threat makers?**	
9. *Is there a difference between the target's individual baseline and the peer group's individual baseline?*	
10. *Is there a peer who could assist with the plan or obtain the weapons necessary for the attack?*	

Series Six – The Empty Vessel	
Questions	**Notes**
1. *Does the threat maker (subject) have a healthy relationship with a mature adult?*	
2. If they do not have a healthy connection, what (or who) is he/she filling themselves with?	
3. *Does the threat maker (subject) have **inordinate** knowledge or interest versus a **general** knowledge or interest in violent events, themes, or incidents including prior school based attacks?*	
4. *How has the threat maker (subject) responded to prior violent incidents (local, national, etc.)?*	
5. Does he/she identify with the aggressors and justify their actions?	
6. Does he/she critique the aggressor's behaviours and talk about how to do it better?	
7. *What type of violent games, movies, books, music, internet searches, etc. does the threat maker (subject) fill him/herself with?*	
*8. Is there evidence that what they are filling themselves with is influencing their behaviour? **(Imitators vs. Innovators?)***	
9. What related themes are present in their writings, drawings, etc.?	
10. *Is there evidence of fluidity and/or religiosity?*	

Series Seven – Contextual Factors (Triggers)	
Questions	**Notes**
1. Has the threat maker experienced a recent loss, such as the death of a family member or friend, a recent break up, rejection by a peer or peer group, been cut from a sports team, received a rejection notice from a college, university, military, etc.?	
2. Have his/her parents just divorced or separated?	
3. Is he/she the victim of abuse? Has the abuse been dormant but resurfaced at this time?	
4. Is he/she being initiated into a gang? Is it voluntary or forced recruitment?	
5. Has he/she recently been in an argument or fight with a parent/caregiver or someone close to him/her?	
6. Has he/she recently been charged with an offence or suspended or expelled from school?	
7. Is the place where he/she been suspended to likely increase or decrease his/her level of risk?	

Series Eight – Family Dynamics	
Questions	**Notes**
1. How many homes does the threat maker (subject) reside in (shared custody, goes back and forth from parent to grandparents' home)?	
2. Is the threat maker (subject) connected to a healthy/mature adult in the home?	
3. Who all lives in the family home (full-time and part-time)? Has anyone entered or left the home who may be influencing level of risk?	
4. Who seems to be in charge of the family and how often are they around?	
5. Has the threat maker (subject) engaged in violence or threats of violence towards their siblings or parent(s)/caregiver(s)? If yes, what is the frequency, intensity, and recency **(FIR)** of the violence and what form does it take?	
6. What is the historical baseline at home? What is the current baseline at home? Is there evidence of evolution at home?	
7. Are parent(s)/caregiver(s) concerned for their own safety or the safety of their children or others?	
8. Do the parents know the contents of the bedroom or is the bedroom off limits?	
9. If they do not know the contents of the bedroom, is it due to a "rule the roost" dynamic or parental attitude about privacy or…?	
10. Does the threat maker's (subject's) level of risk (at home, at school, or in the community) cycle according to who is in the home (eg. Student is low risk for violence when his father is home but is high risk during the times when his father travels away from home for work)?	
11. Does the threat maker (subject) have a history of trauma including car accidents, falls, exposed to violence, abuse, etc.?	
12. Has the threat maker (subject) been diagnosed with a DSM-IV disorder? If so, what?	
13. Is there a history of mental health disorders in the family?	
14. Is there a history of drug or alcohol abuse in the family?	

Series Nine – Genogram

This is a diagram of the family structure. It is only needed if complex family connections exist.

Series Ten – Additional Information	
Questions	**Notes**
1. **Is there any information we haven't talked about that is important to know about this situation or the student?**	
2. **To the parent – What do you want for your son or daughter? What do you hope will come from this process?**	

Assessment of the Risk Factors

Nature of the Threat
- Clear –
- Direct –
- Plausible –

Human target selection
- Previous –
- Current –

Site Selection
- Previous –
- Current –

Violence, Threats, or Weapons Possession
- Frequency –
- Intensity –
- Recency –

Compare individual baseline to peer baseline behaviours.
-

Drug and/or alcohol involvement
-

Evidence of Planning
-

Fluidity
-

Justification
-

Empty Vessel
-

Mental Health Flags
-

Behavioural Flags
-

What is the student's cognitive baseline and is there evidence of evolution?
-

What is the student's affective baseline and is there evidence of evolution?
-

Other considerations
-

Is it safe for this student to remain in his/her current placement? –

Is RCMP involvement required? –

Is a Stage 3 Risk Evaluation required? –

Determination of Risk

School Based VTRA Team members collate the data and discuss all relevant information in regard to the threat maker. RCMP VTRA Member will be included in high profile incidents. As a team, ask these questions:

- To what extent does the student pose a threat to school/student safety?
- Does the student pose a threat to himself/herself or someone outside the school (eg. family)?

The Stage 1 VTRA Assessment is an overall assessment of current level of risk and is a precursor (if necessary) to a more comprehensive Stage 2 Risk Evaluation.

Low Level of Concern

Risk to the target(s), students, staff, and school safety is minimal.

- ☐ Threat is vague and indirect.
- ☐ Information contained within the threat is inconsistent, implausible or lacks detail; threat lacks realism.
- ☐ Available information suggests that the person is <u>unlikely</u> to carry out the threat or become violent.
- ☐ Within the general range for typical baseline behaviour for the threat maker.
- ☐ Categorization of low risk does not imply "no risk" but indicates the individual is at little risk for violence. Monitoring of the matter may be appropriate.

Medium Level of Concern

The threat could be carried out, although it may not appear entirely realistic. Violent action is possible.

- ☐ Threat is more plausible and concrete than a low level threat. Wording in the threat and information gathered suggests that some thought has been given to how the threat will be carried out (eg. possible place and time).
- ☐ No clear indication that the student of concern has taken preparatory steps (eg. weapon seeking) although there may be an ambiguous or inconclusive reference point to that possibility. There may be specific statement seeking to convey that the threat is not empty. "I'm serious."
- ☐ There are moderate or lingering concerns about the student's potential to act violently.
- ☐ There is an increase in baseline behaviour.
- ☐ Categorization of risk indicates the threat maker is at an <u>elevated</u> risk for violence.
- ☐ Those measures currently in place or further measures, including monitoring, are required in an effort to manage the threat maker's future risk.

High Level of Concern

The threat or situation of concern appears to post an imminent and serious danger to the safety of others.

- ☐ Threat is specific and plausible. There is an identified target. Student has the capacity to act on the threat.
- ☐ Information suggests concrete steps have been taken toward acting on the threat. For example, information indicates that the student has acquired or practiced with a weapon or has had a victim under surveillance.
- ☐ Information suggests <u>strong</u> concern about the student's potential to act violently.
- ☐ Significant increase in baseline behaviour.
- ☐ Categorization of risk indicates the threat maker is at high or imminent risk for violence.
- ☐ Immediate intervention is required to prevent an act of violence from occurring.

Remember to note the determination of risk on the front page of the report form.

* Sources for the above categorizations represent the work of the FBI, Durham Regional Police Service, Ontario Provincial Police Threat Assessment Unit, and the Canadian Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response.

Stage 2 Violence/Threat Risk Assessment Meeting

Student -

Attendance List

Role/Relationship with Student	Name (Please Print)	Signature	Date
School Division Facilitator			
RCMP			
Children & Family Services			
School Administrator			

APPENDIX D: Violence/Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Intervention Plan

Student		**School**	
Birthdate		**Age**	
Grade		**ASN**	
Parent – First Contact		**Parent 1 Phone Numbers**	
Parent – Second Contact		**Parent 2 Phone Numbers**	
Date of Incident		**Intervention Plan Date**	
Determination of Risk			

Stage 1 – School Based Intervention Plan	**Contact Person**		**Phone Number**	
Stage 2 – Division Based Intervention Plan	**Contact Person**		**Phone Number**	

Intervention	Details	Person Responsible	Done	Follow-Up
Student				
Counselling/Therapy Support				
Community Resources and Interventions				
Suicide Assessment				
Contract Not to Harm Self or Others (Attach Plan)				
Drug and/or Alcohol Intervention				
Other Actions				
Family				
Obtain permission to share information with community partners				
Community Resources and Interventions				
Identify precipitating and/or aggravating circumstances and intervene to alleviate.				
Other Actions				

School				
Disciplinary Action				
Intended Victim(s) Warned and Parents/ Guardians Notified				
Identify precipitating and/or aggravating circumstances and intervene to alleviate.				
Alert teachers and support staff on a need to know basis.				
Increased Supervision – Which settings?				
Daily/Weekly Check In				
Travel Card to Be Accountable for Whereabouts				
Back Pack, Coat, and Belongings Routine				
Schedule Adjustment – Late Arrival/Early Dismissal				
Modify Daily Schedule				
Specialized Assessment				
If Special Education student, review IPP goals and programming.				
Behaviour Intervention Plan (Attach Plan)				
Referral for Specialized School Placement				
Other Actions				

Meeting Date to Review Intervention Plan Implementation

- Date & Time:
- Location:
- Attending:

Monitor this Intervention Plan Regularly and modify it as appropriate.

APPENDIX E: Violence/Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Consent for Release of Information

I, _____, parent/guardian of _____ do hereby give my permission for the following agencies to participate in the Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) process as follows:

Agency or Service Provider	Permission for Agency Involvement		Permission to Share Information	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Parkland School Division (PSD)				
Children & Family Services (CFS)				
Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)				

According to the following timeline:

_____ - On an ongoing basis for the remainder of this school year (June 30, 20____).

_____ - On a one-time basis for the VTRA Meeting only.

I am aware that I can withdraw my consent verbally or in writing at any time.

_____   _____   _____
Name   Signature   Date

_____   _____   _____
Name   Signature   Date

_____ - Parents gave verbal permission to share the items checked above.

_____   _____   _____
Name   Signature   Date

APPENDIX F: Fair Notice Parent Brochure

The Partners

Education partners are committed to creating and maintaining school environments in which students, staff, parents and others feel safe. Parkland School Division, Evergreen Catholic Separate Regional School Division, Grande Yellowhead Public School Division, Living Waters Christian Academy, Mother Earth's Children's Charter School, SML Christian Academy, and Columbus Academy – Unlimited Potential Community Services have taken a lead role as there is a direct application to the health and safety of the school environment.

Government agency partners play an active role in a comprehensive intervention plan to support the young person. Alberta Human Services-Children & Family Services, Alberta Health Services, and RCMP personnel are key to determining the level of risk a young person may pose.

Community agency partners provide services that are regularly included as part of the intervention plan. City of Spruce Grove, Town of Stony Plain, Parkland County, Alberta Parenting for the Future Association, and Aboriginal Parent Link-Native Counselling Services advise on different facets of the VTRA protocol to ensure it is tailored to the Tri-Municipal Community.

The Canadian Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response has completed extensive research in youth and school violence. Kevin Cameron, CEO of CCTATR, has trained local personnel in use of the protocol.

Duty to Report

There is zero tolerance for not responding. Prevention of youth violence is a community responsibility and it is everybody's duty to report. Under-reaction is epidemic and a key factor of escalation from thought to action.

What is a Threat?

A threat is an expression of intent to do harm or act out violently against someone or something. Threats may be verbal, written, drawn, posted on the internet, or made by gesture. Threats must be taken seriously and be investigated with a clear and appropriate response. In a culture of responsible reporting, students/youth need to believe that they will be believed when they confide; their identity will be kept confidential; their information will be acted upon promptly; and their concern wil be investigated thoroughly.

Who is on a Threat Assessment Team?

Each threat assessment team is multi agency. The team may include school staff, psychologist, police, child protection agencies, community mental health workers, hospitals, probation/parole and other professionals.

What is the Purpose of a Threat Risk Assessment?

The purposes of a student/youth threat risk assessment are to:

➢ ensure the safety of students/youth, staff, parents, and others;
➢ ensure a full understanding of the context of the threat;
➢ understand the factors that contribute to the threat maker's behaviour;
➢ view the student/youth as in need of intervention rather than discipline;
➢ be proactive in developing an intervention plan that addresses the emotional and physical safety of the threat maker which may include disciplinary action but will also include appropriate supports to aid the student/youth in developing and using positive strategies;
➢ promote the emotional and physical safety of all; and
➢ ensure all school and agency partners are working together with a common understanding and protocol.

What happens in a Student Threat Risk Assessment?

All threat making behaviour by a student(s)/youth shall be reported to the Principal/Supervisor who will activate Stage 1 of the protocol for the initial response. The protocol requires contacting 911 if imminent danger is present.

When the Stage 1 team is activated interviews may be held with student(s)/youth, the threat maker(s), parents, staff, and/or partner agency personnel to determine the level of risk and develop an appropriate response to the incident. Instances of serious threats or violence will result in a Stage 2 response which will bring agency personnel together to work toward a deeper understanding of the situation.

An intervention plan will be developed and shared with parents, staff, and students/youth as required and as appropriate.

Can I refuse …?

It is important for all parties to engage in the process. If for some reason there is a reluctance to participate in the process by the threat maker or parent/guardian, the threat risk assessment process will continue in order to ensure a safe and caring learning/community environment for all.

Appendix G: Signatories to the Protocol
Signing Ceremony – April 8, 2014

Tracy Shannacappo
Aboriginal Parent Link Center
Coordinator
Aboriginal Parent Link – Native
Counseling Services of Alberta

_____
Signature

Christine Mummery
Director, Child and Adolescent
Mental Health Services
Alberta Health Services

_____
Signature

Carole Ann Patenaude
Regional Director
Edmonton & Area
Child & Family Services

_____
Signature

Pamela Geddes
Executive Director
Alberta Parenting for
the Future Association

_____
Signature

Katherine King
Principal, Columbus Academy
Bosco Homes Schools

_____
Signature

Kevin Cameron
Chief Executive Officer
Canadian Center for Threat
Assessment & Trauma Response

Signature

Gerald Bernakevitch
Board Chair
Evergreen Catholic Separate
Regional School Division No. 2

Signature

Leanne Topola
Board Member
Living Waters Christian Academy

Signature

Dale Friedel
Vice Chairperson
Mother Earth Children's
Charter School

Signature

Eric Cameron
Board Chair
Parkland School Division No. 70

Signature

Staff Sergeant William Eubank
For Inspector Gary Graham
Royal Canadian Mounted Police

Signature

Appendix H: **Signatories to the Protocol**
Signing Ceremony – December 3, 2015

The City of SPRUCE GROVE

Wayne Rothe
Deputy Mayor
City of Spruce Grove

_____
Signature

Grande Yellowhead
Public School Division

Brenda Rosadiuk
Board Chair
Grande Yellowhead
Public School Division

_____
Signature

parkland county

Rod Shaigec
Mayor
Parkland County

_____
Signature

SML CHRISTIAN ACADEMY
ST. MATTHEW LUTHERAN • SHARE MENTOR LEARN

Rev. Mark Dressler
Principal
St. Matthew Lutheran
Christian Academy

_____
Signature

TOWN OF STONY PLAIN

Judy Bennett
Deputy Mayor
Town of Stony Plain

_____
Signature

UP Unlimited Potential community services

Katherine King
Principal, Columbus Academy
Unlimited Potential
Community Services

_____
Signature