



Leduc and Area Regional Collaborative Service Delivery Violence Threat Risk Assessment Community Protocol

Schools. Communities. Parents. Protective Services.

Working Together To Protect Our Children and Keep Our Community Safe

VTRA
PROTOCOL PARTNERS

Canadian Center for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response (CCTATR)

Evergreen Catholic Separate Regional School Division No. 2

St. Thomas Aquinas Roman Catholic School Division No. 38

Black Gold Regional Division No. 18

RCMP

Alberta Human Services

Alberta Health Service Child - Youth and Family Addictions and Mental Health

Town of Beaumont

Town of Calmar

Town of Devon

City of Leduc

Leduc County

Village of Thorsby

Village of Warburg

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.

Acknowledgements

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We also wish to acknowledge the work of the many school boards and community organizations who have also developed regional protocols in working to support the safety of children/youth and families with a special thanks to the Parkland Evergreen and Area Tri-Community VTRA Protocol Committee.

The willingness to share experience and resources has strengthened our Leduc and Area Community VTRA Protocol and process.

Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| Vision | 1 |
| Mission | 1 |
| Guiding Principles | 1 |
| KEY INFORMATION ABOUT | 2 |
| VIOLENCE THREAT RISK ASSESSMENT | 2 |
| Responding to Threat-Making Behaviour | 2 |
| Partner Responsibilities | 2 |
| Threatening and Violent Behaviour for VTRA Response | 2 |
| VTRA Team Membership | 2 |
| VTRA Team's Mandate Areas | 3 |
| Un-authored Threats | 3 |
| Worrisome Behaviours | 4 |
| VTRA and Suspension from School | 4 |
| VTRA is Not a Disciplinary Measure | 4 |
| Criminal Charges | 5 |
| Early Elementary Aged Children and VTRA | 5 |
| Students with Diverse Learning Needs and VTRA | 5 |
| Supporting the Targeted or Victimized Child/Youth or Staff Member | 6 |
| Community Based Referrals | 6 |
| VTRA Meeting Procedures | 7 |
| Need for Training | 7 |
| PROCESS AND PROCEDURES | 8 |
| Stage One - Violence/Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Process | 8 |
| Stage Two - Violence/Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Process | 11 |
| Stage Three - Clinical Intervention | 13 |
| CRISIS AND TRAUMA MANAGEMENT | 14 |
| Sample Letter | 14 |
| COMMUNICATIONS | 14 |
| Responsible Reporting | 15 |
| Fair Notice | 15 |
| Communicating with Parents | 15 |
| Communicating with the Media | 15 |
| Community Partners | 16 |
| Documentation | 16 |

| | |
|---|----|
| CONSENT AND INFORMATION SHARING | 17 |
| ANNUAL TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES | 18 |
| Annual Meetings | 18 |
| Leadership | 18 |
| Building Capacity | 18 |
| HELPFUL LINKS | 19 |
| Appendix A: Definition | 20 |
| Appendix B: Stage 1 Violence Threat Risk Assessment Forms | 21 |
| Stage 1 - Violence/Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Process | 21 |
| Stage 1 - Violence / Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Report Form | 27 |
| Appendix C: Stage 2- Violence/Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) | 39 |
| Stage 2 - Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Report Form | 46 |
| Stage 2 - Violence/Threat Risk Assessment Meeting | 60 |
| Appendix D: Violence/Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Intervention Plan | 61 |
| Appendix E: Fair Notice Parent Brochure | 63 |
| Appendix F: Signatories to the Protocol Signing Ceremony- March 4, 2015 | 65 |

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 (e.g. the *Alberta Human Rights Act*, the *Children 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 *Leduc and Area Community Threat Risk Assessment and Intervention Protocol* are based upon the Canadian Center 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 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
 - Child & Family Services VTRA Contact
 - RCMP VTRA Contact
 - Additional Community VTRA Members may be added, if available, at the discretion of the VTRA Team.
- The School VTRA Team will be made up of:
 - Principal and/or Assistant Principal(s)
 - Appropriate school-based team staff
 - The classroom teacher(s)
 - Additional School VTRA Members may be added at the discretion of an administrator (e.g.,

- Educational Assistant, Family School Liaison Worker, bus driver, staff witnesses, etc.).
- Smaller schools may contact the Division VTRA Contact to assist.

VTRA Team's Mandate Areas

Un-authored Threats

- Un-authored threats are typically threats to commit a violent act against an individual(s), specific group, or site (e.g. 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 (e.g. 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 behaviours 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 (e.g. 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 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 a 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 led 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

Black Gold Regional Division to assist in determining the youth's school.

- If the student is not a Black Gold Regional Division student, contact St. Thomas Aquinas Roman Catholic School Division, Evergreen Catholic School Division, 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, backpacks, 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 backpacks, 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? (e.g., 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.
 - Are there risk reducing interventions that need to be put into place immediately?
 - 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 a 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?
 - Bedroom
 - Internet history
 - Personal devices, texts history, photos, etc.
 - Private spaces (forts, etc.)
 - Will parent be checking on the honor system? If so, ask them to check
 - 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 –
 - 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.
 - Collectively complete the Stage 2 VTRA Report Form.
 - Upon completion of form, thank parents for their participation.
 - 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
 - Debrief the meeting.
 - Complete the Assessment of Risk Factors.
 - Determine level of risk based upon criteria provided in the VTRA Report Form.
 - 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
 - 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.
 - The Division VTRA Contact arranges the meeting at the appropriate location (usually the school).

Stage Three - Clinical Intervention

- 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 students, 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.

Sample Letter

Dear Parents,

You may be aware that information was received by school officials that resulted in the Leduc and Area 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.

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. Assure everyone that all students and staff are safe and that the 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 Leduc and Area 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 E: Fair Notice Parent Brochure*. It is recommended that, if possible, information about the Leduc and Area 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 *Leduc and Area 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 parents/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 *Leduc and Area 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 a 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 policies that guide 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 Partner 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://211edmonton.com/resources.html>

Addiction & Mental Health Edmonton Zone Index to Services

<http://psychiatry.med.ualberta.ca/Dept%20News.aspx>

The Do's and Don'ts of Calling 911

<http://globalnews.ca/news/509277/the-dos-and-donts-of-dialling-911/>

City of Leduc Services

<http://www.leduc.ca/Assets/Departments/FCSS+Assets/Community+Directory.pdf>

Leduc County Resource Guide

http://www.leduc-county.com/images/stories/PDFs/Publications/Brochures/FCSS/FULL_Community_Resource_Guide_2013_WEB.pdf

Sharing for Human Service Providers in the Alberta Public Sector

<http://humanservices.alberta.ca/documents/information-sharing-strategy.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>

Children First Act

<http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca/16594.html>

Criminal Code of Canada

<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-46/page-1.html>

Education Legislation

<http://www.education.alberta.ca/department/policy/legislation.aspx>

Health Information Act

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


Privacy Act

<http://www.servicealberta.gov.ab.ca/foip/>

Youth Justice Act

<http://justice.alberta.ca/publications/Pages/default.aspx?WT.svl=sideNav#lawAppendices>

Appendix E: Fair Notice Parent Brochure

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|---|--|---|---|
|  |  |  | <h1>Leduc and Area Community V</h1> <h2>Threat Risk Assessment and In</h2> <h3>Protocol</h3> <div></div> |
|  |  <p>Royal Canadian Mounted Police Gendarmerie royale du Canada</p> | | |
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Schools. Communities. Parents. Protect
Working Together To Protect Our Child
Our Community Safe

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THE PARTNERS

Education partners are committed to creating and maintaining school environments in which students, staff, parents and others feel safe. Black Gold Regional Division, Evergreen Catholic Separate Regional Division, and St. Thomas Aquinas Roman Catholic School Division 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, Child and 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 plans. Leduc County, City of Leduc, Beaumont, Calmar, Devon, Thorsby and Warburg support this coordinated response to any violence or threats of violence.

The Canadian Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response has completed extensive research in youth and school violence. Kevin Cameron, ECO of CCTATR, has trained partner local personnel in the 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 chief 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, investigated, and responded to. In a culture of responsible reporting, students 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 will be investigated thoroughly.

WHO IS ON A THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM?

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

WHAT IS THE MAIN PURPOSE OF A THREAT ASSESSMENT?

The purpose of a Student Threat Assessment is to:

- To ensure the safety of students, staff, parents, and others;
- Ensure a full understanding of the context of the threat;
- Begin to understand the factors that contribute to the threat maker's behaviour;
- View the student as in need of intervention rather than to be disciplined;
- Be proactive in developing an intervention plan that addresses the emotional and physical safety of the threat maker. It may include disciplinary action but will include appropriate supports to aid the student in developing and using positive strategies;
- Promotes the emotional and physical safety of all;
- Ensure all school and agency partners are working together with a common understanding and protocol.

WHAT HAPPENS IN A STUDENT THREAT ASSESSMENT?

All threat making behaviour by a student(s) shall be reported to the Principal who will activate the protocol for the initial response.

Once the team has been activated, interviews may be held with students, the threat maker(s), parents and staff to determine the level of risk and develop an appropriate response to the incident. Intervention plans will be developed and shared with parents, staff, and students as required and as appropriate.

CAN I REFUSE?

It is important for all parties to engage to 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 assessment will continue in order to ensure a safe and caring learning environment.



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

Signature



Gerald Bernakevitch
Chairperson, Board of Trustees
Evergreen Catholic Schools

Signature



Norman Yanitski
Superintendent of Schools
Black Gold Regional School Division

Signature



John Tomkinson
Chairperson, Board of Trustees
St. Thomas Aquinas Roman Catholic School
Division

Signature



Christine Mummery, MSc, BPT
Director, Children, Youth and Families Addiction
and Mental Health
Alberta Health Services
Government of Alberta

Signature



Russ Pickford
Acting Regional Director, Edmonton
Region Child and Family Services
Division
Alberta Human Services
Government of Alberta

Signature



Royal Canadian Mounted Police Gendarmerie royale du Canada
Lesley Bain
Chief Superintendent
Central Alberta District

Signature



John Whaley
Mayor
Leduc County

Signature



Camille Bérubé
Mayor
Town of Beaumont

Signature



Wally Yachimetz
Mayor
Village of Calmar

Signature



Stephen Lindop
Mayor
Town of Devon

Signature



Terry Lazowski
Deputy Mayor
City of Leduc

Signature



John Whaley
Mayor
Leduc County

Signature



Barry Rasch
Mayor
Village of Thorsby

Signature



Ralph van Assen
Mayor
Village of Warburg

Signature