

THREAT ASSESSMENT PROTOCOL

**Avon Maitland District School Board
Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board**

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Signatories

The signatories to this protocol have a history of working cooperatively to encourage the safety and well-being of students and staff in our schools. Further, these agencies work alongside the District School Boards helping students and their families access supports to help ensure positive, healthy environments at school, at home and in the larger community.

These efforts are enhanced by the development of this protocol for the identification, investigation and assessment of threats posed by students at schools in Huron and Perth Counties through the cooperative efforts of the following agencies:

**Avon Maitland District School Board, Huron Perth Catholic District School Board,
Police Services, Children's Aid Society of Huron-Perth, Choices for Change,
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Overall Rationale

The Avon Maitland District School Board and the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board, along with our Community Partners, are committed to making our schools safe for students and staff.

As a result, all protocol partners will respond to student behaviours that pose a potential risk to students, staff, and members of the community. It is hoped that our commitment to early intervention measures by the school boards and community partners will reduce school violence and maintain a high level of safety throughout the schools of Perth and Huron counties.

The effective continuing implementation of the protocol will support collaborative planning to prevent traumatic events. In addition, the timely sharing of information about students at risk for violence towards self and/or others will ensure that risk management plans and student support plans are put in place.

The strength of this school board/community partnership lies in the cross-sector multi-disciplinary composition of the community threat assessment team. Without delay, and with due regard for confidentiality requirements, the team will share and review student information and the details of the event in order to collaborate using a broad range of expertise.

This collaborative process will respect the individual's right to privacy and the safety of all.

Values Statement

Beliefs

Service providers can reduce the risk of student violence and ultimately keep our students and schools safer when we work together collaboratively and conjointly with families, in the face of student violence or the threat thereof.

Values

A collaborative and coordinated community response to student violence or the threat of violence is most effective in reducing risk and preventing traumatic events for students. Students' individual needs, strengths and privacy will inform service planning. Wherever possible and appropriate, parents will be involved in the process.

Vision

The partners involved in the Threat Assessment Protocol will work collaboratively to prevent and/or minimize traumatic events in schools that result from student violence or the threat of student violence.

Mission

The partners involved in the Threat Assessment Protocol endeavor to create an efficient and timely response to any threat or potential risk of violence involving a student in our community.

In the Face of Imminent Harm/Danger

- Call 911 in the face of imminent harm/danger (911 calls are made in the event that you believe that others are in immediate danger)
- Ensure all students and staff are safe
- Inform principal
- Initiate lockdown procedures if appropriate
- Detain the student or students who are involved
- Do not allow access to coats, backpacks, lockers, cellular phones or other electronic devices.
- Consult with school superintendent and other appropriate board staff.
- Plan for a minimum of two hours to complete the Threat Assessment.

What is a Threat Assessment

Threat Assessment is a team approach to identifying and addressing potential threats from a student towards themselves, another student, staff and parents within the school environment. The purpose of carrying out a Threat Assessment is to ensure that those who have knowledge of the student carry out a careful analysis of the potential severity of the threat and determine an appropriate response to the threat-maker.

Kevin Cameron, in "Assessing Violence Potential: Protocol for Dealing with High-Risk Student Behaviours (Oct., 2001)" indicates that *"the primary purpose of the team is to identify indicators that suggest a student may be engaging in attack related behaviours against some target and intervene to decrease the risk, prevent injury to self or others, and assist the student to receive the help he or she needs to address the issues contributing to the high-risk student behaviour."*

NOTE: For the purposes of this document, the single form of "student" as threat maker or victim will be used, although it is understood that the threat may arise from, or be directed to, a group of students.

Factors to Consider in Determining Need for Threat Assessment

It is important to use reasonable judgment when determining whether or not to move forward with a Threat Assessment. Sometimes, behaviour is worrisome in nature or might be highly unusual given the student's previous history, but not necessarily attack-related or of homicidal or suicidal intent. Taking into account various factors such as age, developmental level, special education profile, mental health needs and environmental triggers/antecedents will help the principal assess the severity of behaviour and determine the most appropriate response:

- A review of, and possible amendments to, special education, safety and/or behaviour plans for the student by school staff in order to ensure safety and support for the student in question as well as others in the school;
- Activation of a Stage 1 – In-School Threat Assessment Team (In-School TAT); or
- Activation of a Stage 2 – Community Threat Assessment Team (Community TAT).

In determining a response, consideration should be given to expectations outlined in legislation and Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memoranda, such as:

- “Keeping Our Kids Safe at School”- Education Act
- Policy/Program Memorandum No. 145 - Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour (includes: mitigating circumstances regarding student)
- Policy/Program Memorandum No. 128 - The Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Conduct
- Policy/Program Memorandum No. 144 - Bullying Prevention and Intervention
- Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119 - Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools
- Policy/Program Memorandum No. 120 - Mandatory Reporting of Violent Incidents
- Accepting Schools Act - Education Act, 2012
- “Violence and Harassment in the Workplace” - Ontario Labour Relations Act, 2011

Stages of Threat Assessment

There are three potential stages in a Threat Assessment process:

Stage 1 - The In-School Threat Assessment Team (In-School TAT) includes school staff and possibly some community resource staff in an initial assessment of a potential threat.

Stage 2 - The Community Threat Assessment Team (Community TAT) includes school staff and representatives from the protocol partner agencies.

Stage 3 - The Community TAT creates a Risk Management/Student Support Plan and monitors its implementation

Stage One

When an immediate threat or risk is discovered,

The In-School TAT will:

- take immediate action to reduce the risk;
- consult with the superintendent of the respective school board;
- collect and share data using the Threat Assessment Report Form (Appendix B) to ensure facts are known and understood

Immediate data may be obtained from multiple sources including:

- individual(s) making a report
- target(s)
- witnesses
- teachers and other school staff (secretaries, teacher assistants, bus drivers, etc.)
- community agency support staff (as available)
- friends, classmates, acquaintances
- parents/caregivers (call both parents)
- current and previous school records (call the sending school)
- police record check
- check the student's locker, desk, backpack, recent text books/assignment binders, cars, etc.
- check/search or question parents/caregivers about the student's bedroom, etc.
- activities: Internet histories, diaries, notebooks

Stage Two

When it has been determined that a Community TAT will be convened, the principal/designate, in consultation with his or her superintendent will:

- determine the appropriate community partners and contact the agencies' lead staff
- in a timely manner, determine the date, time and location of Community TAT
- collect data and use the Threat Assessment Report Form (Appendix B) and Stage Two Threat Assessment Screening Questions (Appendix C)
- evaluate level of risk to the safety of students, staff, community
- make recommendations that support risk reduction and student support

All Community TAT members will share pertinent information, review all data, including data obtained from other sources, e.g., students and the parent/guardians.

Stage Three

As a result of the school board and community partner evaluation of risk, the protocol partners will collaboratively develop a Risk Management/Student Support Plan (see Appendix D). (Responsibility for the implementation of the risk management plan will be assigned by the Community TAT.)

When it is determined by the Community TAT that the student requires psychiatric assessment, a referral will be made using the risk assessment protocols for hospitals in Huron/Perth Counties. In cases of acute need, the Huron-Perth Crisis Intervention Program (1-888-829-7484) will be called to facilitate access to mental health resources.

A follow-up meeting date will be determined by the partners in order to assess the implementation and effectiveness of the Risk Management/Student Support Plan.

Activation of the Community Threat Assessment Team

Whenever possible, Community Threat Assessment Team (Community TAT) meetings will occur on school premises. In most cases the lead partner will be the school board/school administration. The student behaviour that activates the community protocol will have been observed in, or will potentially affect the safety, of the school.

To ensure the timely activation of a Community TAT, lead contact(s) will be identified by each partner, each school year.

The principal/designate will consult with his or her superintendent to determine whether to proceed with a Community TAT. When a decision is made to organize a Community TAT, the superintendent of the respective school board will appoint a staff member who will assist in the implementation of the Community TAT and who will assist the principal/designate in contacting the appropriate agencies relevant to the specific threat situation.

When a community partner determines the need to activate the Community TAT, the partner will contact the principal/designate of the respective school.

All protocol partners will, at all times, take any actions seen as necessary within their mandate to ensure immediate risk reduction. All protocol partners agree that a Community TAT may be convened even though not all partners may be able to participate at that time.

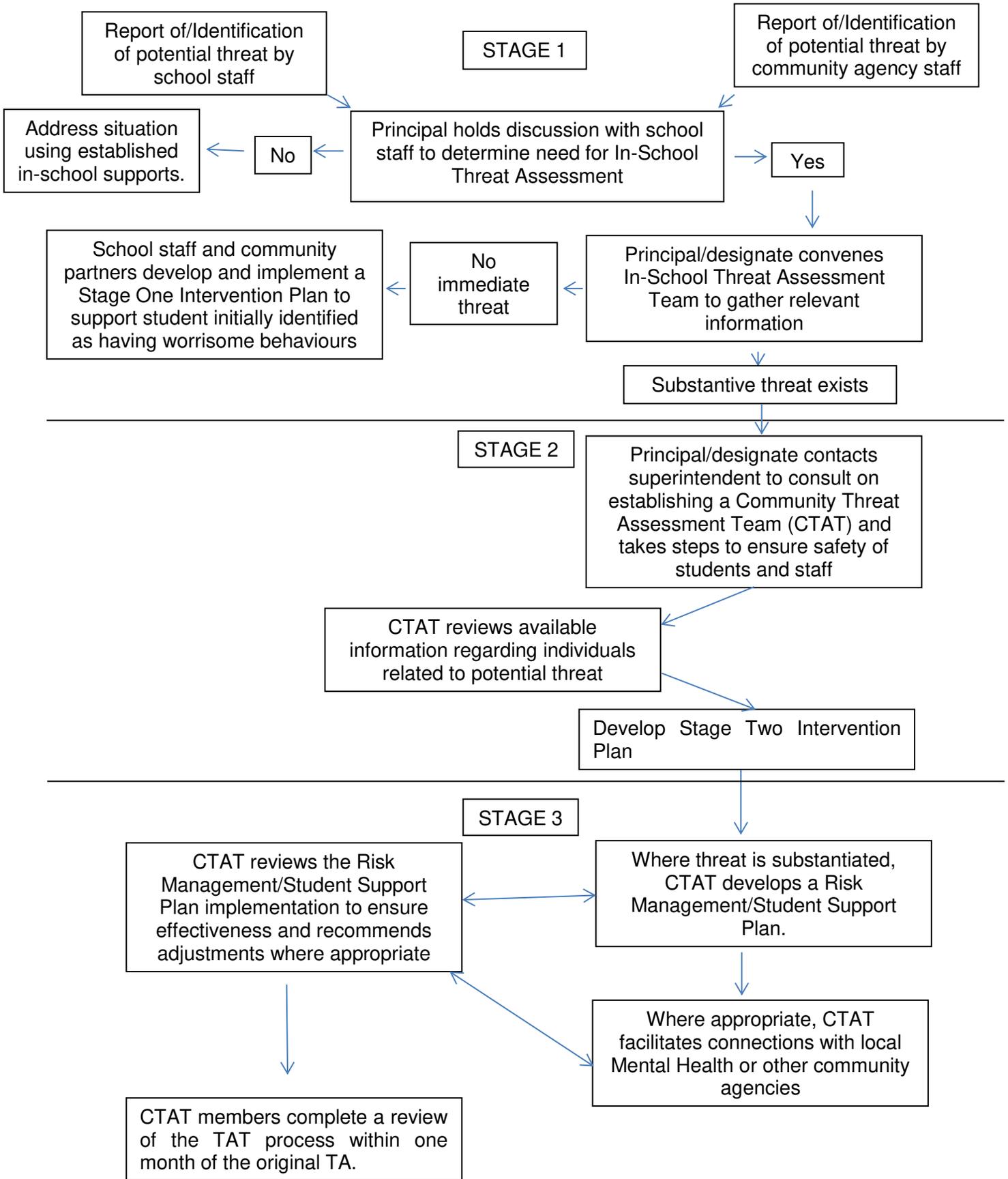
Responding to Student Threat Making Behaviour

All protocol partners including school board administrators and staff, parents and students will report behaviours to the school principal/designate that may pose a risk or threat to others.

The following chart is provided to assist principals and members of the Threat Assessment (TA) teams in determining what might be worrisome, high risk or an immediate threat.

Worrisome Behaviours	High Risk Behaviours	Immediate Threat Call 911
<p>Include but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violent content <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Drawings, pictures ○ Writing stories or journals with vague threatening themes or statements • Verbal statements of a vague but violent or threatening nature • Unusual interest in fire, weapons or explosives • Significant change in behaviour - seems more anti-social • Significant change in baseline behaviour 	<p>Include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possession of weapons/replicas • Bomb threat plan • Threat to injure or kill (written, verbal, electronic); not considered an immediate threat • Fire setting • Escalation in physical or verbal aggression • Promotion of hate towards a specific group 	<p>Includes but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possession of weapon that poses a serious threat to others • Plan for serious assault • Immediate threat to injure or kill (written, verbal, electronic) • Homicidal/suicidal behaviour that threatens safety of others or self • Fire setting resulting in harm
<p>Take the following steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform Principal/designate who then investigates to determine if the current behaviours are linked to other worrisome behaviours • Consult with school-based community services staff • Have a school team discussion • Decide on need for further case consultations, conferencing or In-School Threat Assessment 	<p>Take the following steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform Principal/designate who then investigates • In-School Threat Assessment • Use Threat Assessment Report Form for gathering and reporting of information and for planning purposes • School team determines whether a Stage Two Threat Assessment is warranted 	<p>Take the following steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When in doubt, call 911 • Inform Principal/designate who then investigates • Stage Two Threat Assessment • Use the Threat Assessment Report Form for gathering and reporting of information and for planning purposes • Implement plan resulting from Stage Two Threat Assessment

Threat Assessment Process



Activation of a Threat Assessment: A School Principal's Guide

In-School Threat Assessment Team: Stage 1

An **In-School Threat Assessment** meeting will be chaired by the principal/designate and conducted to determine whether a student's **worrisome behaviours** pose a risk to the safety of the student and/or others and/or whether the behaviours are a precursor to more high risk behaviours.

The In-School Threat Assessment will also provide the information necessary to plan for a school based response to a student's worrisome behaviours.

The In-School Threat Assessment meeting should be held as soon as the principal/designate feels that the student's behaviour patterns have reached a level of concern.

An **In-School TAT** will be made up of member(s) of the administrative team, appropriate special education teachers, support staff, student services and guidance personnel, appropriate classroom teachers and educational assistants. The staff assigned to the school from the central administration office may also be invited to the meeting where appropriate and when they are available.

In most cases, community partners would not be invited to attend. However, in the case where it is known that an open file exists with any community support agency, discussion should occur with them regarding their involvement. Police officers may be invited and will attend based on their availability.

Worrisome Behaviours:

The following worrisome behaviours will be discussed and evaluated by the In-School TAT.

Worrisome behaviours include but are not limited to:

- Violent content in written stories/journals/Internet messages and/or drawings and pictures
- Vague threatening statements
- Unusual interest in fire
- Unusual interest in weapons
- Significant change in antisocial behaviours or peer associations (change in baseline)

Support, Consultation and Training

Prior to organizing an In-School Threat Assessment, the principal/designate may wish to consult with the appropriate superintendent. In the case where a principal/designate wishes central office support at the meeting, such support will be arranged by the appropriate superintendent.

The In-School Threat Assessment may result in a recommendation for a Community Threat Assessment. In these cases, the consultation and referral process for a Community Threat Assessment will be followed.

The principal/designate will lead the In-School Threat Assessment Process, which will consider the following:

- Data Collection: Current and historical data
OSR
Assessments
Behaviour/Safety Plans
Teacher Interviews
Educational Services Staff Interviews
Former School Administrator Interviews
Former School Board Interviews
Parent/Guardian Interviews
Student Interviews where appropriate
- Gather facts pertaining to the incident or pattern of behaviour.
- Identify baseline behaviour.
- Document the intensity and frequency of the behaviours. Have they changed? Identify change in baseline behaviour.
- Identify who voiced the concern and why. Is there a victim? What is the impact on the victim?
- Determine how the student's age and developmental/cognitive ability, mental health diagnosis and other mitigating factors impact on the behaviours of concern and level of risk.
- Discuss special education/mental health needs of the student, how diagnosis may impact on level of risk/threat and whether student is receiving appropriate special education services/supports.
- Identify stressors in the family/household and how they may have impacted on the student's behaviour.
- Identify where/when the behaviour is most evident. Who is the behaviour directed at?
- Ensure that the desk, backpack and the locker have been searched.
- Identify the student's interests and how they may impact on level of risk to self and others e.g., violent content video games, violent or anti-social content in music, Internet searches of violent content, interest in weapons/replicas and fire setting.
- Describe peer group behaviours and interests and how they impact on student.
- Determine current drug and alcohol involvement.
- Determine if the student has set fires. What has been the response to the fire setting behaviours?
- Determine what medical and mental health practitioners are involved with the student/family.

Documentation:

Recommendations coming out of the In-School Threat Assessment that address the risk and support the student will be documented. Documentation will provide important student information for future administrators, teachers and support staff. Such documentation shall be stored in the Ontario Student Record (OSR) for a period of not less than five years. Protocol partners directly involved with the implementation of the recommendations shall receive a copy of same. Sharing the recommendations of the In-School Threat Assessment with the parent/guardian/student will be facilitated by the school principal/designate.

Student Support Planning - Some Factors to Consider

- Classroom accommodations
- Referral to appropriate board level support staff e.g. School Attendance Counsellor, Learning Services staff
- Enhanced supervision
- Development of a Behaviour/Safety Plan
- Referral to health, mental health and/or addictions agency/practitioner
- In-school counseling support e.g. Guidance and Student Success Teachers
- Request for Community TA - consult with appropriate superintendent
- Communication with parents/guardians - record date of meeting and role the parent/guardian will play in the implementation of the student support plan

Community Threat Assessment Team: Stage 2

In the event that the In-School TAT determines that the data related to the threat by the student requires a cross-disciplinary review, the principal/designate shall contact his/her respective superintendent to convene a Community TAT.

The superintendent will notify protocol partner contacts of the need for a Community TAT and coordinate the time and location of the team meeting. The superintendent shall also deploy board level staff to assist with the Community Threat Assessment. The principal/designate shall chair the team meeting.

The Community TAT shall review the information gathered by the In-School TAT and seek out additional information for clarification purposes. The team shall make recommendations for next steps in terms of mitigation of the threat and support of the student involved. The principal/designate will share the recommendations with the appropriate superintendent.

Risk Management/Student Support Plan: Stage 3

The principal/designate will work with the protocol partners to develop and implement the recommendations in the Risk Management/Student Support Plan. The underlying focus will be on the safety of staff and students and the support of students to mitigate against future threat situations.

Within 30 days the principal/designate shall convene a meeting of the Community TAT members to review the implementation of the Risk Management/Student Support Plan. Further communication related to plan components and effectiveness will be determined at this review. At the same meeting, the Community TAT will review the effectiveness of the Threat Assessment Protocol and make recommendations for necessary changes to the respective superintendent.

Key Approaches in Threat Assessment

1. **Sharing of Relevant Information**

The sharing of information is carried out by all partners on a proactive basis to avert or minimize imminent danger that affects the health and safety of any person.

2. **Investigative Mind-Set**

This is central to the successful application of the threat assessment process. Threat assessment requires thoughtful probing, viewing information with healthy skepticism, and paying attention to key points about pre-attack behaviours.

Components of an investigative mind-set include:

- Open probing questions
- Healthy skepticism
- Attention to pre-attack behaviours
- Verification of facts, corroboration of actions
- Common sense
- Ensuring that information makes sense

When determining if a threat maker actually poses a risk to the person/target, consideration should be given to the following:

- Is the threat plausible?
- Is the threat an emotionally charged threat?
- What are the precipitating factors?

3. **Unauthored Threats: Duty and Intervention**

Unauthored threats are typically threats to commit a violent act against an individual(s), specific group, or site (i.e., 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.

As of this writing, there are no known North American cases where an unauthored threat to kill was issued and a homicide occurred on the day the threat stated.

Although unauthored threats may be credible in the world of global terrorism, in the field of school-based child and adolescent threat assessment, the lack of ownership (authorship) of the threat generally denotes a lack of commitment. Nevertheless, there are steps that should be followed to:

1. Assess the unauthored threat
2. Attempt to identify the threat maker
3. Avoid or minimize the crisis/trauma response

Threat Assessment teams should consider the following in determining the initial level of risk based on the current data (i.e., the language of the threat):

Language of Commitment

- Amount of detail (location where the violence is to occur, target(s), date and time the violence is to occur, justifications, etc.)
- Threat to do what with what ("kill", "murder", "ruin your lives", "shank", "shoot", 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 and who else knows about it)
- Is the threat clear, direct, plausible and consistent

Identifying the Threat Maker

In many cases the author is never found; steps that can be taken to identify the author(s) are:

- Handwriting analysis
- Word usage (phrases and expressions that may be unique to a particular person or group of people [street gang, club, sports team, etc.])
- Spelling (errors or modifications unique to an individual group)

Contra-indicators:

Some authors will switch gender and try to lead the reader to believe they are a boy (or girl) when they are not or pretend to be someone else as a setup.

Some individuals who write unauthored “hit lists” embed their names in the list of identified targets.

Depending on the severity of the threat, some or all staff members may be asked to assist in analyzing the unauthored threat.

Depending on the severity of the threat, some students may be asked to give their opinion regarding the origin and authorship of threat.

4. **Building Capacity**

Violence Threat Risk Assessment training (VTRA) will be provided on an ongoing basis. Training could include:

- Stage One (two days) for principals, vice principals and agency staff who will be directly involved in the threat assessment teams;
- Stage Two (two days) for individuals who may be considered for subsequent training as a trainer; and
- Threat Assessment Protocol training (one day) for school administration and partner agency staff who will be applying the AMDSB/HPCDSB Threat Assessment Protocol document.

5. **Program Review**

The Threat Assessment Protocol will be reviewed annually by an advisory panel composed of representatives from the agencies that are signatories to the protocol. This review shall be convened by the school boards.

Consent and Information Sharing

The general intent of access to information and protection of privacy legislation is to limit the sharing of personal information without the consent of the person. Wherever possible and reasonable, consent should be obtained. The individual should know what he/she is consenting to and understand the consequences of the intended disclosure. The individual must be made aware that he/she can withdraw consent at any time by giving written or verbal notice.

Key supportive points regarding information sharing for the purpose of a cross-sector/multi-disciplinary community threat assessment

- The Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA) and the Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA) provide exceptions for the release of information where there are imminent risks to health and safety. MFIPPA notes “compelling circumstances affecting the health and safety of an individual...” (Part II, 32(h), MFIPPA). PHIPA notes that “a health information custodian may disclose personal health information about an individual if the custodian believes on reasonable grounds that the disclosure is necessary for the purpose of eliminating or reducing a significant risk of serious bodily harm to a person or group of persons.” (2004, c. 3, Sched. A, s. 40(1) PHIPA)
- The Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA, ss.125 (6)) enables information in a Youth Criminal Justice 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 others to facilitate rehabilitation/reintegration 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. The individual’s consent is not relevant in the context of the YCJA.

The recipient of youth justice information is responsible for ensuring compliance with legislated restrictions on its use and disposal under the YCJA ss.126 (7). This provision requires that the information must be kept separate from any other record of the young person, that no other person is able to access the information except as authorized under the YCJA or for the purposes of ss.125 (6), and that it must be destroyed when it is no longer needed for the purpose for which it was disclosed.

Sharing of Information Green Light, Yellow Light, Red Light

In circumstances where a Threat Assessment Team has been convened, the following guide may be used in terms of information sharing.

Green Light	Yellow Light	Red Light
Respecting partner agency protocols, and pursuant to freedom of information and privacy acts, relevant personal information MAY be shared under one or more of the following circumstances:	In any of the following circumstances, obtain more information and/or get advice from the appropriate partner supervisor :	Information can NEVER be shared under any of the following circumstances:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With written consent • To avert or minimize imminent danger to the health and safety of any person • To report a child who might need protection under the Child and Family Services Act • By order of the Court • To facilitate the rehabilitation of a young person under the Youth Criminal Justice Act • To ensure the safety of students and/or staff under the YCJA • To cooperate with a police and/or a child protection investigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consent is not provided or is refused but where there may be a health or safety issue for any individual or group(s) • To report criminal activity to the police • To share YCJA records • Where there is a demand or request to produce information for a legal proceeding • When a professional code of ethics may limit disclosure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a legislative requirement barring disclosure • No consent is given and there is no need to know or no overriding health/safety concerns • Consent is given but there is no need to know or no overriding health/safety concerns

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 support to openly voice concerns about school safety.

Media

The school board and community partners involved in the evaluation of a threat may decide to develop a joint press release. In all other cases, the school board would take a lead role in managing media relations.

Parent/Guardian/Staff/Student

Communication between parents/guardians, staff and students will be facilitated by the school-based administration. The superintendent responsible for supervision of the school undertaking the threat assessment will consult with the other members of school board senior staff to determine the school and parent communication plan. Each school year, the school board will share the *Threat Assessment Parent/Guardian Notification and Fair Notice* document with parents/guardians.

Internal School Board and Agency Communications

Internal school board and agency communication regarding the protocol will be the responsibility of each party to the protocol. A School Board/Agency Advisory Committee will meet regularly to review threat assessment practices, organize training and recommend protocol revisions.

Documentation

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

Involving Parents in Threat Assessment

If the threats are “clear, direct and plausible” or the In-School TAT feels violence may be imminent, notification of the parents will occur after the student is secured or protected from potential harm, unless inappropriate (if the student is 18 years of age or if the parent increases the threat/risk involved in the situation). However, if the threat is not clear, direct and plausible, the In-School TAT will continue to collect data to determine the level of risk before the parents/guardians are notified in order to prevent unnecessary trauma when no risk is actually present.

Parents/guardians can play an important role in gathering insight and data regarding the behaviour at home (“bedroom dynamic” found in Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Level One Training Guide: VTRA Attachment One, 2011, pp 40) by their knowledge of increases or decreases in baseline behaviours and other contextual factors that may be either “risk-reducing” or “risk-enhancing”. This collaborative approach will provide more information to make a complete assessment and will support the appropriate intervention.

Reasons for Delay of Parent /Guardian Notification:

If a student discloses child abuse during the threat assessment process, the Children’s Aid Society will collaborate with the In-School TAT on the appropriate timing (if at all) of parent/guardian notification as part of their child protection investigation.

Threat Assessment Parent/Guardian Notification and Fair Notice

(template for annual notification)

The Avon Maitland District School Board and the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board along with our Community Partners are committed to making our schools safe for students and staff. Part of this commitment is responding quickly and effectively to student behaviours that pose a potential risk to students, staff, and members of the community. Early intervention will help reduce school violence and maintain a high level of safety. As such, the school boards have established a Threat Assessment Protocol in partnership with a number of community agencies.

What is the process?

- When school or community agency staff, students or parents identify behaviours in a student that pose a potential risk to self and/or others, the school administration may do a Threat Assessment in collaboration with the protocol partners.
- Behaviours that might trigger a Threat Assessment include but are not limited to: possession of weapon/replica; bomb threat/plan; verbal, written, Internet website/electronic threat to kill or injure self/others; setting fires; threats of violence.
- School administration staff may call together a multidisciplinary Community Threat Assessment Team, which could include: the school administration and school teaching and support staff, board support staff and community partners (e.g., police, children's mental health practitioners, addictions counsellors, public health nurses, probation).
- An assessment will be completed to:
 - Understand the context and the level of the risk/threat
 - Better understand the factors that contribute to the threat maker's behaviours
 - Plan for a supportive response for all those involved
 - Develop a Risk Management Plan.

What about privacy?

- The Community Threat Assessment Team will be permitted to share and review student information and the details of the event with other members of the team in order to collaborate and respond to the situation.
- For safety reasons, the threat assessment process will continue even if the threat maker and/or parent/guardian are reluctant to participate, all the while maintaining respect for the individual's rights to privacy.
- Risk management and student support plans will be developed and shared with parents, staff and students as required.

The model presented reflects the thinking and work of J. Kevin Cameron, Director of the Canadian Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response.

Stage One Threat Assessment Actions/Checklist

(See Appendix B, pages 33-48)

- Inform principal/designate who initiates and oversees following actions:
- Consult with appropriate school staff and community agency staff
- Assemble in-school multidisciplinary team
- Inform regional superintendent
- Inform police if appropriate
- Inform parent/guardian(s) of threat maker and target of incident (“Duty to Warn”)

Threat Maker Parent/Guardian(s): _____

Informed by: _____ Date: _____

Target Parent/Guardian(s): _____

Informed by: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian(s) have NOT been informed because:

- Complete Identifying Information and Threat Assessment Team forms
- Complete Stage One Threat Assessment Report Form Screening Questions (Appendix B)
(Note: Refer to Threat Assessment Training Guide, Stage One for additional background)
- Determine Level of Concern
- Complete Stage One Intervention Plan
- Review outcome with parent/guardian and threat maker
- Schedule follow-up/review meeting with In-School Threat Assessment School Team and appropriate superintendent

Stage One Threat Assessment

Use **Threat Assessment Report Forms** as a format for gathering and recording information for a Stage One Threat Assessment.

What is a Stage One Threat Assessment?

The purpose of the Stage One Threat Assessment is to determine whether a student poses a threat to the safety of others. It is an initial response when notified of worrisome and/or high risk behaviours and it is initiated when a student makes a threat, may be about to act out violently, or has acted out violently.

Taking the time to do a proper initial assessment can prevent overreactions. There are times when a case may first appear as high-risk but quickly proves to be a minor non-threat related situation.

The Stage One Threat Assessment involves data collection and immediate risk-reducing intervention. The Team designated by the school/agency staff is charged with conducting the Threat Assessment. This team is called the In-School Threat Assessment Team (TAT).

Who is on the In-School TAT?

Once an incident of concern occurs, the In-School TAT is identified based on roles and responsibilities within the school/agency and familiarity with the student. Follow these guidelines for team membership:

Elementary School	Secondary School
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Principal/designate• School-based community agency staff if applicable• Special Education Resource Teacher• A teacher who knows the student well• Police service trained personnel• Others at the discretion of the principal/designate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Principal/designate• School-based community agency staff if applicable• At least one of:<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Student Success teacher▪ Guidance staff▪ Special Education Resource Teacher▪ A teacher who knows the student well▪ Police service trained personnel▪ Others at the discretion of the principal/designate

Someone trained in Threat Assessment must be a member of the In-School TAT. This team assembles first to determine who will gather which pieces of information. The team will need to reassemble after as much information as possible is collected about the threat. (It is understood that the Threat Assessment training process is progressive and it will take a period of time to achieve this level of proficiency).

Contacting Police to be Part of the In-School TAT

In the case of violence or criminal threats, the police officer has first call as to whether or not charges will be laid.

Police Services will endeavor to attend Stage One Threat Assessments. In the event that an in-school officer is not available to attend, relevant information will be provided to the school board Threat Assessment member requesting police participation, as per information sharing agreements.

In cases where a school-based police officer exists, that officer should be the first police contact. If he/she is not available or the school does not have a school-based officer, call the appropriate number below:

Huron OPP - 1-888-310-1122
Perth OPP - 1-888-310-1122
Wingham Police - 519-357-1214
Stratford Police - 519-271-4141

Possible Sources for Data/Information

The better the data collection, the better the assessment, the better the intervention!

- Current and previous school/discipline records/OSR
- Police Service, Probation, as appropriate
- Interview with the threat maker and/or target of the threat, as appropriate
- Interview with school staff, including teaching, secretarial, custodial and Educational Assistant, as appropriate
- Interview family members/guardian, as appropriate
- Witnesses, including all participants directly and indirectly involved
- Evidence obtained in any search of a locker, backpack and home (in particular the bedroom), as appropriate
- Internet histories, diaries, notebooks
- Psychiatric/psychological assessments or other formal assessments
- Any other sources as deemed necessary by the In-School TAT
- Previous Threat Assessment data, if it exists
- If applicable, school-based community agency staff

Completion of Threat Assessment Report Form

Complete the Threat Assessment Report Form using the data collected in the In-School TAT process. Upon the completion of the process, and in consideration of the level of concern, use the Stage One Intervention Plan (see page 47 of this document).

Share the Intervention Plan

The Intervention Plan should be shared with the following:

- The student who has made the threat, his/her parent/guardian, as well as the victim and his/her parent/guardian as it relates to the safety of the victim.
- School staff that are in direct contact or have a close relationship with the student who has made the threat and, where appropriate, the student who was the target of the threat.
- Any receiving educational or therapeutic setting (e.g., suspension program or new school).
- Superintendent and/or other senior staff as per board/school policy.
- The Intervention Plan must be maintained in the student's OSR for a minimum of five (5) years.

THIS COMPLETES A STAGE ONE THREAT ASSESSMENT

Stage Two and Stage Three Threat Assessment Actions/Checklist

(See Appendix C pages 49-60, Appendix D page 61)

- Inform principal/designate who initiates and oversees following actions:
- Consult with appropriate school staff and community agency staff
- Request that the Community Threat Assessment Team members collect any pertinent information relevant to the threat maker
- Inform parent/guardian(s) that a Stage Two Threat Assessment involving team members from outside the school will be conducted
- Assemble internal and external Threat Assessment Team Members
- Complete Stage Two Threat Assessment Screening Questions
- Revise Level of Concern in Stage Two
- Revise Stage One Intervention Plan to create the Stage Two Intervention Plan and develop the Stage Three Risk Management/Student Support Plan
- Notify the appropriate superintendent of the outcome, and submit a copy of the completed Stage Three Risk Management/Student Support Plan.
- Principal/designate shares Intervention Plan and the Risk Management/Student Support Plan with parent/guardian(s), student, and school staff as required and where appropriate
- File copies of the Stage Two Intervention Plan and Stage Three Risk Management/Student Support Plan in the OSR.

Stage Two Threat Assessment

Use **Stage Two Threat Assessment Screening Questions** (see Appendix C, pages 49-58) as a format for gathering and recording information for a Stage Two Threat Assessment.

What is a Stage Two Threat Assessment?

It is a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary risk evaluation, which is conducted when a threat has serious implications of potential or immediate danger to others. It is an initial response to “Immediate Threat” behaviours listed in this protocol. It may also be a second stage response to “high risk” behaviours listed in the same chart. A trained team of school-based staff and external agency/emergency response staff is charged with conducting a Stage Two Threat Assessment. This team is called the Community Threat Assessment Team (TAT).

Who is on the Community Threat Assessment Team?

The intention is that members of the Community Threat Assessment Team have Threat Assessment training and/or Clinical Training and experience. The Community TAT is multidisciplinary in nature and must consist of the following members:

In-School TAT and at least two of the following:

- School-based community agency staff
- Children’s Aid Society worker
- Teacher or guidance counsellor who knows the student
- Any other members as determined by the principal/designate or Community TAT (Parents of the threat maker or victim should not be team members)

Contacting Police to be a Part of the Community Threat Assessment Team

If possible, the police officer that attended the Stage One Threat Assessment should be involved in the Stage Two Threat Assessment. If this is not possible, or an officer was unable to attend the Stage One, the principal/designate will contact the appropriate police department and provide the required information.

Whenever possible, consideration should be given to the fact that police availability is determined by shift assignments.

Process

Assemble the Community Threat Assessment Team for purposes of amalgamating Stage One information with all new information. Provide Stage One information to new Stage Two participants as soon as possible to allow for review prior to Stage Two assessment.

Note: Steps must be taken to protect the identity of the student when using electronic communication. (e.g., portable devices such as cell phones, computers, fax machines, etc.)

Information will come from a variety of sources such as:

- Current and previous school/discipline records
- Police, Probation, as appropriate
- Interviews, from all sources, with the threat maker and target of the threat
- Interviews with school staff, including teaching, secretarial, custodial and educational assistant staff, as appropriate
- Interviews with family members, as appropriate
- Interviews with student witnesses, including all participants directly and indirectly involved
- Searches of the student, lockers, and backpack, as appropriate
- Internet histories, diaries, notebooks
- Psychiatric/Psychological assessments or other formal assessments
- Other resources at the discretion of the principal/designate and superintendent
- Community agency staff as appropriate

Note: Use the Stage Two Threat Assessment Screening Questions (Appendix C, pages 49-58) to guide the inquiry and to document concerns during the Stage Two Threat Assessment meeting.

With the input of all Community TAT members and as a result of the Stage Two assessment:

- Complete/revise Level of Concern
- Revise Stage One Intervention Plan to reflect new information which will aid in the development of the Stage Two Intervention Plan and the Stage Three Risk Management/Student Support Plan
- Set follow up meeting(s) and document these
- Ensure that all threat assessment reporting documents are completed

Stage Three Threat Assessment Developing and Monitoring the Risk Management/Student Support Plan

What is a Risk Management/Student Support Plan?

- The Risk Management/Student Support Plan outlines the decision(s) that the Community Threat Assessment Team (TAT) determines to be appropriate in addressing the threat-maker and ensuring the safety of staff and students.
- It includes the Stage Two Intervention Plan (see page 59 of this document).
- It includes the Risk Management/Student Support Plan form (see Appendix D page 61). (This will be tailored to each situation and to the needs of the student and the school environment.)
- The Risk Management/Student Support Plan will organize what has occurred already in response to the incident and will provide ideas for incorporating the information into a more detailed plan of action.
- The Risk Management/Student Support Plan should be reviewed periodically as per the decision of the Community TAT and should be placed in the student's OSR.

As a result of the Community TAT's evaluation of risk, an Intervention Plan and The Risk Management/Student Support Plan will have been developed collaboratively for the student. The responsibility for the immediate implementation of the plan will be assigned by the principal/designate/community agency in consultation with the Community TAT. The principal/designate will inform the superintendent.

A follow-up meeting, within a timeline indicated by the Community TAT, will subsequently be convened to assess the implementation of the plan for the student. This meeting should involve all available members of the Community TAT, principal/designate and parents of the student requiring support as well as any other attendees at the discretion of the superintendent.

Definitions

Affective Violence - Violence committed as a result of an emotional or reactive state.

Baseline Behaviours – If a behaviour is typical for an individual, then that behaviour serves as a baseline for future reference. If the behaviour is not typical, or if a deviation from a previously identified baseline is observed, then evolution can be inferred.

Bedroom and Locker Dynamic - People who do not want to be discovered engaging in threat behaviours often choose a location where they believe they have an expectation of privacy for storing the plans and tools with which to carry out their threatening behaviour. This location is often the threat maker's bedroom or locker or it can be another location over which they have control of access.

Community Threat Assessment Team - School board and community partners will come together to evaluate the risk a student poses to self/others and will develop a cross sector Risk Management/Student Support Plan to ensure safety and support.

DSM Diagnosis - DSM is the acronym for the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. You may also see it referenced as the DSM-IV. A DSM-IV diagnosis is based upon an assessment completed by a qualified mental health professional, following the criteria outlined in the manual.

Empty Vessels - A young person (or student) who is not connected to a healthy mature adult will search for people or things with which to identify. A person who feels empty will try to fill themselves with something thereby increasing their vulnerability to threat making behaviour.

Fluidity - This refers to the way a person can move from thoughts of homicide to thoughts of suicide and is referred to as psychological shifting.

Genogram - A genogram is a pictorial display of a person's family relationships and medical history. It goes beyond a traditional family tree by allowing the user to visualize hereditary patterns and psychological factors that punctuate relationships. It can be used to identify repetitive patterns of behavior and to recognize hereditary tendencies.

High Risk Behaviours - These are behaviours that express a potential intent to do harm or act out violently against someone or something. "High Risk" behaviours include but are not limited to: interest in violent content, unusual interest in setting fires, escalation of physical aggression, significant change in anti-social behavior, unusual interest in or possession of a weapon or replica, bomb threats, threat (written, verbal, electronic/Internet) to be violent or kill or cause injury to self and/or others, and promotion of hate towards a specific group.

Immediate Threat - Immediate threats include but are not limited to:

- Possession of weapon that poses a serious threat to others
- Plan for serious assault
- Immediate threat to injure or kill (written, verbal, electronic)
- Homicidal/suicidal behaviour that threatens safety of others or self
- Fire setting resulting in harm

Always call "911" and then contact the school administrator or designate. The school will contact the superintendent who will then contact the Director of Education. In consultation with each other, the superintendent or principal/designate will activate the Community Threat Assessment Team.

In-School Threat Assessment Team - A team of school based professionals, principals/designates, senior administrators, teaching staff and support staff, and relevant community partners, trained to assess a threat by a student or a group of students. Consultation with the appropriate superintendent should occur.

Instrumental Violence - Violence committed as a means to an end.

Intervention Plan - A document completed as a result of the Stage One and/or the Stage Two Threat Assessment which outlines specific actions that will be undertaken to manage the threat and support both the threat maker and the intended targets of the threat.

Justification Process - The process through which the potential offender seeks, or is given the means to justify, the intended violence. The threat-maker uses these justifications to rationalize the purpose and intent of the intended violence.

Naturally Closed School Systems - These are schools that have no complicated trauma history and where there is a clearly defined leadership structure. Parents may be formally included in the structure, but they have no significant influence over how the school functions. Information in this type of system is unidirectional in that information flows down through the hierarchy with limited information flowing up to the leadership. (see Violence Threat Risk Assessment Level One Training Guide, pg. 47 for more detail)

Naturally Open School Systems - These are schools that have no complicated trauma history and where there is a clearly defined leadership structure. All levels of this type of system openly share information with the leadership (see Violence Threat Risk Assessment Level One Training Guide, pg. 47 for more detail)

Parentification - The process of role reversal whereby a child is obliged to act as parent to their own parent. In extreme cases, the child is used to fill the void of the alienating parent's emotional life.

Risk Management/Student Support Plan - A chart that depicts the goals, recommendations, actions, respective persons responsible and projected date of completion and includes the Stage Two Intervention Plan.

Threat - The expression of intent to do harm or act out violently against someone or something. Threats can be spoken, written or symbolic and can be classified as direct, indirect, veiled or conditional.

Threat Types

- **Direct:** A threat that identifies a specific act against a specific target and is delivered in a straightforward, clear and explicit manner.
- **Indirect:** A threat that tends to be vague, unclear and ambiguous.
- **Veiled:** A threat that strongly implies, but does not explicitly threaten, violence.
- **Conditional:** A threat that warns that a violent act will happen unless certain demands or terms are met.

Traumatically Closed School Systems - These are schools which have a complicated trauma history often with multiple unresolved traumas and where there is a clearly defined leadership structure. Parental involvement in this type of school system is limited and most parents are viewed by the system as outsiders. (see Violence Threat Risk Assessment Level One Training Guide, pg. 49 for more detail)

Traumatically Open School Systems - These are schools which have a complicated trauma history often with multiple and unresolved traumas. Between crises, this type of system often functions as a chaotic or leaderless system. (see Violence Threat Risk Assessment Level One Training Guide, pg. 48 for more detail)

Worrisome - Those behaviours that cause concern and may indicate that a student is moving toward a greater risk of violent behavior. These behaviours include but are not limited to drawing pictures that contain violence, writings that contain violence, making vague or generalized statements about violence towards others that do not constitute a threat as defined by law. However, the nature of the threat may cause concern for some members of the school community because of violent content.

The majority of high risk behavior, from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12, falls into this category. All worrisome behaviours must be communicated to the In-School Threat Assessment Team and/or community members for consultation. In these cases, the team is not activated formally. The principal/designate consults with the community member or another professional who knows the student and decides if an In-School TAT needs to be activated.

In many cases, follow up on worrisome behaviours results in good intervention measures. There are also cases where “a little data, leads to a lot” and what seems like a minor case can quickly evolve to the formal activation of the In-School Threat Assessment Team.

Stage One Threat Assessment Report Form¹

(Data Collection and Immediate Risk Reducing Interventions)

Violence/Threat Making Behaviours

(Examples of high-risk behaviours addressed in this protocol include but are not limited to):

- Serious violence or violence with intent to harm or kill
- Verbal/written threats to injure or kill others (“clear, direct and plausible”)
- Internet (e.g., Facebook, YouTube, etc.) or text messaging, threats to kill others (refer to Appendix B pgs. 42-47 of the Community Protocol for Violence Threat Risk Assessment and Intervention, January 2011, for abbreviations commonly used on the Internet and texting)
- Possession of weapons (including replicas)
- Bomb threats (making and/or detonating explosive devices)
- Fire setting
- Sexual intimidation or assault
- Gang related intimidation and violence

Student: _____ School: _____

DOB: _____ Grade: _____ Age: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____ Date of Incident: _____

Three Primary Hypotheses in Threat Assessment

One: Is it a conscious or unconscious “Cry for Help”?

Two: Conspiracy of two or more! Who else knows about it? Who else is involved?

Three: Is there any evidence of fluidity?

Pre-interview Considerations

- a) 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 questions that can be asked in a strategic Threat Assessment interview to test those hypotheses.

- b) There should **never** be more than two people in the room interviewing the Threat Maker or Student of Concern.
- c) Remember to distinguish between **Assessing the Threat** versus **Assessing the Threat Maker**.

¹ Copyright - adapted from the *Canadian Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response, Violence Threat/Risk Assessment VTRA, Stage I Report Form, Second Edition, May 2011*

Step 1:

Principal/designate: 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 of concern until the police member of the team is present.
- Do not allow “student of interest” access to coats, backpacks, desks, or lockers.
- Determine if the threat maker has immediate access to the means (knife, gun, etc.).

Step 2:

Principal/designate: If appropriate, check the locker, backpack, desk, etc.

Step 3:

Call the “trained” Threat Assessment police member; share initial data and police will determine if a history of weapons possession, use, or violence is noted in police accessible records.

Step 4:

Principal/designate: notify the appropriate superintendent of the need for In-School TAT activation.

Step 5:

Principal/designate and Threat Assessment police member: will 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 including:

- Reporter(s)
- Target(s)
- Witnesses
- Teachers and other school staff (secretaries, teacher assistants, bus drivers, etc.)
- Friends, classmates, acquaintances
- Parents/caregivers (call both parents where families are separated)
- Current and previous school records (call the sending school)
- Police Records Check
- Check the student, locker, desk, backpack, recent text books/assignment binders, cars, etc. for data consistent with the threat making or threat-related behaviour
- Check/search or question parents/caregivers about the student, bedroom, etc.
- Activities: Internet histories, diaries, notebooks
- Relevant community agency staff

Step 6:

Genogram

Threat Assessment Screening Questions

The following eight “series” of questions are comprehensive and cover data collection useful for Stage One Threat Assessment.

Series I Questions - The Incident

- Where did the incident happen and when?
- How did it come to the interviewee’s attention?
- What was the specific language of the threat, detail of the weapon brandished or gesture made?
- Was there stated:
 - Justification for the threat?
 - Means to carry out the threat?
 - Consequences weighed out (I don’t care if I live or die!)?
 - Conditions that could lower the level of risk (unless you take that Facebook post down I will stick my knife in your throat!)?
- Who was present and under what circumstance did the incident occur?
- What was the motivation or perceived cause of the incident?
- What was the response of the target (if present) at the time of the incident? Did they add to or detract from the Justification Process?
- What was the response of others who were present at the time of the incident? Did they add to or detract from the Justification Process?

Notes:

Series II Questions - Attack-Related Behaviours

- Has the student sought out information consistent with his/her threat making or threat-related behaviour?
- Have there been any communications suggesting ideas or intentions to attack a target currently or in the past?
- Has the student attempted to gain access to weapons or does he/she have access to the weapons she/he has threatened to use?
- Has the student developed a plan & how general or specific is it (time, date, identified target selection, site selection, journal of justifications, maps & floor plans)?
- Has the student been engaging in suspicious behaviour such as appearing to show an inordinate interest in alarm systems, sprinkle systems, video surveillance in schools or elsewhere, schedules & locations of police or security patrol?
- Has the student engaged in rehearsal behaviours, including packing or brandishing fake but realistic looking weapons, air rifles, pistols, or engaged in fire setting (i.e. lighting fire to cardboard tubes cut & taped to look like a pipe bomb, etc.)?
- Is there any evidence of attack related behaviours in his/her locker (back pack, car trunk, etc.) at school or bedroom (shed, garage, etc.) at home?
- Have others been forewarned of a pending attack or told not to come to school because "something big is going to happen?"

Notes:

Series III Questions - Threat Maker Typology

- Does the threat maker appear to be more:
 - a. Traditional Predominately Behavioural Type? (see Violence Threat Risk Assessment Level I Training Guide 4th Edition pg 41-44)
 - b. Traditional Predominately Cognitive Type?
 - c. Mixed Type?
 - d. Non-Traditional
- Does the threat maker have a history of violence or threats of violence? If yes, what is his/her past:
 - a. (HTS) Human Target Selection
 - b. (SS) Site Selection
 - c. (F) Frequency of Violence or Threats
 - d. (I) Intensity of Violence or Threats
 - e. (R) Recency
- In the case at hand, what is his/her current:
 - a. (HTS) Human Target Selection
 - b. (SS) Site Selection
 - c. Does it denote a significant increase in **BASELINE** Behaviour?

Note: In Stage One Threat Assessment, 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!

- Does the threat maker have a history of depression or suicidal thinking/behaviour?
- Is there evidence of fluidity in his/her writings, drawings or verbalizations?
- Does the threat maker use drugs or alcohol? Is there evidence it is a risk enhancing factor in the case at hand?
- 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?

Notes:

Series IV Questions - The Target Typology

Remember that in some cases, the target is 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.

- Does the target have a history of violence or threats of violence? If yes, what is his/her past:
- If yes, what is the frequency, intensity & recency (F.I.R.) of the violence?
- What has been his/her past human target selection?
- What has been his/her past site selection?
- Is there evidence the target has instigated the current situation?

Notes:

Series V Questions - Peer Dynamics

- Are others involved in the incident that may intentionally or unintentionally be contributing to the justification process?
- Who is in the threat maker's peer structure and where does the threat maker fit (i.e., leader, co-leader, and follower)?
- Is there a difference between the threat maker's individual baseline and his/her peer group baseline behaviour?
- Who is in the target's peer structure and where does the target fit (i.e., leader, co-leader, and follower)?
- Is there a peer who could assist with the plan or obtain the weapons necessary for an attack?

Notes:

Series VI Questions - Empty Vessels

- Does the student of concern have a healthy relationship with a mature adult?
- Does the student have inordinate knowledge versus general knowledge or interest in violent events, themes, or incidents, including prior school - based attacks?
- How has he/she responded to prior violent incidents (local, national, etc.)?
- What type of violent games, movies, books, music, Internet searches, does the student fill himself/herself with?
- Is there evidence that what he/she is filling him/her with is influencing his/her behaviour? (Imitators vs. Innovators?)
- What related themes are present in his/her writings, drawings, etc.?
- Is there evidence of fluidity and/or religiosity?

Notes:

Series VII Questions - Contextual Factors

- Has the threat maker experienced a recent loss, such as a 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.?
- Have his/her parents just divorced or separated?
- Is he/she the victim of child abuse and has the abuse been dormant but resurfaced at this time?
- Is he/she being initiated into a gang and is it voluntary or forced recruitment?
- Has he/she recently had an argument or "fight" with a parent/caregiver or someone close to him/her?
- Has he/she recently been charged with an offence or suspended or expelled from school?
- Is the place where he/she has been suspended likely to increase or decrease his/her level of risk?

Notes:

Series VIII Questions - Family Dynamics

- How many homes does the student reside in (shared custody, goes back and forth from parent to grandparent's home)?
- Is the student connected to a healthy/mature adult in the home?
- Who all lives in the family home (full-time and part-time)? Has anyone entered or left the home that may be influencing level of risk?
- Who seems to be in charge of the family and how often is he/she around?
- Has the student engaged in violence or threats of violence towards his/her siblings or parent(s)/ caregiver(s)? If so, what form of violence and to whom, including frequency, intensity, and recency (F.I.R.)?
- What is the historical baseline at home? What is the current baseline at home? Is there evidence of evolution at home?
- Are parent(s) or caregiver(s) concerned for their own safety or the safety of their children or others?
- Does the student's level of risk (at home, school, or the community) cycle according to who is in the home (i.e., the student is low risk for violence when his/her father is home but high risk during the times his/her father travels away from home for work)?
- Does the student have a history of trauma (car accidents, falls, exposure to violence, abuse, etc.)?
- Has the student been diagnosed with a DSM IV diagnosis?
- Is there a history of mental health disorders in the family?
- Is there a history of drug or alcohol abuse in the family?

Notes:

Step 7:

Notify the Threat Maker'(s) and Target'(s) parents/guardians at the earliest opportunity.

Threat Maker's parents/guardians have been notified of the situation and this Stage One data collection phase.

Threat Maker's parents/guardians have NOT been notified because:

Target's parents/guardians have been notified of the situation and this Stage One data collection phase.

Target Maker's parents/guardians have NOT been notified because:

Step 8:

Other Agencies:

As per the formal signed protocol, community agency staff may be involved in the Stage One threat assessment as consultants to the school/police team and sources of initial data relevant to the case at hand (such as past or current involvement by the other agencies). Once community agency staffs are informed of the initial school/police data, they may release necessary information or physically join the team.

Upon receipt of the Stage One data, partner agencies should check to see if the student in question is or was a client and then the agencies can determine if they are in possession of information that in conjunction with the Stage One data would inform an Intervention Plan for the student.

Generally, when a student reveals information that poses a significant risk of harm to the health and safety of themselves or others, then that information is disclosed immediately as required, with or without consent, to provide an appropriate response. Therefore, it is likely that such information will already have been previously shared. It may be appropriate to the situation to share that information again with the In-School Threat Assessment Team (ISTAT) and Community Threat Assessment Team (CTAT).

Where information reveals that a risk is not immediate, then the community agency that holds the record will request consent to share information with the ISTAT and CTAT as soon as possible. It is preferable to develop a consent process that obtains such consent to share with the ISTAT and CTAT at the time the record is first created prior to any investigation.

Therefore, community agency staff will report that a record check has been completed and:

- There is nothing to report
- There is information relevant to the current situation that can be shared (as consent has been obtained either at the time the information was collected or at the time of the investigation).
- There is information relevant to the case that may be disclosed as per the Threat Assessment Protocol (significant risk of harm to the health and safety of others is present).

Note:

At this point of the Stage One process, some initial data may not be available to complete this form but enough information is usually available to determine if:

- a) an immediate risk is posed; and
- b) if a Stage Two evaluation is required.

Step 9:

In-School TAT members collate the data and discuss all relevant information regarding the student. As a team, ask the 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)?

The Stage One Assessment is an overall assessment of current level of risk and is a precursor to (if necessary) a more comprehensive Stage Two Threat Assessment.

Low Level of Concern

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

- Threat is vague and indirect.
- Categorization of low risk does not imply “no risk” but indicates the individual is at little risk for violence.
- Information contained within the threat is inconsistent, implausible or lacks detail; threat lacks realism.
- Available information suggests that the person is unlikely to carry out the threat or become violent.
- Within the general range for typical baseline behaviour for the student in question.
- 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 (e.g., possible place and time).
- No clear indication that the student of concern has taken preparatory steps (e.g. weapon seeking), although there may be an ambiguous or inconclusive reference pointing to that possibility. There may be a specific statement seeking to convey that the threat is not empty: “I’m serious!”
- A moderate or lingering concern about the student’s potential to act violently.
- Increase in baseline behaviour.
- Categorization of risk indicates the individual is at an elevated risk for violence, and those measures currently in place or further measures, including monitoring, are required in an effort to manage the individual’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 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 individual is at a high or imminent risk for violence.
- Immediate intervention is required to prevent an act of violence from occurring.

- * 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.

Step 10:

Decide on a course of action

Are there risk reducing interventions that need to be put in place immediately?

With the input of all Threat Assessment Team members, decide on a course of action. If there is a low to medium level of concern, the student can likely be managed at school with appropriate (increased) supervision.

Low to Medium Level of Concern

- Implement the Intervention Plan (Most students can be managed at school with interventions.)

Medium to High Level of Concern

- The Threat Assessment Team has determined that a Stage Two Threat Assessment is needed.

Step 11:

Develop a Stage One Intervention Plan and determine if Stage Two Threat Assessment and longer term treatment planning is required.

Use the following Intervention Plan to address all concerns identified during the Stage One Threat Assessment.

Stage One Intervention Plan (attach additional pages as needed)

This Intervention Plan will be monitored regularly and modified as necessary.

<input type="checkbox"/> Disciplinary action taken:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Intended victim warned and/or parents/guardians notified	
<input type="checkbox"/> Suicide assessment initiated on:	<input type="checkbox"/> By:
<input type="checkbox"/> Contract not to harm self or others created (please attach)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Alert staff and teachers on a need-to-know basis	
<input type="checkbox"/> Daily or <input type="checkbox"/> weekly check-in with (name, title):	
<input type="checkbox"/> Travel card to hold accountable for whereabouts and on-time arrival to destinations	
<input type="checkbox"/> Backpack, coat and other belongings check-in and check-out by:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Late arrival and/or early dismissal	
<input type="checkbox"/> Increased supervision in these settings:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Modify daily schedule by:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Behaviour plan (attach copy)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Identify precipitating/aggravating circumstances and intervene to alleviate tension - describe:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Drug and/or alcohol intervention with:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Referral to School Team to consider possible Special Education assessment	
<input type="checkbox"/> If Special Education student, review IEP goals and placement options	
<input type="checkbox"/> Review community-based resources and interventions with parents/guardians	
<input type="checkbox"/> Obtain permission to share information with community agencies (see Release of Information Form)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other action:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Parents/guardians will provide the following supervision and/or intervention	

Principal/Designate: _____

Signature

Date

Police: _____

Signature

Date

Other: _____

Signature

Date

Stage Two Threat Assessment Screening Questions

The following ten “series” of questions are comprehensive and cover data collection useful for Stage Two Threat Assessment.

Series I Questions - Details of the Incident
<p>Threats (Weapon Possession)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where did the incident happen & when? • How did it come to the team’s attention? • What was the specific language of threat? • Was the threat direct, indirect, conditional or veiled? • Who was present & under what circumstance was the threat made? • What was the response of the target (if present) and/or others who were present at the time of the threat? <p>Violence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where did the incident happen & when? • How did it come to the team’s attention? • What was the specific language used during the violent incident? • Who was present & under what circumstance did the violence occur? • What was the response of the target and/or others who were present at the time of the incident? • Was the violence provoked or unprovoked? • Was intent to harm present? • Were illegal weapons (knives, guns, replicas, machetes, etc.) brandished or used in the commission of the offence? • Was there intent to seriously injure the target(s)
<p>Notes:</p>

Series II Questions - Attack - Related Behaviours

- Has the threat maker sought out information consistent with their threat making behaviour (i.e., has the student who threatened to “bomb the school” been downloading bomb making instructions off the Internet?)
- Has the threat maker attempted to gain access to weapons or do they have access to the weapons they have threatened to use?
- Have they developed a plan & how general or specific is it (time, date, identified target selection, site selection, journal of justifications, maps & floor plans)?
- Has the threat maker been engaging in suspicious behaviour such as appearing to show an inordinate interest in alarm systems, sprinkle systems, video surveillance in schools or elsewhere, schedules & locations of police or security patrol?
- Have they engaged in rehearsal behaviours, including packing or brandishing fake but realistic looking weapons, air rifles, pistols, or engaged in fire setting?
- Is there any evidence of attack related behaviours in their locker (back pack, car, trunk, etc.) at school or bedroom (shed, garage, etc.)?

Notes:

Series III Questions - Threat Maker Typology

- Does the threat maker have a history of violence or threats of violence?
- If yes, what is the frequency, intensity & recency (F.I.R.) of the violence?
- Does the F.I.R. of the violence denote a significant increase in behavioural baseline of the perpetrator(s)?
- What has been their past human target selection?
- What has been their past site selection?
- Have they primarily engaged in instrumental violence or affective violence?
- Do they have a history of depression or suicidal thinking/behaviour?
- Is there evidence of fluidity?
- Are they open and honest about the incident?
- Is there current incident an increase in behavioural baseline?
- Do they feel justified in attacking the target and have they also dehumanized the target?

Notes:

Series IV Questions - Empty Vessel

- Does the threat maker or student of concern have a healthy relationship with a mature adult?
- If they do not have a healthy connection, what (or who) are they filling themselves with?
- Have there been any communications suggesting ideas or intentions to attack a target?
- Have others been forewarned of a pending attack or told not to come to school because “something big is going to happen?”
- Does the student have inordinate knowledge or interest in violent events, themes, or incidents, especially prior school - based attacks?
- How have they responded to prior violent incidents (local, national, etc.)?
- Do they identify with the aggressor’s behaviour & justify their actions? Do they talk about how they would or could do it better?
- What type of violent games, movies, books, music, Internet searches, does the threat maker fill himself/herself with?
- Is there evidence that what they are filling themselves with is influencing their behaviour?
- Imitators vs. Innovators?
- What related themes are present in their writings, drawings, etc.?
- Is there evidence of fluidity and/or religiosity?

Notes:

Series V Questions - Target Typology

- Does the target have a history of violence or threats of violence?
- If yes, what is the frequency, intensity & recency (F.I.R.) of the violence?
- What has been their past human target selection?
- What has been their past site selection?
- Have they primarily engaged in instrumental violence or affective violence?
- Do they have a history of depression or suicidal thinking/behaviour?
- Is there evidence of fluidity?
- Are they open and honest about the incident or dishonest?
- Is there any evidence of an increase in their baseline behaviour?
- Do they feel justified in attacking the threat maker and have they also dehumanized the threat maker?

Notes:

Series VI Questions - Peer Dynamics and Structure

- Was there a clear victim and perpetrator dyad with power imbalance (e.g., age, size, social power, etc.?)
- Are others involved in the incident that may intentionally or unintentionally be contributing to the justification process?
- Is the target more at risk for perpetrating violence than the threat maker?
- Who is in the threat maker's peer structure & where does the threat maker fit (i.e., leader, co-leader, and follower)?
- Are there others in the threat maker's peer structure that may be directly or indirectly influencing the target & is their baseline behaviour higher or lower than the threat maker's?
- Is there a difference between the threat maker's individual baseline & their peer group baseline behaviour?
- Who is in the target's peer structure & where does the target fit (i.e., leader, co-leader and follower)?
- Are there others in the target's peer structure who may be directing or influencing the target & is their baseline behaviour higher or lower than the target's?
- Is there a difference between the target's individual baseline & their peer group baseline behaviour?

Notes:

Series VII Questions - Contextual Factors (Triggers)

- Has the threat maker experienced a recent loss such as a 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.?
- Have their parents just divorced or separated?
- Are they victims of child abuse & has the abuse or memories of the abuse been dormant but resurfaced at this time?
- Are they being initiated into a gang? If so, is recruitment voluntary or forced?
- Have they recently had an argument or “fight” with a parent/caregiver or someone close to them?
- Have they recently been charged with an offence or suspended or expelled from school?
- Is the place where they have been suspended likely to increase or decrease their level of risk?

Notes:

Series VIII Questions - School Dynamics and Structure

- What is the history of trauma in the school/community?
- Is the current incident occurring in a defined international, national, or local critical period?
- Is the flow of information typically open between all levels of the system (i.e., Naturally Open - Naturally Closed - Traumatically Open - Traumatically Closed) (pg. 47-50 in training manual)?
- Is the flow of information in this case open or is some other dynamic influencing this particular case (i.e., the threat/violence occurred in the back of the school while the witnesses and threat maker were smoking pot and no one wants to implicate themselves)?
- Could a parent(s) or caregiver(s) be adding to or maintaining the justification process?
- Could a staff member(s) be adding to or maintaining the justification process?
- If several parents or staff members seem to be overreacting or underreacting, is there an underlying “human systems dynamic” driving the behaviour?

Notes:

Series IX Questions - Family Dynamics and Structure

- How many homes does the student reside in (shared custody, goes back and forth from parent to grandparent's home)?
- Is the student connected to a healthy/mature adult in the home?
- Do the parents or caregivers know what the contents of the bedroom are or is the bedroom off-limits?
- If they do not know the contents of the bedroom, is it due to a "rule-the-roost" dynamic or a parental attitude about privacy?"
- Who all lives in the family home (full-time and part-time)?
- What is the family structure (patriarchal, matriarchal, chaotic, stage two parentification, etc.)?
- Has the student engaged in violence or threats of violence towards their siblings or parent(s)/guardian(s)? If so, what form of violence and to whom, including frequency, intensity, and recency (F.I.R.)?
- What is the historical baseline at home? What is the current baseline at home? Is there evidence of evolution at home?
- Are parent(s) or caregiver(s) concerned for their own safety or the safety of their children or others?
- Does the student's level or risk (at home, school or community) cycle according to who is in the home (e.g., the student is at low risk when his/her father is at home but high risk during times when their father is away from home for work.
- Does the student have a history of trauma, including car accidents, falls, or exposure to violence, abuse, etc.
- Has the student been diagnosed with a DSM-IV diagnosis?
- Is there a history of mental health diagnoses in the family?
- Is there a history of drug or alcohol abuse in the family?

Notes:

Series X Questions - Baseline Overview

- What is the history of human target selection?
- What is the history of site selection?
- What are the frequency, intensity, and recency (F.I.R.) of violence, threats, or weapon possession?
- Is there a difference from individual baseline versus peer group baseline?
- Is there a drug and alcohol baseline related to violence and is it different from when the student is clean?
- 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?

Notes:

Stage Two Intervention Plan (attach additional pages as needed)

This Intervention Plan will be monitored regularly and modified as necessary.

<input type="checkbox"/> Disciplinary action taken:	
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<input type="checkbox"/> Suicide assessment initiated on:	<input type="checkbox"/> By:
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<input type="checkbox"/> Daily or <input type="checkbox"/> weekly check-in with (name, title):	
<input type="checkbox"/> Travel card to hold accountable for whereabouts and on-time arrival to destinations	
<input type="checkbox"/> Backpack, coat and other belongings check-in and check-out by:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Late arrival and/or early dismissal:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Increased supervision in these settings:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Modify daily schedule by:	
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Signature

Date

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Signature

Date

Other: _____

Signature

Date

