



The West Yellowhead Community Violence Threat Risk Assessment and Intervention Protocol

A Collaborative Response to Keeping our Children and Community Safe

PROTOCOL PARTNERS

Alberta Health Services- Addiction and Mental Health

North American Center for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response (NACTATR)

Edson Friendship Centre

Hinton Friendship Centre

Alberta Probation

Evergreen Catholic Separate School Division

Grande Yellowhead Public School Division

Children's Services

Living Waters Catholic Separate School Division

Royal Canadian Mounted Police

Town of Edson

Town of Hinton

Municipality of Jasper

Yellowhead County

Yellowhead Koinonia Christian School

Victim Services - Jasper

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.

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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

Partners are engaged and responsive with a shared responsibility to actively take steps to prevent traumatic events in schools and the community.

MISSION

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.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- All partner organizations will respond to any form of violence or threat of violence that impacts the quality of life for community members.
- Prevention of violence is a community responsibility as it is everybody's duty to report.
- Open and collaborative community partnerships help to ensure that the right person 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 individualized support planning.
- Proactive and trauma informed 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 West Yellowhead Community Threat Risk Assessment and Intervention Protocol is based upon the Canadian Center for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response (NACTATR) 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- Community Protocol Activation (Comprehensive risk assessment and intervention by a multidisciplinary team).
- Stage 3- Longer-Term Multi-Disciplinary Intervention Plan Developed and Implemented.

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

Partner Responsibilities

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

Threatening and Violent Behaviour for VTRA Response

- Examples of high-risk behaviours addressed in this protocol include but are not limited to:
 - Serious violence or violence with the intent to harm or kill.
 - Verbal/written threats to kill others (clear, direct, plausible).
 - Internet, web site, social media threats to kill others.
 - Possession of weapons (including replicas).
 - Bomb threats (making and/or detonating explosive devices).
 - Fire setting.
 - Sexual intimidation or assault.
 - Gang related intimidation and violence.
 - Suicide Pacts and fluidity.
- The 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 may be made up of:
 - Grande Yellowhead School Division.
 - Evergreen Catholic School Division.
 - Living Waters Catholic School Division.
 - Yellowhead Koinonia Christian School VTRA contact.
 - Addiction and Mental Health VTRA contact.
 - Children's Services VTRA Contact.
 - Edson and/or Hinton's Friendship Centres.
 - RCMP VTRA Contact.
 - Municipality of Jasper.
 - Victim Services- Jasper.
 - Additional Community VTRA Members may be added, if available, at the discretion of VTRA Team.

Un-authored Threats

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

- Word usage (phrases and expressions that may be unique to a particular person or group of people (club, team, gang, etc.)
- Spelling (errors or modifications unique to an individual or group).
- Symbols or drawings.

Worrisome Behaviours

Worrisome behaviours are those that cause concern for members of the school or community that may indicate a person 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 antisocial behaviours (a change in baseline).

In keeping with VTRA partner commitment to responding to all worrisome behaviour, all such behaviours will be communicated to the VTRA Team Lead at your organization for consultation. In these cases the VTRA Team is not formally activated. The 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 Person of Concern has been violent, uttered threats, or is in possession of a weapon, then the VTRA Team is activated to deal with the new data.

VTRA and Suspension from School

In most cases arising out of schools, 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.

It is encouraged that in-school suspension should be given significant consideration as a poorly timed "out of school" suspension can be a very risky response as the suspension is often viewed by a high-risk Person of Concern 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 Person of Concern 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 VTRA representative to tell an individual 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 Person of Concerns during an out of school suspension may be exacerbated if steps are not taken to keep the Person of Concern connected with healthy adult supports; Adult family and/or community members may take a critical role in providing supervision and support.

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 so long as it doesn't question the investigational integrity of the criminal code investigation.

Good communication between the RCMP with their 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 their 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 Person of Concerns (POC) engage in violent or threat related behaviour, developmental and exceptionality issues need to be taken into consideration. An elementary age Person of Concern does have the potential to pose a risk.

Working with Cultural Diversity

The potential for cultural bias is well documented in the social and psychological literature. When conducting a VTRA, cultural bias's may be a function of; the construct being measured (VTRA between different Western subcultures as well as non- Western cultures); The content of the questions and/or how the questions are phrased (i.e., language and culture may influence interpretation with respect to the interviewer and/or respondent); and members of some cultures experience significant rates of poverty, racism, and discrimination and language barriers may also exist. These factors, along with possible distrust for authority figures can lead to the presence of multiple stressors that increase perceived level of risk or actual risk.

If language barriers exist, it is vital, if possible, that respondents speak in their first language and that a neutral interpreter be used to translate. Similarly, it is vital that the individuals involved make efforts to familiarize with the cultural background of the parties being interviewed and that whenever possible at least one member of the team is an identified "specialist" in that area. If there are no VTRA protocol team members knowledgeable of a particular culture or language, consideration should be made to gain

information and bring in an untrained staff member or other professional or a specialist if resources exist, with consent, as a consultant to the team.

Person of Concerns with Diverse Learning Needs and VTRA

The Stage 2 VTRA Team process will not be activated when Person of Concerns 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 Person of Concern 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 Person of Concern 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 Person of Concern 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 Person of Concern 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 Person of Concern with diverse needs. They may assume that all of their behaviours are as a result of their symptoms rather than consider that a Person of Concern 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 Person of Concern population can be factors in contributing to the violence potential of the Person of Concern with diverse needs independent of their challenges.

Autism Spectrum as a special consideration

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) features a range of social communication challenges. There are a number of considerations for Preliminary Data Gathering when VTRA is enacted with a Person of Concern who may fall on the Autism Spectrum such as the difficulty with deliberate deception, difficulty understanding someone else's point, that individuals with ASD can easily be overwhelmed with extensive communication demands of interpersonal relationships and can seek out social connections online where they are more successful. These considerations should be taken into account when interviewing individuals who may fall on the Autism Spectrum. It would be valuable for the VTRA Team to team to look at the function of Behaviour when assessing risk.

Supporting the Targeted or Victimized Child/Youth or Community Member

The VTRA Contact is 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, school population or community, the circumstances will dictate how far reaching the intervention may be. The VTRA Team should determine if crisis counseling or a trauma intervention 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.

Stage 2 VTRA Meeting Procedures

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 NACTATR 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, Report Form, Intervention Planning and Stage One VTRA Team Members
- Appendix C: Stage 2- Violence/Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Process and Report Form, Stage Two VTRA Team Members, Determination of Risk
- Appendix D: Stage 3 Intervention Planning, Initial Plan and Review/ Follow up

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

The Stage One process occurs within the protocol partner's agency. A VTRA Leader will take the initiative 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 individual(s) of concern until the police member of the team is present.
 - If appropriate, do not allow Person of Concern(s) of interest access to coats, backpacks, desks, lockers, technology 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.
 - Depending on the criminal code investigation, the RCMP may "own" or the team will determine who is best investigate 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 Person of Concern's bedroom and any other personal spaces (internet history, backyard fort, etc.) and report back any concerning discoveries.
- Activate VTRA Stage 1.
 - Notify the VTRA Lead.

- 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.).
 - Applicable community VTRA partners.
 - Parents/caregivers (call both parents, if appropriate).
 - Check the Person of Concern(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; connect with Children's Services about any concerns prior to contacting parents.
 - Check the Person of Concern'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 Person of Concern.
 - 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 Person of Concern 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 .
 - Whenever possible, two people should be present for interviews.
 - At least one of the interviewers should be VTRA trained.
 - Ideally, at least one of the interviewers has a positive relationship with the student
- 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 Person of Concern pose a threat to the target and/or community safety?
 - Does the Person of Concern pose a threat to himself/herself or someone outside the site? (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 Level One 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 Person of Concern can likely be managed at school or site with appropriate school/site 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 Person of Concern until the Stage 2 meeting takes place.
- Advise parents who will be contacting them to discuss the intervention plan.
- Advise victim/target's parents/guardians that their child has been a victim and provide information about services and advise that there are measures being taken to ensure their child is safe within the school environment/organizational environment when possible

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

The focus for stage two is a comprehensive risk evaluation by a multidisciplinary team. Members of the Community VTRA Team collaborate to gain a deep understanding of the child with the goal of creating a comprehensive intervention plan.

- Review Stage 1 Data Collection with respective agency 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.

- Who are the significant people for the Person of Concern and who should attend the Stage 2 meeting (family members, teachers, bus drivers, therapists, etc.)?
- Ensure the Superintendent has been notified of the Stage 2 activation, if school based VTRA.
- Provide advance copies (if applicable) to the VTRA Contact of:
 - Stage One Data Collection
 - Current ISP
 - Psychological testing reports
- VTRA contact will provide Level One data to Level Two partners prior to meeting when possible
- VTRA Interagency Contact
 - Contact RCMP VTRA Contact
 - The RCMP "own" the bedroom dynamic or the VTRA team will delegate someone to 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 Children's 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 agency's VTRA Contact or designate books a date, time and location for the meeting and ensures all participants are aware.
- Parent Contact for Stage 2
 - Confirm that the school administrator contacted the parent.
 - Explain the VTRA process.
 - Indicate the goal is to create an intervention plan to support the Person of Concern, family, and/or school.
 - Discuss the multi-disciplinary assessment and participation of RCMP and CS.
 - Discuss the participation of any other agency personnel involved with the Person of Concern.
 - Principals contact these agencies to request participation.
 - Principals will attempt to notify parents of other agencies involved.
 - Discuss bedroom dynamic.
 - Will RCMP attend to discuss?
 - Bedroom.
 - Internet history.
 - Personal devices -texts, history, photos, etc.
 - Private spaces (forts, etc.)
 - Will the 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 Person of Concern to become a healthier individual and ensure the school remains safe for both him/her and the Person of Concerns and staff.

- Confirm date, time, and location of meeting.
- If deemed appropriate by the VTRA team, notify and invite parents and/or guardians to participate as decided and advise they are permitted to bring a support person if they wish.
- Stage 2 Risk Assessment Meeting- Part One: Preparation - to be done in collaboration with invited VTRA trained members.
 - Has the process been discussed with 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 Person of Concern?
- Stage 2 Risk Assessment Meeting - Part Two: Data Collection
 - 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 Person of Concern and the circumstances related to the incident to create a comprehensive intervention plan to support the Person of Concern, 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 community members; so many questions will be asked of members at the table.
- Collectively complete the Stage 2 VTRA Report Form.
- 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 C: 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 3- Intervention planning, implementation and follow up
 - The agency VTRA lead is responsible for setting a review date with the community team.
 - It is recommended that at minimum a first review date is set.
 - It is expected that team members involved in the intervention plan should diminish over time, as lasting gains are made.
 - Parents and/or guardians will be invited to these meetings at the discretion of the community team.

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 Person of Concerns, staff and/or parents. In some schools and communities, the unnecessary communication of "threat-related" incidents will cause more damage than good.

If the language of the threat is low risk but several Person of Concerns, staff, and others are aware of the incident and it appears to be elevating the anxiety of some in the school, then all Person of Concern, 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 West Yellowhead 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 Person of Concerns 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 Person of Concern 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 Person of Concerns 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 Person of Concerns and staff members outside of the target group are aware, then all Person of Concerns, staff and parents should be notified in general terms that an incident is under investigation and the school is following the lead of the RCMP. Ensure everyone that all Person of Concerns 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 (counseling staff, administrative support, security staff, etc.), closing the school for the remainder of the day, etc.

COMMUNICATIONS

Safe schools and communities promote open communication in a culture of information sharing and openly reporting of concerns within a safe environment.

Responsible Reporting

All staff and Person of Concerns must be advised that any person in a school community having knowledge of high-risk Person of Concern 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 Person of Concerns that seeking adult support for worrisome behaviour is not "ratting or snitching" but rather a social responsibility for the well being of all. School staff need to actively counter the "code of silence".

Fair Notice

The West Yellowhead 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 Person of Concerns 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 West Yellowhead 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 Person of Concerns 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 West Yellowhead 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 NACTATR, and recommend needed revisions to the protocol.

Documentation

Each protocol partner will be responsible for documenting and storing information as required by the agency or by law. Sharing results of the VTRA process with parent/guardians and Person of Concerns will normally be the responsibility of the site 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 West Yellowhead Community Violence Threat Risk Assessment and Intervention Protocol are committed to the sharing of relevant information to the extent authorized by law.

Section 126(6) of the Youth Criminal Justice Act enables information in a Youth Criminal Justice Act record to be shared, within the access period, with any professional or other person engaged in the supervision or care of young person, including the representative of any school board, or school or any other educational or training institution only in limited circumstances. Information may be shared to ensure the safety of staff, Person of Concerns or to facilitate rehabilitation of the young person or to ensure compliance with a youth justice court order or any order of the provincial director respecting reintegration leave. Such sharing of information does not require the young person's consent.

All participants in the VTRA process are bound by the legislation and/or policy that 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.
 - Ensure distribution of fair notice.
- 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.
 - Need for training.

Leadership

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

Building Capacity

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

Helpful Links

211 Resource Lists

http://www.211edmonton.com/upload/2015-05_211ResourceLists_All.pdf

Addiction and Mental Health (Alberta Health Services)

<http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/amh.asp>

The Do's and Don'ts of Calling 911

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

Information Sharing for Human Service Providers in the Alberta Public Sector

https://justice.alberta.ca/programs_services/.../doc_ACYI__RedGreen.pdf

List of Chat Acronyms and Text Message Shorthand

<http://www.netlingo.com/acronyms.php>

Legislation

Alberta Human Rights Act

<http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Acts/A25P5.pdf>

Child First Act

<http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Acts/c12p5.pdf>

Criminal Code of Canada

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

Education Act

<http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Acts/e00p3.pdf>

Health Information Act

<http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Acts/H05.pdf>

Privacy Act

<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/P-21/>

Youth Justice Act

<http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Acts/Y01.pdf>

Youth Criminal Justice Act

<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/y-1.5/>

Appendix A: Definitions

NACTATR	North American Center for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response
CS	Children Services
Community Response (Stage 2)	The inter-agency process of determining the level of risk for threatening or violent behaviour. At this stage a multi-disciplinary intervention plan is also created.
Empty Vessel	The relationship between the child/youth of concern and his/her connection to healthy adult supports and other social/cultural aspects of his/her personality.
FCSS	Family and Community Support Services
Fluidity	The flow between suicidal thoughts and/or actions and homicidal thoughts and/or actions.
FSCD	Family Supports for Children with Disabilities. This is a department of Child & Family Services.
Genogram	A diagram expressing the relationships within a family.
High Risk Behaviours	Behaviours that express a plausible intent to do harm or act out violently against someone or something.
Informed Consent	Ensuring the participant knows what he/she is consenting to and the risks and benefits of giving that consent.
Risk Assessment	The process of determining if a child/youth of concern may pose a risk to some unknown target(s) at some unknown period of time.
School Based Response (Stage 1)	Ensuring immediate risk reduction, collection of data, and initial assessment.

Stage 3 Intervention	Ensure that a Person of Concern is provided services and supports.
Threat	Any expression of intent to do harm or act out violently against someone or something. Threats may be spoken, written, drawn, posted online or made by gesture. Threats may be direct, indirect, conditional or veiled.
Threat Assessment	The process of determining if a threat maker actually poses a risk to the target they have threatened.
West Yellowhead Community	The Town of Edson, the Town of Hinton and Yellowhead County, Municipality of Jasper
Worrisome Behaviours	Behaviours that cause concern and may indicate that a child/youth is moving toward a greater risk of violent behaviour but are not overtly threatening or violent.

Appendix B: Stage 1- Violence/Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Process, Report Form, Intervention Planning and Stage One VTRA Team Members

It is not a Stage 1 VTRA if there is imminent danger or the threat is time sensitive.
 For example, they said they were coming back to get her with a knife.

In these types of cases
Call 911

General Information

When to activate a Stage 1 VTRA?	Notes
<p>Examples of high-risk behaviours addressed include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • Suicide pacts and fluidity 	
Three Primary Hypotheses in VTRA	Notes
<p>Formulate an idea of what you think you will discover as you learn more about those involved in the incident:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is it a conscious or unconscious “Cry for Help”? 2. Conspiracy of two or more. Who else knows about it? Who else is involved? 3. Is there any evidence of fluidity? (Suicidal and/or homicidal behaviour) 	
Key VTRA Considerations	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guard against under reaction to indicators that someone is moving on a pathway to serious violence. • Avoid the uni-dimensional assessment. The more perspectives and information about a Person of Concern, the clearer the understanding of his/her motivations. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serious violence is an evolutionary process. No one just 'snaps'. • The pathway to violence is not a straight line. • The quote that kills. "He's a good kid with no history." • Baseline – is this typical behaviour? If not, can evolution be inferred? • Empty vessel – What is the child filling him/herself with? • Who else is concerned by the behaviour of the threat maker? Are there more involved? Puppet master? • Fluidity – If a Person of Concern is suicidal/homicidal how committed are they to the act? Are they primed? • Imitators vs Innovators – As most are imitators, seek predictors based upon the circumstances. • Threat assessment trumps suspension. 	
<p>Stage 1 VTRA Process</p>	<p>Notes</p>
<p>Work through the steps following this handout. There will be information to assist you along the way. Photos and copies of documents are helpful if Stage 2 is activated or future incidents occur.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Address immediate risk. 2. Mitigate risk. 3. Contact RCMP and Children's Services VTRA Lead Member. 4. Contact agency VTRA Leads 5. Activate VTRA Stage 1. 6. Data Collection 7. Parent notification if a minor 8. Parent notification for victim or intended victim when appropriate 9. Semi-Structured Interviews & Reporting 10. Determination of Risk 11. Decide on a Course of Action 12. Develop an intervention Plan <p>While these steps are generally sequential, they are not necessarily discrete. If common sense dictates starting one step, before the previous is complete, do so.</p>	

How long should a Stage 1 VTRA take?

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

Recordkeeping

- Documentation is kept according to VTRA Team Member's organizational policy.

VTRA Process

Stage	Step	Action	Done	Notes
1	1	Incident Screening - Plausibility, Baseline- Attack Related Behaviours.		
	2	Site Specific VTRA Activation (Data Collection and consolidation).		
	3	Immediate Risk Reducing Intervention Plan developed and Implemented.		
2	4	Community Protocol Activation (VTRA Multidisciplinary Risk Assessment - Further Data Collected).		
3	5	Longer- Term Multidisciplinary Intervention Plan Developed and Implemented.		
	6	Continue to Monitor, Evaluate, and/or revise the Intervention Plan as needed (30-60-90 day follow up recommended).		

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

Date of Incident:		Date of VTRA:	
Location of Incident:		VTRA Team Lead:	
Person of Concern Name:		Date of Birth:	
Phone:		Age:	
Address:		Gender:	
School:		Grade:	
Parent/Guardian:		Phone:	
Parent/Guardian:		Phone:	
Address:		Other Address:	
Previous VTRA(s):	___ Yes ___ No		
Previous incident type(s)			
Plausible / Baseline / Attack-Related Behaviours (PBA's) (Answers relevant to risk)			

Series One Questions: Details of the Incident
Questions
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where did the incident happen? When? What happened? 2. How did it come to the interviewee's attention? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What was the specific language of the threat, detail of the weapon brandished, or gesture made? 3. Was there stated:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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 (eg. unless you take that Facebook post down, I will stick my knife in your throat!)? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Who was present & under what circumstance did the incident occur? 5. What was the motivation or perceived cause of the incident? 6. What was the response of the target (if present) at the time of the incident? Did he/she add to or detract from the justification process? 7. 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 Two Questions: Attack-Related Behaviours
Questions
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Has the threat maker (subject) sought out information consistent with their threat making or threat related behaviour? 2. Have there been any communications suggesting ideas or intentions to attack a target currently or in the past? 3. Has the Person of Concern (subject) attempted to gain access to weapons or do they have access to weapons he/she has threatened to use? 4. Has the Person of Concern (subject) developed a plan & how general or specific is it (time, date, target selections, site selection, journal of justification, maps, floor plans, etc.)? 5. Has the Person of Concern (subject) been engaging in suspicious behaviour such as appearing to show an inordinate interest in alarm systems, sprinkler systems, video surveillance in schools or elsewhere, schedules and locations of police or security patrol?

6. Has the Person of Concern (subject) 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 and taped to look like a pipe bomb, etc.)?
7. Have others been forewarned of a pending attack or told not to come to work/school because “something big is going to happen?”

Notes

Series Three Questions: Empty Vessel

Questions

1. Does the Person of Concern (subject) have a healthy relationship with a mature adult?
2. Does the Person of Concern have inordinate knowledge versus general knowledge or interest in violent events, themes, or incidents, including prior work/school-based attacks?
3. How has he/she responded to prior violent incidents (local, national, etc.)?
4. Is there evidence that what he/she is filling himself/herself with is influencing his/her behaviour? (Imitators vs. Innovators?)
5. What themes are present in his/her writings, drawings, etc?

Notes

Series Four Questions: Threat Maker Typology

Questions

- 1. Does the Person of Concern appear to be more:**
 - Traditional Predominately Behavioural Type?
 - Traditional Predominately Cognitive Type?
 - Mixed Type?
 - Non-Traditional?
 - 2. Does the Person of Concern (subject) have a history of violence or threats of violence? If yes, what is their past:**
 - (HTS) History of Human Target Selection
 - (SS) History of Site Selection
 - (F) Frequency of Violence or Threats
 - (I) Intensity of Violence or Threats
 - (R) Recency
 - 3. In the case at hand, what is their current:**
 - (HTS) Human Target Selection
 - (SS) Site Selection
 - Does it denote a significant increase in **BASELINE** behaviour?
- NOTE:** In Stage I VTRA, history of violence is a significant risk enhancer but the best predictor of future violent behaviour is an **increase or shift in baseline**. This may also include an individual who has become more withdrawn or quiet as opposed to acting out!
- 4. Do they have a history of depression or suicidal thinking/behaviour?**
 - 5. Is there evidence of fluidity in their writings, drawings or verbalizations?**
 - 6. Does the Person of Concern (subject) use drugs or alcohol? Is there evidence it is a risk enhancing factor in the case at hand?**
 - 7. Is there a mental health diagnosis or evidence of a mental health diagnosis that may be a risk enhancing factor in the case at hand?**

Notes

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Series Five Questions: Target Typology

Questions

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

1. Does the target have a history of violence or threats of violence? If yes, what is their past history?
2. If yes, what is the frequency, intensity, & recency (FIR) of the violence?
3. What has been their past human target selection?
4. What has been their past site selection?
5. Is there evidence the target has instigated the current situation?

Notes

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Series Six Questions: Peer Dynamics

Questions

1. Are others involved in the incident that may intentionally or unintentionally be contributing to the justification process?

2. Who is in the Person of Concern's (subject's) peer structure & where does the threat maker (subject) fit (i.e.: leader, co-leader, and follower)?
3. Is there a difference between the Person of Concern's individual baseline & their peer group baseline behaviour?
4. Who is in the target's peer structure & where does the target fit (i.e.: leader, co-leader, and follower)?
5. Is there a peer who could assist with the plan or obtain the weapons necessary for an attack?

Notes

Series Seven Questions: Family Dynamics

Questions

1. How many homes does the Person of Concern (subject) reside in (shared custody, goes back and forth from parent to grandparent's home)?
2. Is the Person of Concern (subject) connected to a healthy/mature adult in the home?
3. Who all lives in the family home (full-time and part-time)?
4. Has anyone entered or left the home who may be influencing level of risk?
5. Who seems to be in charge of the family and how often is he/she around?
6. Has the Person of Concern 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, Recency (FIR)?

7. What is the historical baseline at home? What is the current baseline at home? Is there evidence of evolution at home?
8. Are parent(s) or caregiver(s) concerned for their own safety or the safety of their children or others?
9. Does the Person of Concern's level of risk (at home, school, work, or the community) cycle according to who is in the home (i.e. the Person of Concern 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)?
10. Does the Person of Concern have a history of trauma, including car accidents, falls, exposure to violence, abuse, etc.?
11. Has the Person of Concern been diagnosed with a DSM V diagnosis?
12. Is there a history of mental health disorders in the family?
13. Is there a history of drug or alcohol abuse in the family?

Notes

Series Eight Questions: Contextual Factors

Questions

1. Has the Person of Concern 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?
2. Have his/her parents just divorced or separated?
3. Is he/she the victim of child abuse and has the abuse been dormant but re-surfaced at this time?
4. Is he/she being initiated into a gang and is it voluntary or forced recruitment?

5. Has he/she recently had an argument or “fight” with a parent/caregiver or someone close to him/her?
6. Has he/she recently been charged with an offence or suspended or expelled from school?
7. Has he/she recently been either suspended from work with or without pay?
8. Has he/she recently been terminated from a job?
9. Has he/she recently been issued or served with a trespassing notice, restraining order, no contact order, etc?
10. Is the place where he/she has been suspended to likely to increase or decrease his/her level of risk?

Notes

Remember

If the increase (shift) in baseline is “too steep” the two leading hypotheses are:

A recent traumatic incident that has contextually increased vulnerability.

The person of concern is meeting the cognitive baseline of the “**puppet**”

Stage One Intervention Plan

STAGE ONE VTRA (Data Collection and Immediate Risk Reducing Interventions)				
		2 - 24 Hours	24 - 48 Hours	One Week
Risk Enhancer #1 (C or H):				
Intervention <i>Identify ST or LT</i>	ST			
	LT			
Professional/Other				
Buy-In				
Risk Enhancer #2 (C or H):				
Intervention <i>Identify ST or LT</i>	ST			
	LT			
Professional/Other				
Buy-In				
Risk Enhancer #3 (C or H):				
Intervention <i>Identify ST or LT</i>	ST			
	LT			
Professional/Other				
Buy-In				
Risk Enhancer #4 (C or H):				
Intervention <i>Identify ST or LT</i>	ST			
	LT			
Professional/Other				
Buy-In				
Notes				
<p>Terms of Reference</p> <p>Risk Enhancer “C”: Confirmed Risk Enhancer Intervention “ST”: Short Term Intervention Risk Enhancer “H”: Hypothesized Risk Enhancer Intervention “LT”: Long Term Intervention PBA’s - Plausible, Baseline, Attack Related Behaviours</p>				

Stage One VTRA Team Members

Site-Based

Position / Title	Team Member Name	Signature

Community Protocol Partners

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

Three Primary Hypotheses in VTRA
<p>Formulate an idea of what you think you will discover as you learn more about those involved in the incident:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is it a conscious or unconscious “Cry for Help”? 2. Conspiracy of two or more. Who else knows about it? Who else is involved? 3. Is there any evidence of fluidity? (Suicidal and/or homicidal behaviour)
Key VTRA Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guard against under reaction to indicators that someone is moving on a pathway to serious violence. • Avoid the uni-dimensional assessment.. the more perspectives and information about a Person of Concern, the clearer the understanding of his/her motivations. • Serious violence is an evolutionary process. No one just ‘snaps’. • The pathway to violence is not a straight line. • The quote that kills. “He’s a good kid with no history.” • Baseline – Is this typical behaviour? If not, can evolution be inferred? • Empty vessel – What is the child filling him/herself with? • Who else is concerned by the behaviour of the threat maker? Are there more involved? Puppet master? • Fluidity – If a Person of Concern is suicidal/homicidal how committed are they to the act? Are they primed? • Imitators vs. Innovators – As most are imitators, seek predictors based upon the circumstances. • Threat assessment trumps suspension.

Stage 2 VTRA Process

Done	Step One – Review Stage 1 Data Collection with Agency VTRA Lead	Notes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 VTRA Contact will be contacting them. • Who are the significant people for the Person of Concern and who should attend the Stage 2 meeting (family members, teachers, bus drivers, therapists, etc.)? 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For school bases assessments, school to notify the area Superintendent of the Stage 2 activation. • Advise to provide copies (if applicable) of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stage 1 Data Collection ○ Current ISP 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Psychological testing reports ● Compare calendars for meeting date. 	
Done	Step Two – VTRA Interagency Contact (Community VTRA Team)	Notes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contact RCMP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The RCMP “own” the bedroom dynamic and take the lead in decision making ○ Do not make the RCMP Contact your agent by requesting them to search the bedroom. ○ Discuss the bedroom dynamic and how to proceed with this case. ○ Any other factors to consider in addressing this case? ○ Compare calendars for meeting date. ● Contact Child & Family Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Based on initial information, are there any significant factors to consider in addressing this case? ○ Compare calendars for meeting date. ● Forward any documents; including level one data in advance of the meeting to be reviewed prior when possible. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensure security standards are in place for confidential information. 	
Done	Step Three – Stage 2 Meeting Details (Division VTRA Contact)	Notes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School Division – ● School Division – ● RCMP – ● CS – ● Administrator – ● Parent/Caregiver 	
	<p>Date – Time – Location –</p> <p>Book a meeting space and ensure that all are contacted and confirm their participation.</p>	
Done	Step Four – Contact Parent (Agency VTRA Lead)	Notes

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Confirm that the School Administrator has indicated that the parent would be receiving this phone call. ● Explain the VTRA process. ● Indicate the goal is to create an intervention plan to support the Person of Concern, family, and/or school. ● Discuss the multi-disciplinary assessment and participation of RCMP and CFS. ● Seek consent for participation of any other agency personnel involved with the Person of Concern. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Forward a consent form for their signature and request that it is returned asap to allow for contacting personnel. ● Discuss bedroom dynamic. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Will RCMP attend to discuss? ○ Will parent be checking on the honor system? If so, ask them to check <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bedroom ▪ Internet history ▪ Personal devices – texts, history, photos, etc. ▪ Private spaces (forts, etc.) ● Advise that this may feel like an onerous process but that it is done in the spirit of supporting the Person of Concern to become a healthier individual and ensure the school remains safe for both him/her and the Person of Concerns and staff. ● Confirm date, time, and location of meeting. ● Advise it is permitted to bring a support person if they wish. ● Speak to both parents and any step-parents. 	
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Done	Step Five – Stage 2 Risk Evaluation Meeting – Part One: Preparation (Community & School VTRA Teams)	Notes
	<p>If Needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● VTRA Team, School Based Personnel and any other agency personnel meet. ● What consent has been provided by the parents? ● What are the issues of concern? ● Are there any specific items that need to be questioned with the parents? ● Do we need further information from the Person of Concern? ● Complete the first section of the Stage 2 form regarding school dynamics. ● Possibly complete Series Four – Target Typology 	

Done	Step Six – Stage 2 Risk Evaluation Meeting – Part Two: Data Collection (Community & School VTRA Teams)	Notes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Invite the parents/caregivers to have them join the meeting if determined appropriate by the VTRA Team. ● Welcome and Introductions ● Prior to meeting start... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Circulate attendance sheet for signatures. ○ Declare Intent – The purpose of the meeting is to gain a deep understanding of the Person of Concern and the circumstances related to the incident to create a comprehensive intervention plan to support the Person of Concern, family, and/or school. ○ VTRA is a formal process that works best when we act informally with each other. An open conversation provides the best information and understanding. ○ Seek multiple perspectives on the Person of Concern, so many questions will be asked of both home and school. ● Collectively complete the Stage 2 VTRA Report Form (attached). 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Agency lead to advise parents who will be contacting them by when to discuss the intervention plan. 	
Done	Step Seven – Stage 2 Risk Evaluation Meeting - Part Three: Intervention (Community & School VTRA Teams)	Notes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Debrief the meeting. ● Assess the Risk Factors. ● Determine level of risk. ● Collectively complete intervention plan. 	
Done	Step Eight – Intervention Plan Follow-Up (Division VTRA & School VTRA Contacts)	Notes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The role of the Agency VTRA Lead is to facilitate any interagency supports and assist the Agency's VTRA Contact's. ● The role of the School VTRA Contact is to be the point of contact for the family regarding 	

	<p>implementation of the supports and to monitor that the interventions are put in place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Division VTRA Contact arranges the meeting at the appropriate locations (usually the school).	
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STAGE 2 – VIOLENCE/THREAT RISK ASSESSMENT (VTRA) REPORT FORM

Person of Concern: _____

School: _____

Birthdate: _____ ASN: _____ Grade: _____ Age: _____

Parents Names: _____ Date of Incident: _____

Stage 1 VTRA Team Members: _____

Determination of Risk: _____

STAGE TWO VTRA (Specialized Risk Evaluation)				
		Two Weeks	Three Weeks	One Month
Risk Enhancer #1 (C or H):				
Intervention <i>Identify ST or LT</i>	S			
	T			
	LT			
Professional/Other				
Buy-In				
Risk Enhancer #2 (C or H):				
Intervention <i>Identify ST or LT</i>	S			
	T			
	LT			
Professional/Other				
Buy-In				
Risk Enhancer #3 (C or H):				
Intervention <i>Identify ST or LT</i>	S			
	T			
	LT			
Professional/Other				
Buy-In				
Risk Enhancer #4 (C or H):				
Intervention <i>Identify ST or LT</i>	S			
	T			
	LT			
Professional/Other				
Buy-In				

Notes
<p>Terms of Reference</p> <p>Risk Enhancer “C”: Confirmed Risk Enhancer Intervention “ST”: Short Term Intervention Risk Enhancer “H”: Hypothesized Risk Enhancer Intervention “LT”: Long Term Intervention PBA’s - Plausible, Baseline, Attack Related Behaviours</p>

Stage Two VTRA Team Members	Contact Person	Consent ✓

Determination of Risk

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

- To what extent does the Person of Concern pose a threat to school/Person of Concern safety?
 - Does the Person of Concern pose a threat to himself/herself or someone outside the school (eg. family)?
- The Stage 1 VTRA Assessment is an overall assessment of current level of risk and is a precursor (if necessary) to a more comprehensive Stage 2 Risk Evaluation.

Low Level of Concern

Risk to the target(s), Person of Concerns, staff, and school safety is minimal.

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

Medium Level of Concern

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

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

High Level of Concern

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

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

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

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

VTRA INTERVENTION PLANNING

VTRA Intervention Plan					
STAGE ONE <input type="checkbox"/>			STAGE TWO <input type="checkbox"/>		
Risk Enhancers C- Confirmed H- Hypothesized		Interventions- Identify either ST - Short Term LT- Long Term	ST	Buy-In	Person, Professional, Agency Responsible
			LT		
1)					
2)					
3)					
4)					
5)					
6)					
7)					
8)					
9)					

Appendix D

Stage Three: VTRA Intervention Planning

VTRA Intervention Plan					
STAGE ONE <input type="checkbox"/>			STAGE TWO <input type="checkbox"/>		
Risk Enhancers C- Confirmed H- Hypothesized	Interventions- Identify either ST - Short Term LT- Long Term	S	Buy-In	Person, Professional, Agency Responsible	
		T			
1)					
2)					
3)					
4)					
5)					
6)					
7)					

Intervention Plan: Stage One Stage Two

Initial Plan & Review / Follow-up

		First Review Date:	Second Review Date: (If Necessary)	Third Review Date: (If Necessary)
Risk Enhancer #1 (C or H):				
Intervention <i>Identify ST or LT</i>	S			
	T			
	LT			
Professional/Other				
Buy-In				
Risk Enhancer #2 (C or H):				
Intervention <i>Identify ST or LT</i>	S			
	T			
	LT			
Professional/Other				
Buy-In				
Risk Enhancer #3 (C or H):				
Intervention <i>Identify ST or LT</i>	S			
	T			
	LT			
Professional/Other				
Buy-In				
Risk Enhancer #4 (C or H):				
Intervention <i>Identify ST or LT</i>	S			
	T			
	LT			
Professional/Other				
Buy-In				
Notes				
Terms of Reference				
Risk Enhancer "C": Confirmed Risk Enhancer				

Intervention “ST”: Short Term Intervention
Risk Enhancer “H”: Hypothesized Risk Enhancer
Intervention “LT”: Long Term Intervention
PBA’s - Plausible, Baseline, Attack Related Behaviours

Terms of Reference

Risk Enhancer “C”: Confirmed Risk Enhancer
Intervention “ST”: Short Term Intervention
Risk Enhancer “H”: Hypothesized Risk Enhancer
Intervention “LT”: Long Term Intervention
PBA’s - Plausible, Baseline, Attack Related Behaviours

Appendix E: Statement of Fair notice

The Partners

Education partners are committed to creating and maintaining school environments in which Person of Concerns, staff, parents and others feel safe. Evergreen Catholic Separate Regional Division, Living Waters Catholic School Division, Grande Yellowhead Public School Division and Yellowhead Koinonia Christian School have taken a lead role as there is a direct application to the health and safety of the school environment.

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

Community agency partners provide services that are regularly included as part of the intervention plan. The Town of Edson, Town of Hinton, Yellowhead County, The Edson Friendship Centre as well as other local agencies advise on many facets for the VTRA protocol to ensure it is tailored to the West Yellowhead community.

The Canadian Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response has completed extensive research in youth and school violence. Kevin Cameron, CEO of NACTATR, has trained local partner 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, Person of Concerns need to believe that they will be believed when they confide; their identity will be kept confidential; their information will be acted on 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 school staff, psychologist, 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 Person of Concern Threat Assessment is to:

- ensure the safety of Person of Concerns, 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 Person of Concern 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 Person of Concern in developing and using positive strategies;
- promote 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 Person of Concern Threat Assessment?

All threat making behaviour by a Person of Concern(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 Person of Concerns, 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 Person of Concerns as required and as appropriate.

Can I refuse ... ?

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

Appendix G: Signatories to the Protocol

December 2019

Manager
Addictions and Mental Health Services
North Zone - West

Signature

Kevin Cameron
Executive Director
North American Center for Threat Assessment
and Trauma Response

Signature

Kristie Gomuwka
Executive Director
Edson Friendship Centre

Signature

Ron McKay
Board Chair
Evergreen Catholic Separate School Division No. 2

Signature

Brenda Rosadiuk
Board Chair
Grande Yellowhead Public School Division No. 77

Signature

Manager
North Central Alberta Children's Services

Signature

Lisa Higgerty
Co-Executive Director
Hinton Friendship Centre Society

Signature

Board Chair
Living Waters Catholic School Division No. 42

Signature

Staff Sergeant, Chris Murphy
Royal Canadian Mounted Police

Signature

Kevin Zahara
Mayor
Town of Edson

Signature

Marcel Michael's
Mayor
Town of Hinton

Signature

Mayor
Yellowhead County

Signature

Board Member
Yellowhead Koinonia Christian School

Signature

Richard Ireland
Mayor
Municipality of Jasper

Signature

