



Leduc and Area

Violence Threat Risk Assessment Community Protocol

Schools. Communities. Parents. Protective Services.

Working Together To Protect Our Children and Keep Our Community Safe

2022

VTRA

PROTOCOL PARTNERS

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

Evergreen Catholic Separate School Division

St. Thomas Aquinas Roman Catholic School Division

Black Gold School Division

Royal Canadian Mounted Police

Children's Services

Alberta Health Services Children, Youth and Family Addictions and Mental Health

City of Beaumont

Town of Calmar

Town of Devon

City of Leduc

Leduc County

Town of Thorsby

Village of Warburg

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

Acknowledgements

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SPECIAL THANKS TO:

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INTRODUCTION

This document has been prepared as a support to:

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

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

Vision

All partners are accountable to the protocol and have a shared obligation to actively take steps to prevent or respond to threats of violence in the community.

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

Mission

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

Guiding Principles

- Prevention of violence is a community responsibility.
- Open and collaborative community partnerships help to ensure that there is access to 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- and community-based risk reduction, and
 - child/youth support planning.
- Proactive strategies to recognize early warning signs and initiate/reinforce violence reduction in schools and the community are encouraged and supported.

KEY INFORMATION ABOUT VIOLENCE THREAT RISK ASSESSMENT [VTRA]

Responding to Threat-Making Behaviour

The *Leduc and Area Community Threat Risk Assessment and Intervention Protocol* is based upon the North American Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response (NACTATR) model of Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA). VTRA follows a three step process:

- **Stage 1: Threat Assessment** - Immediate risk reducing intervention, data collection, and initial assessment, and planning
- **Stage 2: Risk Assessment** - Intervention by a multidisciplinary team and planning.
- **Stage 3: Longer Term Intervention Planning** - Intervention plan review, focused long term planning and implementation.

The work of 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 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.

VTRA Response

VTRA response is appropriate when

- baseline behaviour has changed,
- the threat is plausible, and
- there is evidence of attack related behaviour

Formal categories of behaviour that trigger VTRA activation 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
- Chronic, pervasive, targeted bullying and/or harassment
- Gang related intimidation and violence
- Hate incidents motivated by factors including, but not limited to; race, culture, religion, and/or sexual or gender diversity
- Special consideration for suicide.

VTRA Team Membership

- The **Stage 1 Site Specific VTRA Team** will be made up of:
 - Agency Administrator (e.g., school principal, clinic manager, site director)
 - RCMP
 - Additional Members may support the VTRA Stage 1 work at the discretion of an administrator (e.g. Family School Liaison Worker, bus driver, staff witnesses, etc.).
- The **Stage 2 Community VTRA Team** will be made up of:
 - RCMP VTRA Contact
 - School Division VTRA Contact
 - Children's Services VTRA Contact
 - Addiction and Mental Health VTRA Contact
 - Additional Community VTRA Members may be added, if available, at the discretion of the VTRA Team (e.g., Family and Community Support Services, Community Corrections, etc.).

Other Considerations

1. Anonymous Threats

- *Anonymous threats are typically threats to commit a violent act against an individual(s), specific group, or site (i.e. clinic, school). They may be found written on bathroom walls or stalls, spray painted on the side of a building, posted on the internet, letters left in a conspicuous place (i.e. staffroom table, desk) etc.*
- *Although anonymous threats may be credible in the world of global terrorism, in the field of school and workplace VTRA, the lack of ownership (authorship) of the threat generally denotes a lack of commitment. Never-the-less there are steps that should be followed to:*
 - *Assess the anonymous threat.*
 - *Attempt to identify the person of concern.*
 - *Avoid or minimize the crisis/trauma response.*

2. Worrisome Behaviours

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

- Writing stories, journal entries, blog posts
- Social media messaging
- Drawing pictures
- Making vague threatening statements
- Unusual interest in fire
- Significant change in anti-social behaviours (a change in baseline)

In keeping with the zero tolerance for not responding to threat related behaviour, all worrisome behaviours will be communicated to the Principal for consultation. In these cases, the VTRA Team is not formally activated. The School VTRA Team Members determine whether or not some formal action/assessment should occur, for example informally contacting the RCMP VTRA Contact. If further

data is obtained that suggests the young person has been violent, uttered threats, or is in possession of a weapon, then the School VTRA Team is activated to deal with the new data.

3. VTRA REMINDERS:

"VTRA Overrides Suspension" - In most cases unless the person of concern already poses an imminent or obvious safety concern (i.e. currently brandishing a weapon), Stage One VTRA should occur before suspension is even considered. Poorly timed disciplinary action can be high risk as this period is often viewed by the person of concern as the "last straw". It is in this stage that many people of interest decide to finalize a plan to terrorize their school or carry out a plan to attack a specific target. This caution is relevant to both homicidal and suicidal ideation. Although the termination or suspension does not "cause" the violence to occur it can create the necessary "context" for the high risk individual, who is already struggling with suicidal and/or homicidal ideation, to take the final step from planning to action.

"VTRA is not a Disciplinary Measure" - In the past there have been VTRA trained professionals who have failed to activate the Stage One Protocol for legitimate cases and instead have chosen to issue counter threats to the person of concern that if they engage in the threat making behaviour again then "we will do a threat assessment on you". This is contrary to the purpose of the VTRA process and a dangerous unidimensional practice. By doing it the professional (whether they intended to or not) has in essence done a VTRA on their own and determined that the threat maker does not pose a risk. Therefore, they also bear the weight alone should harm occur.

4. Criminal Charges (if applicable)

The RCMP will determine if there are any potential charges independent of the VTRA process. The VTRA Team RCMP officer may still continue to participate as an active member of the VTRA Team while the investigation takes place. An RCMP investigation does not prevent the VTRA from continuing. Good communication between the RCMP and VTRA Team is important so as not to compromise an investigation/prosecution or place unnecessary strain on a victim. It is understood that collaboration with the RCMP and VTRA Team members will be ongoing.

5. Children under 12 years of age

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 children/youth engage in violent or threat related behaviour, developmental and exceptionality issues need to be taken into consideration. Generally speaking, most threat related behaviour exhibited by elementary aged children/youth would fall into the category of "worrisome behaviours". However, just because a child/youth is elementary age, does not mean that they cannot pose a risk.

6. Children/Youth with Special Needs

The multidisciplinary VTRA protocol will not be activated when children/youth with special needs/disabilities 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 manifest themselves then the VTRA Team will not be called upon to conduct an assessment. For instance, some individuals diagnosed along the Autism Spectrum or Fetal Alcohol Spectrum may have histories of verbal threatening when they are frustrated and make statements such as 'I'm going to take a knife and kill you' as part of their typical baseline behaviour. This would not result in activation of the VTRA Team. However, if the child/youth with special needs/disabilities moves beyond their typical baseline and for the first time is caught with a knife in their possession or has threatened a target with a knife in their hand, then the VTRA team would be activated to assist in determining why there is an increase in baseline behaviour and whether they pose a risk to self or others.

Once the VTRA Team is activated, the process of data collection and assessment is not modified other than to ensure appropriate interviewing strategies with the child/youth with special needs. Site-specific staff members responsible for program planning and service delivery to individuals with special needs/disabilities will always be consultants to the VTRA Team in these cases.

Good case management for children/youth with special needs/disabilities means that the program leads should already know more about these individuals than others as proper program planning requires comprehensive assessment in the first place. This foundational knowledge about the individual means that any significant shift in baseline that meets the criteria for the VTRA Protocol activation is easily identified. The purpose of the team would be to assist in determining why there is an increase in baseline behaviour and whether intervention planning is required.

There are times when the child/youth with special needs/disabilities 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 but information may emerge that suggests we consider doing a 'consensual' Stage 2 risk evaluation to see what is contributing to the change.

A note of caution: sometimes school and community members may under react to a serious threat posed by a child/youth with special needs/disabilities. This occurs when they assume that the individual's behaviours are caused by or as a result of their diagnosis alone. It is important to remember that an individual with special needs/disabilities can move along a pathway to 'justification' as well. The same dynamics and variables that can increase the risk of violence in the non-clinical population of society can also be factors in contributing to the violence potential of the individual with special needs/disabilities independent of their diagnoses.

7. Parent / Caregiver Roles in VTRA

Parent/Caregiver Notification - Person(s) of Concern - Parent(s) or caregiver(s) are an essential part of the assessment process as they are necessary sources of insight and data regarding the "bedroom dynamic", "an increase or shift in baseline", and other contextual factors that may be either "risk reducing or risk-enhancing". As such, notification of parent(s) or caregiver(s) is meant to activate a collaborative process between home and the VTRA team to more fully assess the young person of concern and collaboratively plan for appropriate intervention when necessary.

Therefore, parent(s) or caregiver(s) of a young person under the age of 18, or who is still under guardianship of an adult, should be notified at the "earliest opportunity". Specifically, notification should occur after the VTRA team has collected enough initial data to confirm that a Stage One VTRA should be activated. Depending on the initial level of risk or evolving dynamics or a particular case parent/caregiver notification may be delayed. Common reasons include:

- a. Child protection issues that emerge early on in the data collection process. In these situations that part of the case will be the domain of Child Protection.
- b. Parent/Caregiver poses a potential risk of violence to the Site where the VTRA was activated. In these situations, the police will take lead of notification
- c. Where multiple young people of concern (and others) are believed to be part of a conspiracy of two or more and therefore the timing (correlation) of notifying multiple parents/caregivers must be done strategically so as not to escalate a complex peer dynamic.

Parent/Caregiver Notification - Target(s) - As the primary purpose of the Community VTRA Protocol is violence prevention, identifying, protecting and supporting the target(s) of the threat is a priority as well. Therefore, parent(s) or caregiver(s) of a young person under the age of 18, or who are still under the guardianship of an adult, should be notified at the earliest opportunity.

Often the target and his/her parent(s) or caregiver(s) are fearful or traumatized by the situation therefore notification should be done with skill, tact and planning. A plan should be made for possible emotional supports the family may need. As such, if the threat is "clear, direct and plausible" or the VTRA team feels more violence may be imminent (if the case is unfolding during school hours and the target is present at school), notification will occur after the target is secured/protected from potential harm. If the initial threat is not "clear, direct and plausible", the VTRA team will continue to collect data to determine the level of risk before the parent(s) or caregiver (s) are notified: this is to prevent unnecessarily traumatizing individuals when no risk is present.

Taking time to do a proper initial assessment can prevent some of the extreme overreactions that have occurred in several low risk cases across this country. There are also times when a case may first appear as high-risk but quickly prove to be a minor non-threat related situation.

However, there are also cases where notification will be delayed, such as:

- a. Long standing dynamics between two conflicting families that are likely to result in further threats and/or violence once notification occurs. These situations would be seen as "threat management" cases
- b. The parent/caregiver is highly likely to escalate the situation by overreacting before the VTRA Team can conduct all necessary initial interviews and take protective steps for the targets(s)

8. Supporting the Targeted or Victimized Child/Youth or Staff Member

The VTRA Team 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 children/youth or the broader community, the circumstances will dictate how far reaching the intervention may be. The VTRA Team should determine if crisis counselling or a trauma support team is needed to re-establish calm.

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

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

If the language of the threat is **low risk** but several children/youth, staff, and others are aware of the incident and it appears to be elevating the anxiety of some in the school, then all children/youth, 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.

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 child/youth 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 children/youth 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 children/youth and staff members outside of the target group are aware, then all children/youth, staff and parents should be notified in general terms that an incident is under investigation and the school is following the lead of the RCMP. Assure everyone that all children/youth and staff are safe and that the situation is being managed collaboratively as part of the multi-disciplinary VTRA protocol. Again, schools/agencies should follow their appropriate communication procedures.

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

COMMUNICATIONS

Safe communities are communities that promote open communication in a culture of information sharing and reporting of concerns. Throughout the entire community, agency administrators, staff, support staff, children/youth and parents must have the support to openly voice concerns about safety.

Responsible Reporting

All agency staff and children/youth must be advised that any person in a community having knowledge of high-risk child/youth behaviour or having reasonable grounds to believe there is potential for high-risk or violent behaviour should promptly report the information to RCMP or to a site administrator. Actively teach children/youth that seeking adult support for worrisome behaviour is not "ratting or snitching" but rather a social responsibility for the well-being of all. All agencies need to actively counteract the "code of silence".

Fair Notice

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

Partners will make available Fair Notice to parents of children/youth annually. See *Appendix: Fair Notice Parent Brochure*. It is recommended that, if possible, information about the Leduc and Area Community Violence Threat Risk Assessment and Intervention Protocol be posted on their web site. It is the responsibility of each agency to communicate fair notice as appropriate for their site.

Communicating with Parents

Information is 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 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 agency 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, 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 children/youth 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.

Communicating with Community Partners

Communication within each organization will be the responsibility of that *Leduc and Area Community Violence Threat Risk Assessment and Intervention Protocol* partner. An advisory committee will meet at least twice annually to review VTRA practices, organize training from 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 parents/guardians and children/youth will be the responsibility of the VTRA Team in consultation with protocol partners.

CONSENT AND INFORMATION SHARING

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

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

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

LEDUC AND AREA VTRA PROTOCOL ANNUAL TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Management and Meetings

The process and the records of the Leduc and Area VTRA team are coordinated by the LA RCSD Regional Manager. Within Leduc and Area, we have a VTRA Community Stakeholders Team and a VTRA Trainers' Team

- VTRA Community Stakeholders' Meetings
 - Annual Meeting
 - Purpose report on VTRA Community outcomes and plans
 - Frequency: Once per year, usually in the spring
 - Community Stakeholder meetings
 - Frequency: 4 or 6 times per year on average
 - Review trends and needs in the communities
- VTRA Trainers' Meetings
 - Frequency: 4 or 6 times per year on average to plan and offer training and
 - Purpose: Review implementation of the VTRA Process.

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 violence/ threat risk assessment. The need for training will be reviewed annually and provided as needed. Partners acknowledge their commitment to supporting the training of employees in each of their respective agencies.

Building Capacity

VTRA training will be offered by our VTRA Trainers or the NACTATR centre on an ongoing basis. This could include:

- Level One Training (two days)
- Level Two Training (two days)
- Level Three Training (two days)
- VTRA Refreshers
- Community VTRA Overview presentations
- Support for the Training of Level 1 Trainers

HELPFUL LINKS

211 Resource Lists

<https://edmonton.cmha.ca/211-resource-lists/>

Addiction & Mental Health Edmonton Zone Index to Services

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/amh/Page14063.aspx>

The Do's and Don'ts of Calling 911

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

City of Leduc Services

<https://www.leduc.ca/fcss>

Leduc County FCSS

<https://www.leduc-county.com/en/living-here/community-and-family-support.aspx?-mid-=13209>

Sharing for Human Service Providers in the Alberta Public Sector

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

List of Chat Acronyms and Text Message Shorthand

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

Legislation

Alberta Human Rights Act

<http://www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca/about/legislation.asp>

Children First Act

<https://open.alberta.ca/publications/c12p5>

Criminal Code of Canada

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

Education Legislation

<https://www.alberta.ca/K-12-education-legislation-and-regulations.aspx>

Health Information Act

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

Privacy Act

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

Youth Justice Act

<https://open.alberta.ca/publications/y01>

North American Center for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response

<https://www.nactatr.com/>

Appendix A: Definitions

NACTATR	North American Center for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response
CS	Children's Services
Community VTRA Response (Stage 2)	The inter-agency process of determining the level of risk for threatening or violent behaviour. At this stage a multi-disciplinary intervention plan is also created.
Empty Vessel	The relationship between the child/youth of concern and his/her connection to healthy adult supports and other social/cultural aspects of his/her personality.
FCSS	Family and Community Services
Fluidity	The flow between suicidal thoughts and/or actions and homicidal thoughts and/or actions.
FSCD	Family Supports for Children with Disabilities. This is a department of Child & Family Services.
Genogram	A diagram expressing the relationships within a family. Behaviours that express a plausible intent to do harm or act out
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.
Site Based VTRA Response (Stage 1)	Ensuring immediate risk reduction, collection of data, and initial assessment
Longer-Term VTRA Intervention (Stage 3)	Ensure that a young person is provided services by a mental health professional in a clinical setting.
Threat	Any expression of intent to do harm or act out violently against someone or something. Threats may be spoken, written, drawn, posted online or made by gesture. Threats may be direct, indirect, conditional or veiled.
Threat Assessment	The process of determining if a threat maker actually poses a risk to the target, they have threatened
Worrisome Behaviour	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

Fair Notice



Leduc and Area Community Violence Threat Risk Assessment and Intervention Protocol



Fair Notice and Practice

*Schools. Communities. Parents.
Protective Services.
Working Together to
Protect Our Children
and
Keep Our Community Safe*

THE PARTNERS

VTRA partners are committed to creating and maintaining safe environments in which children, youth, staff, parents and others feel safe. Our VTRA Participants include Black Gold School Division, Evergreen Catholic Separate School Division, and St. Thomas Aquinas Roman Catholic School Division, Children's Services, Alberta Health Services, and RCMP. These partners collaborate in multidisciplinary assessment when determining the level of risk posed. Community Agency partners provide services that are regularly included as part of the intervention plans. Leduc County, City of Leduc, City of Beaumont, Town of Calmar, Town of Devon, Town of Thorsby and Village of Warburg support this coordinated response to any violence or threats of violence.

The North American Center for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response has completed extensive research in youth and school violence. Kevin Cameron, Executive Director of NACTATR, has trained partner local personnel in the use of the protocol.

Duty to Report

There is zero tolerance for not responding. Prevention of youth violence is a community responsibility and it is everybody's duty to report. Under-reaction is an 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, children and youth need to believe that they will be believed when they confide; their identity will be kept confidential; their information will be acted upon promptly; and their concern will be investigated thoroughly.

WHO IS ON A THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM?

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

WHAT IS THE MAIN PURPOSE OF A THREAT ASSESSMENT?

The purpose of a Threat Assessment is to:

- To ensure the safety of children, youth, 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 threat-maker 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 child or youth in developing and using positive strategies;
- Promotes the emotional and physical safety of all;
- Ensure all agency partners are working together with a common understanding and protocol.

WHAT HAPPENS IN A THREAT ASSESSMENT?

All threat making behaviour shall be reported to the Agency Administrator who will activate the protocol for the initial response. Once the team has been activated, data is reviewed, and interviews may be held with the threat maker(s), peers, 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 the person of concern, 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 will continue in order to ensure a safe and caring learning environment.

Appendix C:

Signatories to the Protocol Signing Ceremony



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

K. Cameron
Signature



Natasha McBride
Chairperson, Board of Trustees Evergreen
Catholic Separate School Division

N. McBride
Signature



Devonna Klaassen
Chairperson, Board of Trustees
Black Gold School Division

D. Klaassen
Signature



Henry Effen
Chairperson, Board of Trustees
St. Thomas Aquinas Roman Catholic
Schools

H. Effen
Signature



Tracy Palmquist, Director Children, Youth
and Families Addiction and Mental Health
Alberta Health Services
Government of Alberta

T. Palmquist
Signature



Heather Cluett
Regional Director,
Edmonton Region
Child Services
Government of Alberta

H. Cluett
Signature

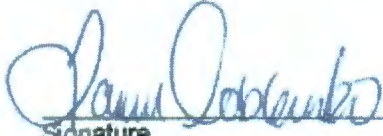


Royal Canadian Mounted Police
Darcy Fleury
Chief Superintendent
Central Alberta District

D. Fleury
Signature



Tanni Doblanko
Mayor
Leduc County


Signature




Bill Daneluik
Mayor
City of Beaumont


Signature



Sean Carnahan
Mayor
Town of Calmar


Signature

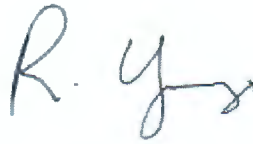


Jeff Craddock
Mayor
Town of Devon


Signature

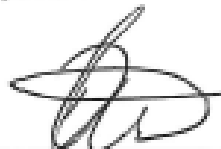


Bob Young
Mayor
City of Leduc


Signature



Darryl Hostyn
Mayor
Town of Thorsby


Signature



Dwayne Mayr
Mayor
Village of Warburg


Signature