



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE 311-1 SECTION: STUDENTS	
Adopted/Original Date of Issue	March 2019
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Last Reviewed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revised	March 2019
Next Review Date	March 2024
Contact	Mental Health Lead

Violent Threat Risk Assessment

The Renfrew County District School Board is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of students to the greatest extent possible. The Director, system administrators and school principals are committed to following the process for responding to threat related behavior, as outlined in the Renfrew County Threat Assessment Protocol. View the protocol.

This administrative procedure has been developed to support administrators in adhering to the Renfrew County Community Threat Assessment Protocol.

1. Definitions

Individual

Individual refers to all children, youth and adults associated with our communities and schools.

In-School Threat Assessment Team

A team of trained school based professionals (e.g. principals, vice principals, ACW) trained to assess a threat to individual safety by another individual or group of individuals. District staff IE. School Supervisor and Educational Services Administration will be consulted and will participate in the school based risk/ threat assessment process.

Baseline

A reference point for identifiable and known behavior that allows for comparison with subsequent behavior.

Community Threat Assessment Team (C-TAT)

When a school based team has assessed that an individual(s) poses a threat to individual/staff safety the principal will call the School Supervisor who will then contact the Board Superintendent of Safe Schools to request that the Threat Assessment Team be activated. In instances when an individual of concern is identified by a Community Partner, the lead may activate a C-TAT request.

Worrisome Behaviour

Defined as those behaviours that cause concern and may indicate that an individual is moving toward a greater risk of violent behaviour. Worrisome behaviours include but are not limited to: drawing pictures that contain violence, stories/journal writings that contain violence, making vague/generalized statements about violence towards others that do not constitute a threat. Worrisome behaviours may be an early

warning sign of the development of more serious high risk behaviours. All worrisome behaviours should be addressed. These situations may involve activation of the In-School TAT and consultation with Educational Services.

High Risk Behaviours

Defined as behaviours that express intent to do harm or act out violently against someone or something. High risk behaviours include but are not limited to: interest in violent content, unusual interest in fire/fire setting, escalation of physical aggression, significant change in anti social behaviour, unusual interest in and/or possession of weapon/replica of a weapon, bomb threat, internet threat to kill and/or injury to self and/or others. The In-School TAT should be activated and after consultation with the school supervisor and Supervisor of Safe Schools may lead to the activation of the C-TAT. Note: Do not be deceived when traditional risk behaviours do not exist. There is no profile or checklist for the high risk individual.

Some individuals who actually pose a threat display very few traits of the traditional high risk individual. Identify when homicidal and suicidal domains exist together. This is critical to the development of a response to the incident, including the creation of an individual support plan. The School TAT may be activated by the school principal. When this occurs, the school principal will notify the school superintendent and the Superintendent of Safe Schools. The C-TAT may be activated by the superintendent (or Community Partner lead if no school dynamic precipitates the incident) as a result of the School TAT intervention plan.

Threat Making Behaviours

Defined as any action that an individual, who in any manner knowingly utters, conveys, or causes any person to receive a threat. Threats may be spoken, written, drawn, posted on the internet (social network, Facebook) or made by gesture only. Threats may be direct, indirect, conditional or veiled.

Immediate Threat

In the case of immediate threat, staff will CALL 911 and then contact the school administration/designate. The school will contact the Superintendent of Safe Schools who will then activate the C-TAT.

Lockdown – Limited Access Mode

There are immediate risk situations where the threat maker has already left school property to possibly obtain the means to carry out an attack at school where the school may need to go into a peripheral lockdown or limited access mode. In these circumstances the case-at-hand may be deemed a “Threat/Risk Management (rather than “assessment”) Case until otherwise determined by the VTRA members.

Threat Assessment

Is the process of determining if a threat maker (someone who utters, writes, emails etc. a threat to kill a target or targets) actually poses a risk to the target they have threatened. Risk Assessment Is the process of determining if an individual of concern may pose a risk to some unknown target or targets at some unknown period in time.

2. Background

The District recognizes that community partnerships are essential for promoting a safe, inclusive, and accepting environment that creates a safe and positive school climate. Threats to safety must be responded to promptly and follow the process outlined in the protocol.

The District School Boards in Renfrew County, Police Services and their Community Partners are committed to making our schools and communities safe. All partners will undertake to follow the protocol. The partners agree to work together for the common goals of reducing violence, managing threats of violence, and promoting individual, school and community safety. We will do so by proactively sharing information, advice, and support. As partners, we will work together for the benefit of individuals and their parents/guardians by:

- building working relationships based on mutual respect and trust
- working in ways that promote safe, caring and restorative school environments and practices
- involving individuals and their families in planning for services and supports
- recognizing that each individual has unique strengths and needs that should be considered when developing an appropriate service plan
- realizing that working together successfully is a process of learning, listening, and understanding one another
- being patient, trusting and working together to help individuals become happy, healthy, active, involved, and caring members of the community.
- participating in Threat-Risk Assessment Team meetings
- designating a trained lead contact person and by advising community partners of who the lead is, their designate and any changes to the lead.

The overriding goal is risk reduction and violence prevention to promote the safety of individuals, parents/guardians, school staff, and community members. The protocol is designed to facilitate communication so that when the Community Threat Assessment Team (C-TAT) is activated, appropriate Community Partners and District School Boards may communicate relevant individuals' information. As part of the protocol design, District School Boards and Community Partners will commit to:

- ongoing participation in a minimum of two Advisory Meetings per year in the first two years of the protocol
- commitment to staff development in threat assessment training
- program review
- participation in C-TAT meetings
- designating a lead contact who has been trained

3. Key Approaches

All partners will share relevant information to avert or minimize imminent risk of violence that affects the health and safety of any person.

An investigative mind-set is central to successful application of the threat/risk assessment process. Threat assessment requires thoughtful probing, viewing information with professional objectivity, and paying attention to key points about pre-attack behaviours. Personnel who carry out Threat/Risk assessment strive to be both accurate and fair.

Threat Assessment training will be provided to as many school personnel and community partner staff as possible. The Steering Committee, made up of community partners, police and school boards, will take the lead in organizing and providing the training.

The Community Threat Assessment Protocol will be reviewed by the Community Threat Assessment Protocol Advisory Group a minimum of two times per year in the first two years of the protocol, and once a year following that. This group will be made up of designates from Community Partners and District School Boards.

The District will be the lead agency in application of the protocol. The District School Boards' Superintendents of Safe Schools or designates, will maintain an up-to-date contact list of the Community Threat Assessment Protocol partners, and will distribute a copy of the list to all Community Partners. The Superintendents also will designate a lead contact for July and August of each year, and will notify the Community Partners of the names and contact information.

4. Unit Categorization of Risk

Low Level of Concern: Risk to target/s, individual/s, staff, and school safety is minimal. "Low" categorization of risk does not imply "no risk", but indicates the individual is at little risk for violence, and monitoring of the matter may be appropriate. Implement the Intervention Plan (Most individuals can be managed with interventions).

- Threat is vague and indirect
- Information contained within the threat is inconsistent, implausible or lacks detail, threat lacks realism
- Available information suggest that the person is unlikely to carry out the treat or become violent
- Typical baseline behaviour

Medium Level of Concern: The threat could be carried out, although it may not appear entirely realistic. Violent action is possible. "Moderate" categorization of risk indicates the individual is at an elevated risk for violence, and those measures currently in place or further measures, including monitoring, are required in an effort to manage the individual's future risk.

- 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 (i.e. possible place and time).
- No clear indication that the individual of concern has taken preparatory steps (i.e. weapon seeking), although there may be an ambiguous or inconclusive references point to that possibility. There may be a specific statement seeking to convey that the threat is not empty "I'm Serious"
- Moderate or lingering concerns about the individual's potential to act violently
- Increase in baseline behaviour. High Level of Concern: The threat or situation of concern appears to pose an imminent and serious danger to the safety of others.

"High" categorization of risk indicates the individual is at high or imminent risk for violence, and immediate intervention is required to prevent an act of violence from occurring.

- Threat is specific and plausible. There is an identified target. Individual has the capacity to act on the threat.
- Information suggests concrete steps have been taken toward acting on threat. For example, information indicates that the individual has acquired or practiced with a weapon or has had a victim under surveillance.
- Information suggests strong concern about the individual's potential to act violently.
- Significant increase in baseline behaviour. Violence is a continuing process of thoughts and behaviours that is dependent on the interaction between a person who is inclined to violence; a stimulus that causes the violence; and a setting that allows for violence or does nothing to prevent a violent act from occurring. Violence is dynamic and multidimensional. It is a process that is developed over time.

5. Procedure

When an individual engages in behaviours or makes threatening comments or gestures that may result in serious injury to self and/or others, the School Threat Assessment Team (School TAT) and Community Threat Assessment Team (C-TAT) will respond in the manner identified in: see Appendix A — Responding to Threat Making Behaviour: A Staff Guide.

Immediate Risk Situations

These situations include a real or perceived threat which poses a risk to public safety. When immediate risk is identified, the school lockdown plan must be activated immediately, and 911 called. In these cases immediate police intervention and protection of students and staff is the immediate response – NOT Stage 1 VTRA. As these situations are often over within minutes it is critical that all schools have a school lockdown plan that everyone understands, is practiced regularly, and knows what to do if such an event were to occur. A solid lockdown plan in itself may serve as a deterrent to an individual who may be contemplating an act of targeted violence in a school setting. Note: VTRA will NOT undertake a formal Threat/Risk Assessment until the situation has been stabilized

The Violence Threat/Risk Assessment (VTRA) follows a three-step process. The three stages of the VTRA combines all appropriate threat assessment concepts and risk assessment factors. Note: Stage 2 and Stage 3 may be simultaneous.

Stage 1

Data collection and immediate risk reducing interventions. The initial data collection is often accomplished in one to two hours. It focuses on gathering case specific data using the Community Threat Assessment Stage 1 Report Form (Appendix D). Automatic activation of stage 1 for:

- Serious violence or violence with intent to harm or kill
- Verbal/written threats to kill self or others (clear, direct and plausible)
- Internet website or social media threats to kill self or 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

Stage 2

Comprehensive Risk Evaluation -Multidisciplinary risk evaluation. This second stage is focused on further data collection beyond the initial data set obtained by the Stage I Team and as such the Stage

- Members are charged (in collaboration with the Stage I Team) with the formal risk assessment and evaluation which may include the use of tests and measures.

Stage 3

Comprehensive multidisciplinary interventions. This stage requires reconvening all the Stage I and/or II team members who are involved in the case at hand for the “development and implementation of a comprehensive multidisciplinary intervention” and to pre-determine a follow-up date for case review. The agency that will take the lead at this point is the one that is the most appropriate at the time.

School principal or designate (as determined by Superintendent of Safe Schools) to:

- discuss with school threat assessment team leader.
- complete Series 1-5 of the Community Threat Assessment Report Form within hours.
- call and coordinate the school threat assessment team, and contact the school superintendent to discuss possible activation and coordinate the C-TAT after an individual has been determined to pose a medium or high level of concern to other individuals or staff.
- follow up and coordinate intervention/management plans developed by the team, and forward the school threat assessment team documentation and intervention/management plan to the school and safe schools superintendent.
- store the intervention/management plan securely.

Guidance counsellor/special education teacher/ student success teacher/ other staff who know the individual will:

- assist in data gathering as assigned by the principal
- assist the principal in Series 6 — 9 of the Community Threat Assessment Report Form and be available for consultation on general issues regarding threat assessment procedures relating to mental health.
- assist in developing plans or other interventions (e.g., behaviour plan, worker/individual safety plan), and in facilitating access to programs or resources, to reduce the risk of violence and respond to the individual’s educational needs if consent has been obtained, help families obtain needed assistance.

District School Board staff will:

- participate in school threat assessment team and where appropriate to be the C-TAT lead (i.e. behaviour crisis consultant/special services counsellor, psychologist, etc.).
- consult with the principal, school threat assessment team, and superintendents involved.
- contact C-TAT members to facilitate consultations, and conduct interviews as required, except in criminal investigations, complete the C-TAT Report Form questions Series 1-8 (Appendix B).
- follow up on recommended intervention/management plans.

Community Partner Staff will:

- Follow internal procedures in support of the V-TRA
- determine the lead or designate staff for each agency
- have a trained staff member participate in the C-TAT
- participate in completion of the C-TAT Report Form questions Series 1-8 (Appendix B)
- participate in a review of school threat assessment team findings
- participate in developing any recommended intervention/management plans

School Resource Officer/ Investigating Police Officer will:

- be involved in school threat assessment team or C-TATs.
- wherever possible, a police officer trained in Threat Assessment will be involved in school threat assessment teams or C-TATs.
- investigate and determine whether a crime has been committed, and if charges are appropriate or warranted.

Threat Assessment Teams should:

- be consulted at any stage of the school threat assessment team or C-TAT processes by either school officials or investigating police members, when an individual has been deemed medium to high level of concern.
- conduct formal, in-depth threat assessments when requested or deemed appropriate.
- be informed when criminal charges have been laid or injuries have been incurred as a result of an individual's behaviours.
- participate in threat assessment training with school officials and community partners when requested.

Legal References

Education Act

Ontario Regulation 472/07

Bill 157 "Keeping Our Kids Safe At School Act"

Bill 13 "Accepting Schools Act"

Ministry Documents

- [Achieving Excellence: A Renewed Vision for Education in Ontario](#)
- [Ontario's Education Equity Action Plan](#)
- [Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy](#)
- [Ontario's Well-Being Strategy for Education](#)