

Threat Assessment Process Chart

The school team should meet in early September and at least once more during the year to review protocol, roles, and responsibilities.
 Concern re student→Principal and Guidance Counsellor meet and decide.

Immediate Risk	High-Risk Student Behaviours	Worrisome Behaviours
<p>Call Police—Police lead the process</p>	<p>Meeting with Principal, Guidance Counsellor/ Resource Teacher, Police, other agencies as appropriate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How much time do we have? - Who will be interviewed? - What order will we interview them in? - Who will interview whom? ■ Need to assess using the 4 prongs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Personality of the student - Family Dynamics - School Dynamics - Social Dynamics <p>{See interview guide for question prompts – pg 5}</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Decide if student is Traditional/Mixed Type/ Non-traditional ■ Reconvene to share all the <u>data</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - While collaterals should be interviewed, they should not be part of the T.A. Team - Specific Mental Health/Child Welfare input will be sought - Police input will be arranged ■ Complete Student Threat Assessment Incident Report (pg 9) 	<p>Principal and Guidance Counsellor/Resource Teacher meet; may involve Police</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ May use same process as High-Risk in a more informal manner ■ May choose to complete Student Threat Assessment Incident Report

High Risk Student Behaviour

- High-Risk student behaviours are to be reported immediately to the principal.
- The Principal will contact the Threat Assessment Team to activate the threat assessment process.
- Prior to assembling the Threat Assessment Team, the School Crisis Response Team may notify the police. The police have “first call” as to whether or not charges will be laid. If legal procedures are not pursued, the Threat Assessment Team will become involved.
- The Threat Assessment Team will conduct a Risk Assessment and determine follow-up recommendations.
- High-Risk Student Behaviours must be assessed using dispositional data (personality of threat-maker) and contextual data (factors that may contribute to threat-making behaviour at a certain point in time).
- Parents should be notified at the earliest opportunity by a Threat Assessment Team member. Involve parents in the risk assessment process (as much as possible).
- If it is determined that a student who has made a threat actually poses a threat, a comprehensive assessment shall be initiated. A comprehensive assessment may draw on the expertise/jurisdictional authority of physicians, child welfare workers, criminal profilers, psychiatrists, or mental health professionals.
- Student(s) may be suspended from school during an assessment period (to protect others from potential harm, to protect the threat-maker, or both).

Pre-suspension and Pre-expulsion Assessments and Interventions

Pre-suspension assessments are critical for students who display high-risk behaviours and are being considered for suspension/expulsion. The feelings of isolation and disconnection created by a suspension may create a context that advances suicidal/homicidal ideation and/or plans to terrorize the school. Suspension plans must, therefore, address issues of when and where the suspension will take place as well as the supports available to the student.

Guidelines for Re-entry into School

When warranted, a student may be suspended pending completion of a comprehensive assessment. It is recommended that the Threat Assessment Team outline, in writing, the steps necessary for completion of the assessment. Upon completion of the assessment, the student, family, and Threat Assessment Team should develop a plan for re-entry. This plan may take the form of a signed contract.

Note: see Policy EED – Threat/Risk Assessment and Response, for further explanation

Worrisome Behaviour

- Worrisome behaviours are those behaviours that are usually dealt with through the Code of Conduct.
- Worrisome behaviours may also, however, indicate that a student is moving toward a greater risk of violent. Examples, include behaviours such as drawing pictures, writing stories in class, or making vague statements that do not, of themselves, constitute “uttering threats” as defined by law but are causing concern for some members of the school community because of their violent content. In addition, worrisome behaviours may take the form of generalized threats with no specific target (e.g., “I could kill somebody today”)
- The Principal is notified of worrisome student behaviour.
- The Principal consults with the Threat Assessment Team Leader (informally) to determine whether a formal threat assessment is warranted.
- The context of the behaviour in addition to the personality characteristics of the identified student must be considered
- The police may also be consulted (not a formal complaint).
- If data is obtained that suggests that student has made a threat and poses a threat, the protocol for dealing with High-Risk Student Behaviours will be activated.

Exceptional: High Profile Threat Related Behaviours

- ❑ There are situations where students engage in threat related behaviour that would be assessed as “worrisome behaviour”. Due to the context of the threat however, a student audience may be traumatized. To avoid over-reactions of the school and community system, activation of the Threat Assessment Team will be necessary.
- ❑ One example of an Exceptional Case involving high profile threat-related behaviour is the following: during lunch hour a fifteen year old student posts a picture he drew on the cafeteria wall depicting a boy shooting students in a school cafeteria. In this situation, the threat-related behaviour occurred in a setting where there is an audience that may be traumatized and their reactions to the incident may trigger a broader response in the school and community.

The principal shall determine if crisis counselling is required to re-establish calm.

Interview Guide

(Guiding Questions):

The following eleven questions are courtesy of the excellent work done by Robert Fein, Bryan Vossekuil, William Pollack, Randy Borum, Bill Moadzeleski, and Marissa Reddy who developed *Threat Assessment in Schools: A Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and to Creating Safe School Climates*. U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Safe and Drug-Free Schools program and U.S. Secret Service, nation Threat Assessment Center, Washington, D.C., 2002

1. What are the student's motive(s) and goals?
 - What motivated the student to make the statements or take the actions that caused him or her to come to attention?
 - Does the situation or circumstance that led to these statements or actions still exist?
 - Does the student have a major grievance or grudge? Against whom?
 - What efforts have been made to resolve the problem and what has been the result? Does the potential attacker feel any part of the problem is resolved or see any alternatives?

2. Have there been any communications suggesting ideas or intent to attack?
 - What, if anything, has the student communicated to someone else (targets, friends, other students, teachers, family, others) or written in a diary, journal, Web site concerning his/her ideas and/or intentions?
 - Have friends been alerted or "warned away"?

3. Has the student shown inappropriate interest in any of the following?
 - School attacks or attackers;
 - Weapons (including recent acquisition of any relevant weapon);
 - Incidents of mass violence (terrorism, workplace violence, mass murderers).

4. Has the student engaged in attack-related behaviours? These behaviours might include:
 - Developing an attack idea or plan;
 - Making efforts to acquire or practice with a weapon;
 - Casing, or checking out, possible sites and areas for attack;
 - Rehearsing attacks or ambushes.

5. Does the student have the capacity to carry out an act of targeted violence?
 - How organized is the student's thinking and behaviour?
 - Does the student have the means, e.g. access to a weapon to carry out an attack?
6. Is the student experiencing hopelessness, desperation, and/or despair?
 - Is there information to suggest that the student is experiencing desperation and/or despair?
 - Has the student experienced a recent failure, loss and/or loss of status?
 - Is the student known to be having difficulty coping with a stressful event?
 - Is the student now, or has the student ever been, suicidal or "accident prone"? Has the student engaged in behaviour that suggests that he or she has considered ending their life?
7. Does the student have a trusting relationship with at least one responsible adult?
 - Does the student have at least one trusting relationship with an adult where the student feels that he or she can confide in the adult and believes that the adult will listen without judging or jumping to conclusions? (Students with trusting relationships with adults may be directed away from violence and despair and toward hope.)
 - Is the student emotionally connected to-or disconnected from-other students?
 - Has the student previously come to someone's attention or raised concern in a way that suggested he or she needs intervention or support services?
8. Does the student see violence as acceptable-or desirable-or the only way to solve problems?
 - Does the setting around the student (friends, fellow students, parents, teachers, adults) explicitly or implicitly support or endorse violence as a way of resolving problems or disputes?
 - Has the student been "dared" by others to engage in an act of violence?
9. Is the student's conversation and "story" consistent with his or her actions?
 - Does information from collateral interviews and from the student's own behaviour confirm or dispute what the student says is going on?
10. Are other people concerned about the student's potential for violence?
 - Are those who know the student concerned that he or she might take action based on violent ideas or plans?
 - Are those who know the student concerned about a specific target?

- Have those who know the student witnessed recent changes or escalations in mood and behaviour?
11. What circumstances might affect the likelihood of an attack?
- What factors in the student's life and/or environment might increase or decrease the likelihood that the student will attempt to mount an attack at school?
 - What is the response of other persons who know about the student's ideas or plan to mount an attack? (Do those who know the student's ideas actively discourage the student from acting violently, encourage the student to attack, deny the possibility of violence, passively collude with an attack, etc.?)

Threat/Risk Assessment Incident Report

- Name of the threat-maker and his/her relationship to the school and to the recipient.
- Names(s) of the victims or potential victims.
- When and where the incident occurred.
- What happened immediately prior to the incident.
- The specific language of the threat.
- Physical conduct that would substantiate intent to follow through on the threat.
- How the threat-maker appeared (physically and emotionally).
- Names of others who were directly involved and any actions they took.
- How the incident ended.
- Names of witnesses.
- What happened to the threat-maker after the incident.
- What happened to the other students or employees directly involved after the incident.
- Names of any administrators, teachers or staff and how they responded.
- What event(s) triggered the incident.
- Any history leading up to the incident.
- The steps that have been taken to ensure the threat will not be carried out.
- Suggestions of preventing school violence in the future.

Adapted from the *“Guide for Preventing and Responding to School Violence”*, published by the International Association of Chiefs of Police.