



## Violence Threat Risk Assessment and Intervention

Board Received: May 27, 2019 Review Date: June 2023

### Policy Statement

The Grand Erie District School Board is committed to creating and maintaining safe, caring, and accepting school environments. Safety in schools is fundamental to learning and well-being for all students.

As a result, the Grand Erie District School Board will respond to all student behaviours that pose a potential risk to other students, staff, and members of the school community through the process of violence threat risk assessment and intervention (VTRA)

### Accountability

1. Frequency of Reports – as needed
2. Criteria for Success –
  - Violence Threat Risk assessments are completed promptly
  - Early intervention supports are in place for students posing risks to others
  - School safety is enhanced.

### Definitions

The assessment of violence, threat and risk is a team approach to identifying, evaluating and addressing potential threats from students toward other students, staff and parents within the school and community environment. The purpose of carrying out a violence threat risk assessment is to ensure that those who have knowledge of the student carry out a careful analysis of the potential severity of the threat and determine an appropriate response to the threat-maker.

A multi-disciplinary assessment of student behaviour helps determine whether or not a student is moving on a pathway towards violence against him/herself or others, and creates an opportunity to intervene to decrease the risk identified. Through development of an individualized intervention plan, the underlying issues that have contributed to high-risk behaviour can be addressed. Where a high risk is identified, a student may require further assessment from community professionals, including but not limited to, child protection agencies and medical practitioners.

**Threat assessment** is the process of determining if a student actually poses a risk to the person(s) they have threatened. A threat is when a person utters, writes or communicates through technology a threat to harm or kill a person or persons. Typically, threat assessment occurs within a few hours of a threat being made. The timeliness of information gathering is essential and includes input from the student, family, peers, school staff, and the community agencies that may have access to information relevant to the threat being made.

**Risk assessment** is the process of determining if a student of concern may pose a risk to self (e.g., suicide) or risk to some person(s) at some unknown period of time. Typically, risk assessment is a lengthier process that may involve a number of assessments, tests and measures beyond the scope of the school-based multi-disciplinary team. Consultation with the school social worker is required in order to request a risk assessment for a student.

**High-Risk Behaviour: When to Enact the Violence Threat Risk Assessment Protocol:**

Student behaviour that poses a threat or risk to self or others can present in a variety of ways. Examples of high-risk behaviours include, but are not limited to:

- serious violence or violence with intent to harm or kill
- indicators of suicidal ideation as it relates to fluidity (both homicidal and suicidal)
- “clear, direct and plausible” threats to kill others
- use of technology to communicate threats to harm/kill others or cause property damage
- possession of weapons, including replicas\
- bomb threats (making and/or detonating explosive devices)
- fire setting
- sexual intimidation or assault
- ongoing issues with 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 orientation
- rehearsal behaviours or evidence of planning an attack

Students who have experienced ongoing harassment and/or bullying, or students who have a history of perceived victimization, may pose a risk to safety and could be considered for a risk assessment.

**All behaviours that may pose a risk or threat to others are to be reported to the school administrator. This includes the behaviour of students, staff or community members.**

**VTRA Procedure**

The process of implementing a threat and risk assessment protocol ensures that potentially high-risk behaviour of students is properly assessed and supportive intervention plans put in place. The following steps are fully developed within the [\*School and Community Violence Threat Risk Assessment and Intervention Protocol \(2018\)\*](#)

- Step 1: **Make Sure All Students Are Safe and Call the Police (911)**
- Step 2: **Determine if the threat maker has access to the means (knife, gun, etc.) of the threat.**
- Step 3: **Interview witnesses, including all participants directly and indirectly involved.**
- Step 4: **Notify the threat-maker’s parent(s) or guardian(s), unless the student is 18 (or is 16 or 17 and has withdrawn from parental control).**
- Step 5: **Initiate Data Collection with Team Members.**
- Step 6: **Review Findings with the Threat Assessment Team**
- Step 7: **Decide on a Course of Action**
- Step 8: **Develop an Intervention Plan**

**Reference**

*School and Community Violence Threat Risk Assessment and Intervention Protocol (2018)*