

North East Community Threat Assessment and Support Protocol



Northeast Community Threat Assessment and Support Protocol: A Multi-Disciplinary Partnership Committed to:

- Early intervention
- Violence prevention
- High-risk assessments
- Interventions and supports; and
- Creating and maintaining internal processes and practices consistent to the model.

Our shared goal is safer schools and communities.

*This Community Threat Assessment and Support Protocol (CTASP)
reflects the work of J. Kevin Cameron,
Executive Director of the Center for Trauma Informed Practices (CTIP),
the Yukon Threat Assessment Program (Y - TAP) and,
the Alberta Children and Youth Initiative.*

Appreciation is expressed to the following school boards for sharing their expertise and resources in the development of this document:

- **Sun West School Division**
- **Living Sky School Division**
- **Yorkton and Area Threat Assessment Supports Protocol**

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Please note: this protocol is posted at www.nesd.ca

Note: This document is specific to the Northeast Community Threat Assessment and Support Protocol, and that each partner agency will use their own specific procedures to support this protocol.

Community Threat Assessment and Support Protocol Rationale

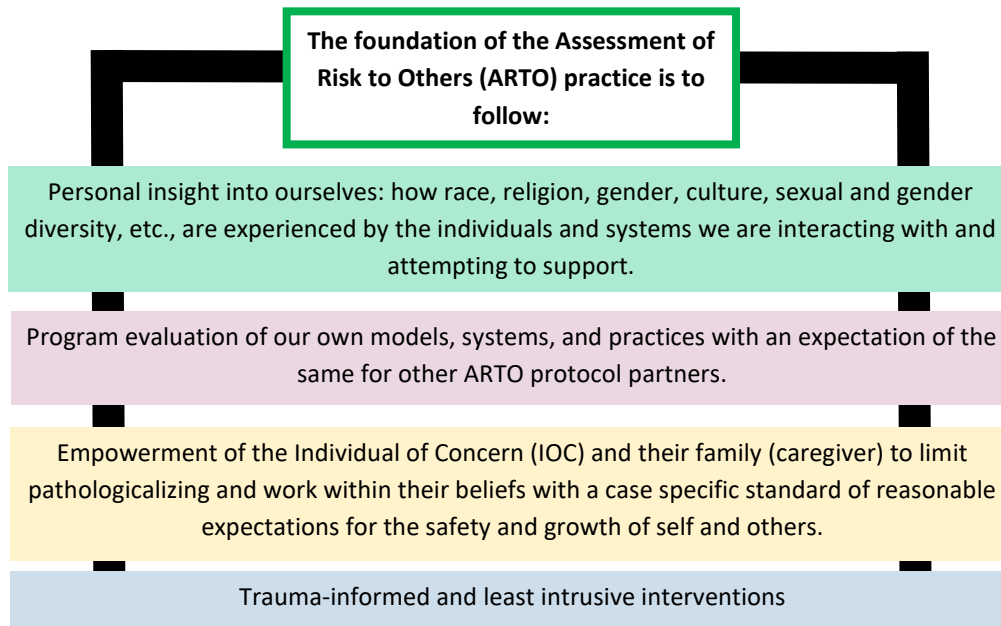
The members of the North East Community Threat Assessment and Support Protocol (NECTASP) are committed to creating safe learning and work environments in our community for individuals of all ages and abilities. All partners will respond to behaviours exhibited by an individual of concern that may pose a potential risk for violence to students, clients, staff, and members of the community. The term “partner” in this document is not intended to mean a legal partnership, but rather a collaborative arrangement.

This protocol supports collaborative planning among community partners to reduce violence and reflects safe, caring, and restorative approaches. It fosters timely sharing of information about individuals who pose a risk of violence towards themselves or others. It promotes the development of supportive and preventive plans through effective collaboration that makes use of a broad range of expertise.



Foundational to the NECTASP is based on the Centre for Trauma Informed Practice’s (CTIP) **Assessment of Risk to Others (ARTO)** model. As a trauma-informed and equity-inclusion guided practice, ARTO considers the role of trauma in individuals and works in conjunction with the Traumatic Event System (TES) Model. This is accomplished through an understanding of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) studies and the role of trauma in human systems (families, workplaces, communities, societies, etc.). Larger societal dynamics, including systemic racism and marginalization, are also formally considered realities addressed openly by ARTO team members. ARTO can be applied to micro assessments of risk related to a single individual of concern (IOC) and the target(s) they have threatened and the macro assessment of risk the IOC may pose towards other targets in school, work and community.

The ARTO model is supported by CTIP’s **Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA)** process. This process reflects scientific research of several disciplines and specialists in the field of threat management. It addresses all forms of potential violence in the community through a multi-disciplinary approach. This approach includes access to helping professionals like social work and psychology (clinicians), as well as criminal justice, health, mental health, and educational institutions. It also involves other agency leaders, organizations, and government.



NECTASP Core Partners

Government of Saskatchewan:

Ministry of Corrections, Policing, and Public Safety
Ministry of Social Services, Child and Family Services

Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) Detachments:

Carrot River, Melfort, Hudson Bay, Nipawin, Cumberland House and Tisdale

Saskatchewan Health Authority

Mental Health and Addiction Services

Suncrest College

North East School Division

Federal Schools

- ❖ *Additional community partners will be invited to join as training occurs. This will allow the protocol to expand and reflect a comprehensive community commitment to early intervention measures and responses to behaviour that pose a potential threat to students, staff, and members of our community.*

NECTASP Vision

Violence prevention in our schools, post-secondary campuses and neighbourhoods is a community responsibility. All community partners work together to promote and maintain safety, and to strive to prevent violence.

NECTASP Statement of Principles

All partners will undertake to follow the protocol. We have a shared obligation to take active steps to reduce violence in our schools, campuses, and community.

The partners agree to work together for the common goals of reducing violence, managing threats of violence, and promoting individual, schools, campuses, and community safety. We will do so by proactively sharing information, advice, and supports that reduce violence.

As partners, we will work together for the benefit of children, youth, adult learners, and their parents/caregivers by:

- Building working relationships based on mutual respect and trust.
- Working in ways that promote safe, caring and restorative school/campus environments and practices.
- Involving children, youth, adult learners, and their families in planning for services and supports.
- Recognizing that each youth, child and adult-learner has unique strengths and needs that should be considered when developing an appropriate support plan.
- Realizing that working together successfully is a process of learning, listening, and understanding one another; and
- Being patient, trusting and working together to help children, youth, and adult learners become happy, healthy, active, involved, and caring members of the community.

The overriding goal is **risk reduction and violence prevention**. We are committed to promoting the safety of individuals of concern, staff, parents/caregivers, and the school/campus community. We will work together to ensure that schools/campuses or other buildings/properties are safe places to learn, work and live.

This protocol is designed to facilitate communication so that when an ARTO is activated, appropriate NECTASP partners may communicate relevant information to support the person of interest.

As part of the protocol design, NECTASP partners will commit to ongoing staff development in threat assessment training and program review.

Essential Components of NECTASP

1. Partner Commitment

Core Partners are expected to attend Northeast Community Threat Assessment Protocol meetings that occur twice per year. These meetings support the following actions:

- manage and revisit the protocol to keep it current and responsive to the ever-changing needs and dynamics of the community.
- observe the commitments, strategies, and practices outlined in the protocol
- commit to training staff members in Level One and Two VTRA
- research, identify, plan, and participate in appropriate training for employees from both Core and Community Partners
- support all NECTASP partners in any VTRA cases as needed

2. Sharing of Information

The sharing of information is carried out by any of the team members, on a proactive basis, to avert or minimize imminent danger that affects the health and safety of any person. Information is shared on a confidential basis and is to be used solely for the purposes of the assessment or for actions directly related to or flowing from the assessment. (See Appendix A)



3. Investigative Mind-Set

This is central to the successful application of the risk/threat 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 risk/threat assessment must strive to be both accurate and fair.

Components of an investigative mind-set include:

- Open probing questions.
- Healthy skepticism.
- Attention to pre-attack behaviours.
- Verification of facts, actions corroborated.
- Common sense; and
- Ensuring that information makes sense.

When determining if a threat maker poses a risk to the person/target, consideration should be given to the following:

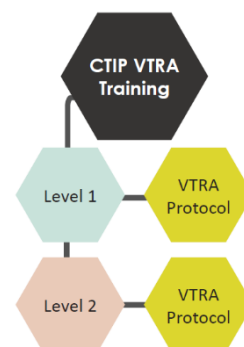
- Is the threat plausible?
- Is the threat an emotionally charged threat?
- What are the precipitating factors?

4. Capacity Building

Threat Assessment Teams (TAT) in each school and community partners will receive violence threat risk assessment training. Along with Level 1 and Level 2 VTRA training, NECTASP partners may provide additional training opportunities to support the work of the Community Threat Assessment and Support Protocol.

5. Documentation

NECTASP partners are responsible for creating and entering their own ARTO documentation. (See Appendices: B, C, D, and E)



6. NECTASP Management Committee

The NECTASP Management Committee is comprised of a minimum of 1 manager/program lead from all signed partners. The role of the committee is:

- Develop and maintain a current list of all employees and volunteers within protocol agencies (organizations) who are Level One and Level Two ARTO trained.
- Develop and maintain a current list of the ARTO Lead(s) for each protocol partner.
- Make any modifications to the written protocol.
- Review ARTO practice by having one or two cases presented to the sub-committee that highlights successes, challenges, and lessons learned.
- Determine when additional training is required.
- Serve as the management representation for assisting front line staff in navigation of the protocol and concerns when working with partners signed to the protocol.
- The chair of the committee will rotate on an annual basis.
- The chair or designate of the NECTASP Management Committee will maintain an up-to-date contact list of the lead team members and will distribute a copy of the list to all community partners.

7. External Communication

It is understood that NECTASP members will consult with one another and their agencies to coordinate any public messages via the media. The NECTAP Management Committee will keep each partner informed of any threats or safety concerns that warrant notification.

It is further recommended that NECTASP partners provide fair notice to their stakeholders regarding its commitment to the North East Community Threat Assessment Protocol (See Appendix F)

When to Activate the ARTO Protocol

There are a wide range of behaviours that are of concern in some families, workplaces, schools, and communities. It is sometimes difficult, however, to determine whether to activate a formal Assessment of Risk to Others (ARTO). The following guidelines are intended to help NECTASP Partners make this determination. It is important to carefully consider each, and every individual incident, to ensure the most appropriate response.

Situation that warrants activation of this protocol include, but are not limited to:

- Serious violence or violence with intent to harm or kill
- Verbal/written threats to kill others (“clear, direct, and plausible”)
- The use of technology (e.g. computers, mobile phone) to communicate threats to harm/kill others or cause serious property damage (e.g. “burn this office down”)

- 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

Threat Assessment Response

This protocol is based on The Center for Trauma Informed Practices (CTIP) Model of Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) three-step process:

- Stage 1 Data collection and immediate risk reducing interventions.
- Stage 2 Comprehensive multidisciplinary risk evaluation; and
- Stage 3 Multidisciplinary intervention.

The three stages of the VTRA combine all appropriate threat assessment concepts and risk assessment factors. This process allows for a comprehensive determination of violence risk posed, and the identification of appropriate interventions. It prevents under-reaction by professionals who may use general violence risk assessment tools as the unilateral measure to determine risk of violence of a young person. The three-stage approach promotes understanding that some individuals may not pose a risk for general violence yet may be moving rapidly on a pathway of violence toward a particular target they consider justifiable.

During data collection, and risk reducing interventions, ARTO team members should ensure attention to fluidity. Fluidity is the understanding that individuals may move between threats to harm others and a threat to harm themselves. Fluidity is an important consideration because the first hypothesis of ARTO is that a threat is a cry for help.

Each NECTASP partner is responsible for the creation of their own forms and documentation of the ARTO process.



Stage 1 – Data Collection and Immediate Risk Reducing Interventions

Stage One is generally referred to as “data collection and immediate risk reducing interventions” performed at a minimum, by the Site- Specific ARTO Team and the police of jurisdiction. This initial data collection is often accomplished in one to two hours.

Step 1: Incident Screening – Plausibility-Baseline-Attack Related Behaviours (PBA).

Step 2: Site-Specific ARTO Team activation (Data Collection and Consolidation).

Step 3: Immediate Risk Reducing Plan developed and implemented.

The ARTO Team conducting Stage One rapidly collects data related to the specific incident that determines if the threat maker really poses a risk to the target. If the threat maker really poses a risk to the target, then the team needs to stabilize the threat maker, protect the target, and take other reasonable steps to manage the current situation. Stage One must be done once a team member becomes aware of any information that meets the criteria for protocol activation. Most data collected at this stage is called **Case Specific Data (CSD)**.

Once risk reducing interventions and data collection are complete, ARTO team members must determine if the situation reflects worrisome behaviour or risk behaviour that warrants a Stage 2 Risk Assessment.

Worrisome Behaviour

Worrisome behaviours are “grey area” cases. This would include instances where a individual of concern may be engaging in behaviours such as drawing pictures, writing stories (and posting or presenting them), or making vague statements that do not, of themselves, constitute “uttering threats” as defined by law, but are causing concern because of violent, sexual, or other concerning content. The primary standard for assessing these types of cases is “the closer to reality, the more concerned we become.” In other words, when an individual of concern draws mythical creatures engaging in scenes of brutal violence we do not assume the author poses a risk as mythical creatures are not real. But if someone puts a picture of a “stick” man choking a woman and leaves it on the coffee table in the staff room prior to a female co-worker walking in, that would be “worrisome.”

Worrisome Behaviour cases are for Site-Specific ARTO team members to discuss internally and do not result in activation of the Community Protocol because it does not cross a clear line. Yet, it is appropriate for the Site-Specific ARTO Lead to consult with their Police ARTO Lead even from a consultation perspective of “what do you think about this Facebook posting?” Independent of the Site-Specific ARTO Lead, the Police member may do their own background check and if they determine the individual of concern targeted and stalked a female employee in a different work setting in a different province prior to this current situation, further inquiry will now begin.

In many cases, following up on “Worrisome Behaviours” results in good early intervention measures. There are also cases where “a little data leads to a lot” and what seems like a minor case can quickly evolve to the formal activation of the ARTO team.

Risk Behaviour

Low Level of Concern:

“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.

- The 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 individual of concern in question.
- Monitoring of the matter may be appropriate.

Moderate Level of Concern:

“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 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 (e.g., possible place and time).
- No clear indication that the individual of concern has taken preparatory steps (e.g., weapon seeking), although there may be an ambiguous or inconclusive reference pointing to that possibility. There may be a specific statement seeking to convey that the threat is not empty: “I’m serious!”
- A moderate or lingering concern about the individual’s potential to act violently.
- Increase in baseline behaviour.
- 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 to manage the individual’s future risk.

High Level of Concern:

“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 the 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.
- Categorization of risk indicates the individual is at a high or imminent risk for violence.
- Immediate intervention is required to prevent an act of violence from occurring.

Where the ARTO team collaboratively agree that the situation in question represents risk behaviour, then they proceed to Stage 2 – Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Risk Assessment.

Note of Caution:

Sometimes stand-alone Risk Assessments done by a single evaluator as well as Hospital Emergency Room assessments and others are not comprehensive, data-driven assessment, but more 'limited scope assessments' focused on acute level of risk. Without data from the appropriate ARTO Protocol Partners even the most skilled threat assessor may under react to a case that is actually high risk. We have consistently said that:

"A single evaluator can use the best violence risk assessment tool (or checklist) out there, but no risk assessment tool is worth squat unless you have good data to put into it. And a multi-disciplinary ARTO Team can collect more data and in a timelier fashion than any one professional can trying to do it on their own."

Stage 2 - Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Risk Assessment

Note: Professionals leading the Stage Two process must be trained in Level Two VTRA.

Step 4: Community Protocol Activation (Extensive Data Collected – Risk Assessment).

Stage Two is generally referred to as "Specialized risk evaluation" which often involves ARTO team members or partners using their specialized training and skill to more fully assess the level of risk the IOC possesses. This requires more extensive data collection about the IOC's background history of violence, evidence of fluidity, changes in family dynamics, presence of ACE's, empty vessel, etc.

Some, or all the following may take a further lead in Stage Two ARTO:



While the ARTO Team understands that the untrained partner/agency is in essence part of the Stage Two ARTO process, it is more useful to communicate with these “external agencies” in their own professional language during the referral process. Education about ARTO can occur for them later.

Stage 3 – Multidisciplinary Interventions

- **Step Five:** Longer-Term Multi-Disciplinary Intervention Plan developed and maintained.
- **Step Six:** Follow-up – Continue to monitor, evaluate, and/or revise intervention plan as needed (30- 60-90-day follow-up as needed).

From the moment the ARTO Protocol is activated there is ongoing data collection, assessment, and “intervention”. Intervention plans must be established, implemented, and evaluated in both Stage One and Stage Two. When the team identifies that the person who threatened to use a knife has a knife, then removing the weapon is an immediate risk-reducing “intervention”. However, removing the weapon does not prevent them from obtaining a knife again later. As such, the intervention planning goes beyond access to the means (short term) and instead works to decrease the likelihood that the individual of concern will return to the point of even wanting to use a knife to harm someone in the future (long term).

As Stage Two ARTO nears completion it should be evident as to what the primary risk enhancers are and therefore who is the logical ARTO lead for the remainder of the case. Many team members present during the early stages of the event may no longer be needed but are available as an original team (agency) member if needed again. The ARTO team does not abandon the lead(s)! However, the goal of successful intervention is that fewer and fewer resources are needed to support the individual of concern (and/or their families etc.) as time goes on.

In essence, good intervention planning occurs when there is ongoing collaboration in cases considered as a complex case by the ARTO Team members. By definition:

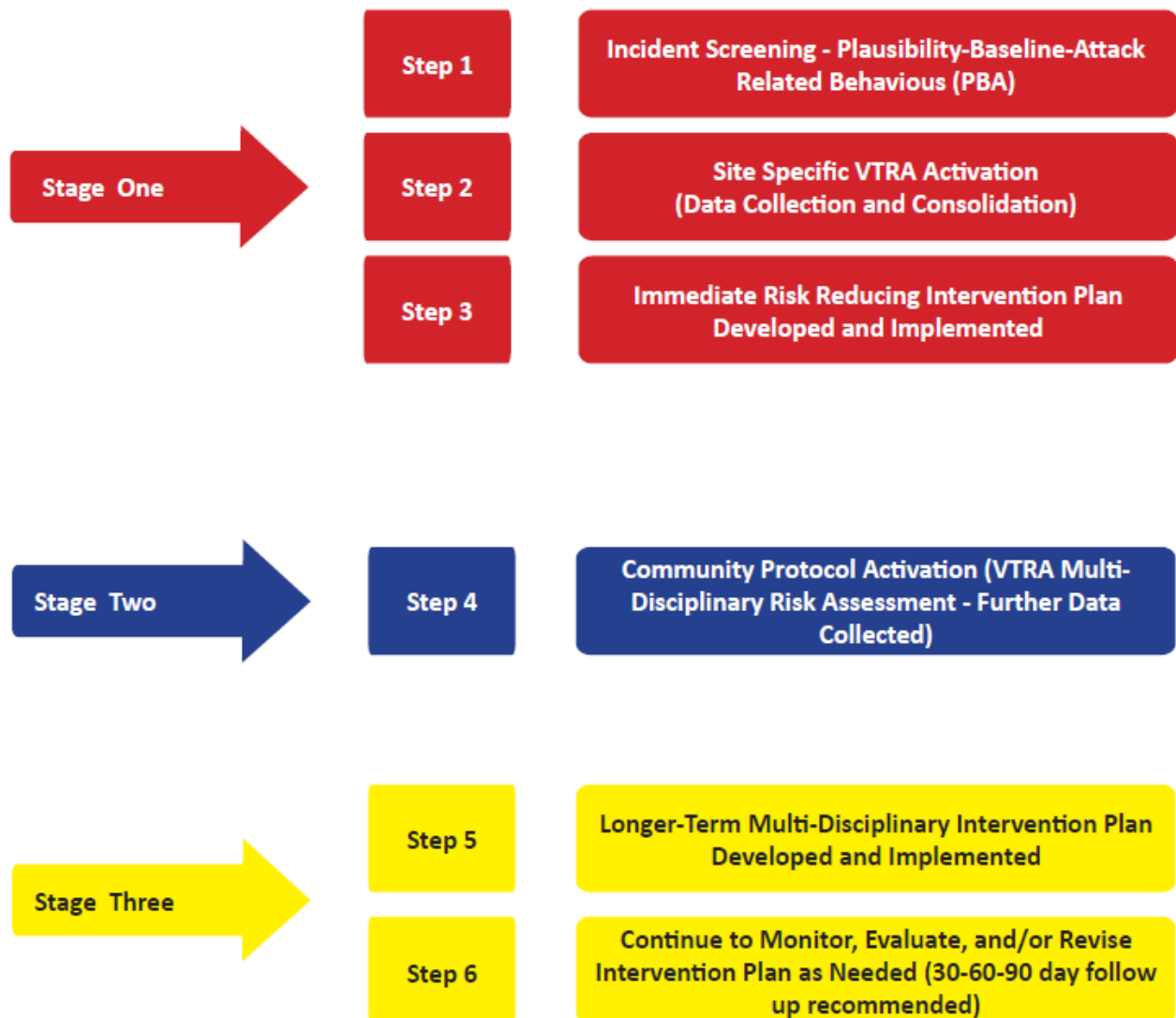
“Any case that has at least two or more significant risk enhancing variables that requires at least two or more different ARTO partners to remain involved in order to lower the level of risk and obtain lasting gains is a ***complex case***”.

Cases that reach this level of intervention planning should place special emphasis on predetermined follow-up meetings where all related ARTO team members come together personally or via telephone conference etc. to report and review the current state of the case. Sometimes data is obtained in these meetings that confirms the interventions are working

or that follow-through did not occur when the individual of concern claimed it did. Thirty day (30); ninety day (90) and even one-year follow-ups have assisted tremendously with ensuring a high-risk case does not “fall through the cracks”.

Threat Assessment Response Flow Chart

A model focusing on three distinct yet seamless stages, and six key steps that incorporates a multi-disciplinary team approach.



ARTO Response Considerations

Immediate Threats:

These situations include armed (e.g. gun, knife, explosives or other device/weapon capable of causing serious injury or death) intruders inside the building or on the periphery, who may pose a risk to some target or targets (i.e. active shooter scenarios). When immediate risk is identified, lockdown plans should be activated immediately, followed by a call to 911. In these cases, a threat is unfolding, and the matter is one of immediate police intervention and protective Site-Specific response; **not** Stage One ARTO.

Most targeted workplace and school shootings are over in a matter of minutes, usually before police arrive. It is vital that every worksite has a plan which everyone understands, drills have been conducted, and everyone knows what to do. In these situations, every additional second, we can manufacture; to slow a perpetrator down, it can save lives. A site-specific lockdown plan which is understood by everyone and practiced on a regular basis will save lives. The importance of having lockdown plans in place can't be overstated. The fact that a solid lockdown plan exists may serve as a deterrent to an individual who may be contemplating an act of targeted violence in a work or school setting. Also, having an established and practiced lockdown plan in place greatly assists in reducing stress, modeling calmness, and minimizing the traumatizing of the individuals within the system the threat occurs.



In situations like the above, where a possible threat was present, but violence has not occurred (e.g. the individual of concern was found to have a weapon or replica but didn't use it), the ARTO Protocol will not be immediately activated. Instead, this will be a police matter (criminal and public safety) and the subject will generally be taken into custody, remanded, and initial evaluations will be conducted within the criminal justice system.

However, prior to release the ARTO Protocol should be activated where the ARTO Lead for the Police of Jurisdiction in consultation with the appropriate Protocol Partners determines current level of risk or if a data-driven Threat Risk Assessment has been conducted internally, informs the ARTO Team about current level of risk and steps the Team can take to assist with Threat/Risk Management if necessary.

Non-Work Hours

If information is received by a ARTO team member regarding serious violence, weapons possession or a threat that is "clear, direct, and plausible" during non-work hours for Protocol Partners, police will be called, and steps will be taken to assess the individual of concern as well as notify and protect the target(s) as required. Site-Specific ARTO team members and police will determine if team members need to assist beyond regular work hours or if the non-police aspect of the case can wait until regular work hours.

However, the ARTO team will be activated if the case at hand is deemed to be high risk. Open communication between Site-Specific ARTO Leads and police is essential. So is information sharing between patrol or general duty police officers and specialized police units such as mobile crisis units and school resource/liaison officers regarding non-work hour cases. Many evening or weekend incidents occur that continue to escalate into the workplace/school and many workplace/school incidents occur that escalate into the community the next day. This has proven especially useful in:

- Gang related cases
- Relational violence
- Family violence
- Workplace violence
- Work-site retaliations (current/former employees, customers, etc.)
- Sporting event retaliations
- Weekend school, college, and university party retaliations

Unauthored Threat: Duty and Intervention

Unauthored threats are typically threats to commit a violent act against an individual(s), specific group, or site (i.e. the school/campus). They may be found written on bathroom walls or stalls, spray painted on the side of schools/campuses, posted on the Internet, or in 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 to:

- a) Assess the unauthored threat.
- b) Attempt to identify the threat maker; and
- c) Avoid or minimize the crisis/trauma response.

Violence Threat Assessment teams should consider the following in determining the initial level of risk based on the current data (i.e. the language of threat):

Language of Commitment

- Amount of detail (location where the violence is to occur, target(s), date and time the violence is to occur, justifications, etc.);
- Threatened to do what with what ("kill", "murder", "ruin your lives", "shank", "shoot", etc.);
- Method of delivery of the threat (who found/received the threat, when did he/she receive it, where did he/she receive it, who else did he/she tell and who else knows about it?); and
- Is the threat clear, direct, plausible, and consistent?

Identifying the Threat Maker

In many cases the author is never found but steps that can be taken to identify the author(s) are:

- Handwriting analysis.
- Analysis of social media use.
- Word usage (phrases and expressions that may be unique to a particular person or group of people (street gang, club, sport team, etc.); and
- Spelling (unique errors or modifications).

Contra-indicators:

Some authors will switch gender and try to lead the reader to believe they are a male or female when they are not or pretend to be someone else as a setup. Some individuals who write unauthored "hit lists" embed their names in the list of identified targets.

Depending on the severity of the threat, some or all staff members may be asked to assist in analyzing the unauthorized threat.

Depending on the severity of the threat, some individual of concern may be asked to give their opinion regarding the origin and authorship of threat.

Suicide as a Special Consideration:

When Site-Specific professionals are dealing with a situation where an individual is of concern because of suicidal ideation, they are required to follow their existing protocols for suicide risk assessment. Protocol Partners are responsible for having personnel who are trained in suicide risk assessment and intervention.

ARTO should be activated in cases where one or more suicides are likely to have a ripple effect, or a large impact on the community. Those trained in suicide risk assessment should also be ARTO trained, and be open to the possibility that the individual being assessed may be fluid. The third formal hypothesis in the Stage One ARTO process is: “Is there any evidence of fluidity?”

As well, whenever there is evidence of a suicide pact or evidence that there is a peer dynamic or a “puppet master” in the background trying to drive them to kill themselves, the ARTO Protocol is activated. Therefore, the ARTO Protocol should only be used as part of a case with suicidal ideation when there is evidence of:

- Fluidity
- Suicide Pact
- Conspiracy of two or more (Puppet Master)
- Multiple Suicides or Attempts in Quick Succession in a Community

Children Under 12 Years of Age:

If there is a significant increase/shift in baseline behaviour, weapons possession or clear, direct, and plausible threats, the formal ARTO protocol will still be activated. Nevertheless, when younger children engage in violent or threat-related behaviours, developmental, and exceptionality issues need to be taken into consideration. Most threat related behaviour exhibited by young children would fall into the category of “worrisome behaviours”. However, just because a child is under 12 years of age does not mean they cannot pose a risk. A 7-year-old who threatens for the first time “I’m gonna set you on fire” to a peer they have been harassing for some time is worthy of ARTO Screening.

ARTO Reminders

Threat Assessment Trumps Suspension

In most cases, unless the individual of concern already poses an imminent or obvious safety concern (i.e.: currently brandishing a weapon), the Stage 1 team is activated, and Stage 1 Report Form data is collected within reason, before suspension is even considered.

A poorly timed “out of school suspension” is high risk, as this period is often viewed by the high-risk person of interest, as the “last straw”. It is in this stage that many threat makers decide to finalize a plan to terrorize their school/campus or attack a specific target (this can include homicidal or suicidal acts).

The suspension does not cause the violence to occur but may create the necessary context for the high-risk person of interest who is already struggling with suicidal and/or homicidal ideation, to take the final step from planning to action.

Students and Learners with Special Needs and ARTO

The multidisciplinary ARTO protocol will not be activated when the individual of concern with intensive needs engages in threat-making or aggressive behaviors **that are typical to their baseline**. In other words, if their conduct is consistent

with their diagnosis and how it has been known to manifest in them, then the ARTO team will not be called upon to conduct an assessment.

However, if the student with intensive needs moves beyond their typical baseline and for the first time engaged in threatening behavior, then the ARTO team would be activated to assist in determining why the increase in baseline and if there is a risk to self and others. Once the ARTO team is activated, the process of data collection and assessment is not modified other than to ensure appropriate interviewing strategies with the student with intensive needs. Staff members from the school/campus and partner agency level responsible for program planning and service delivery to students/learners with intensive needs will always be consultants to the ARTO team in these cases.

Parent/Caregiver Roles in ARTO

Parent (Caregiver) Notification – Person(s) of Concern:

Note: This section is primarily focused on children and youth under 18 years of age. However, there are adult ARTO cases where parents, caregivers, legal guardians, siblings, spouses (partners), and others associated with the individual of concern have been contacted due to concerns regarding risk to self or others.

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 ARTO Team to more fully assess the individual of concern and collaboratively plan for appropriate intervention where necessary.

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

1. Child protection issues that emerge early in the data collection process. In these situations, that part of the case will be the domain of Child Protection.
2. Parent/Caregiver poses a potential risk of violence to the Site where the ARTO was activated. In these situations, the police will take the lead in notification.
3. 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):

Note: This section is primarily focused on children and youth under 18 years of age. However, there are adult ARTO cases where parents, caregivers, legal guardians, siblings, spouses (partners) and others have been contacted due to concerns regarding the trauma response of the target. This may include hyper or hypo arousal of the target that may be impairing their current judgment.

As a primary purpose of the Community ARTO 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 is 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 support the family may need. As such, if the threat is “clear, direct, and plausible” or the ARTO team feels 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 ARTO 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 the 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 may be delayed, such as:

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

Appendix A - Information Sharing

The general intent of access to information and protection of privacy legislation is to regulate the collection storage, use and disclosure of personal information. (Note: When the term “personal information” is used in this document, this includes personal health information.)

Wherever possible and reasonable, consent to disclose personal information should be obtained. Valid consent does not exist unless the individual knows what he/she is consenting to and understands the consequences of the intended disclosure. The individual must be made aware that he/she can withdraw consent at any time by giving written or verbal notice. The NECTASP community partners are committed to the sharing of relevant information to the extent authorized by law.

The presumption is that all information shared by partners about individuals of concern and families is personal information and should be treated with a high level of confidentiality. Once the sharing of information has occurred, each partner who receives the information will be responsible for ensuring appropriate storage, use and disclosure of such information in accordance with the laws, regulations, policies, and procedures applying to that partner. Each partner will be responsible for the education of their staff in this regard.

It is vital to note that legislation allows the release of personal information if there is an imminent threat to health or safety. To make the public aware, community partners are recommended to share a Fair Notice Letter with the stakeholders it serves.

Green Light	Yellow Light	Red Light
Generally speaking, and subject to the guidelines of LAFOIP, relevant personal information CAN be shared under one or more of the following circumstances:	In any of the following circumstances, obtain more information and receive direction from a supervisor :	Information can NEVER be shared under any of the following circumstance:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ With written consent ▪ To avert or minimize imminent danger to the health/safety of any person; ▪ To report a child who might need protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Where consent is not provided or is refused but where there may be a health or safety issue for any individual or group(s); 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is a legislative requirement barring disclosure; ▪ No consent is given and there is no need to know nor overriding health/ safety concerns;

under the <i>Child & Family Services Act</i> ▪ By order of the Court; ▪ To support the rehabilitation of a young person under the <i>Youth Criminal Justice Act</i> ; ▪ To ensure the safety of students and/or staff under the YCJA; ▪ To cooperate with a police and/or a child protection investigation.	▪ When asked about a report of criminal activity given to the police; ▪ When asked to share YCJA information from records, where there is a demand or request to produce information for a legal proceeding; ▪ When a professional code of ethics may limit disclosure.	▪ Consent is given but there is no need to know nor overriding health/safety concerns.
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Sharing Information: Legislation and Case Law

Each partner involved in an assessment will be responsible for determining the threshold for sharing information with other partners. Each partner will be responsible for ensuring compliance with applicable legislation.

Appendix B - Threat Assessment Report Form (example)

AS PER ARTO IMMEDIATE RESPONSE GUIDE, ENSURE ALL RISK REDUCING INTERVENTIONS HAVE BEEN ATTENDED TO BEFORE COMPLETING THREAT ASSESSMENT

For affirmative responses, please provide evidence and/or applicable details.

1. How did the threat come to your attention?
2. Who was/were the target(s)?
3. What was the specific language of the threat?
4. Was it clear, direct, and plausible?
5. Was there a weapon brandished, or gestures made?
6. What was learned from Initial Data Collection of threat maker:
7. Where did the incident happen and when?
8. Who was present and under what circumstances did the incident occur?
9. What was the motivation or perceived cause of the incident?
10. What was the response of the target (if present) at the time of the incident? Did he or she add to or detract from the justification process?
11. What was the response of others who were present? Did they add or detract from the justification process?
12. Additional Information worth noting:

BEHAVIOUR ASSESSMENT: Based on investigation, and in consultation with Superintendent of Student Services or Coordinator of Integrated Services, assess threat maker behavior:

() Worrisome Behaviour

() High Risk Behaviour

Appendix C - Risk Assessment Report Form (example)

Date:

For affirmative responses, please provide evidence and/or applicable details.

1. Do the actions in question represent a change in baseline?
2. Chronological history of violence?
3. Evidence of fluidity (*harm to self/harm to others*)?
4. Recent changes to family dynamics?
5. Presence of Adverse Childhood Experiences?
6. Evidence of peer dynamics that may be conducive to violence?
7. Evidence of empty vessel indicators (*always alone, despondent, face covered, etc...*)?
8. Evidence of threat maker's inordinate knowledge/fascination with threats or harm to others?
9. Outside agency involvement? Please provide list of those involved.
10. Using ARTO Risk Evaluation criteria, and in consultation with Superintendent of Student Services, Coordinator of Integrated Services, or Partner Administration, determine level of risk posed by student?

☐ Low to Medium Risk

Explanation:

☐ Medium to High Risk

Explanation:

Appendix D – ARTO Notification Form (if applicable)

Assessment of Risk to Others (ARTO) ASSESSMENT NOTIFICATION
(to be copied on yellow paper and placed in the student's cumulative folder)

Individual of
Concern: _____

Date of Birth: _____

School/Campus: _____

Date of Incident: _____

A formal threat/risk assessment was completed on: _____

Please contact _____ at

_____ for further information.
(school/Campus name and phone #)

Signature of Principal/Administration

Date

Appendix E – Intervention Plan Form (example)

Date:

For students deemed High Risk, ensure pertinent outside agencies are part of Intervention Plan

1. **Case Manager** (*Must be Administrator*):
2. **Disciplinary Action Taken** (if any):
3. **Daily Risk Reducing Interventions** (*Check-in/check-out, back-pack check, Late arrival/early dismissal, etc.*):
4. **Adult Strategies/Responsibilities** (*Relationship, avoid power struggles, soft tone, etc ...*):
5. **Person of concern Strategies/Responsibilities** (*music, body break, drumming, etc ...*):
6. **Person of concern Services Supports:**
7. **Outside Agency Supports and Responsibilities** (*For Medium to High Risk only*):

Update and Next Steps:

Case Closed: Yes/No

Appendix F – Sample Fair Notice Letter



North East School Division

Box 6000, 402 Main St.
Melfort, SK S0E 1A0

Phone: (306) 752-5741
Fax: (306) 752-1933

Toll Free: 1-888-752-5741
Website: www.nesd.ca

September 2, 2024

Dear Parents/Guardians/Caregivers:

It is with great pleasure that I am able to announce that the North East School Division has collaborated with community partners across the northeast to develop the “Northeast Community Threat Assessment and Support Protocol.” This protocol allows community partners to share information and use their expertise to implement the appropriate supports for students and their families. Furthermore, North East schools have established School Threat Assessment Teams including the administrator(s), school counsellor, and RCMP, to work with the Protocol.

The purpose of a threat assessment is to determine how best to support high-risk students so that their behaviour does not become hurtful or destructive. These actions have been undertaken to help fulfill our Board expectations to provide a safe, respectful learning environment within our schools. The North East School Division is committed to ensuring that students, staff, school visitors and community members feel safe. Collaboration with families and community partners is viewed as critical to attain our goal.

For more information on the Community Threat Assessment and Support Protocol, please visit our website at www.nesd.ca. Information and a brochure that outlines the steps for the protocol can be found under “Safe and Caring Schools.” If you have questions about the process, please contact your school principal.

We look forward to working with you and our community partners to provide safe and caring schools.

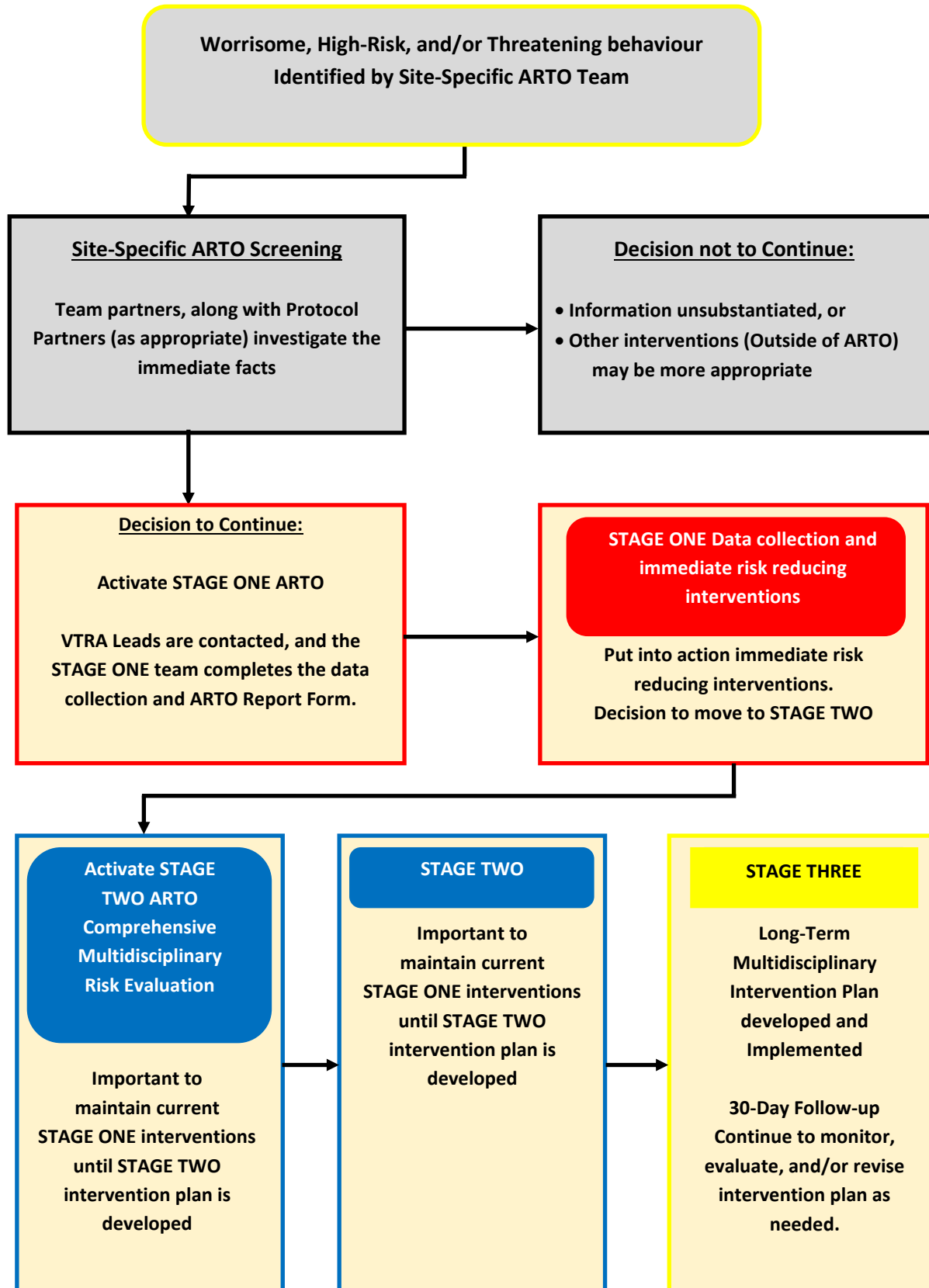
Sincerely,

Stacy Lair

Director of Education

North East School Division

Appendix G - ARTO Response Flow Chart



Appendix H - Responding to Individual of Concern Threat Making Behaviour: A Staff Guide

Any person who is concerned will report behaviours to the school principal/designate that may pose a risk or threat to others.



<p>Worrisome Behaviours Included but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violent content • Drawings and pictures • Stories/journals • Vague threatening statements • Unusual interest in fire • Within range of baseline behaviour <p>**Does not typically lead to activating the protocol but because it is a 'cry for help' it does involve timely follow-up with the individual of concern, his/her teachers, the school/campus counsellor and the student's parents/guardians/caregivers. **</p>	<p>High Risk Behaviours Include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possession of weapon/replica • Bomb threat plan • Verbal/written threat to kill/injure • Internet website threats to kill or injure self/others • Fire setting • Threatens violence • Hate motivated violence targeting a particular student/group • Anti-social behaviour (empty vessel) • Significant change in baseline behaviour <p>**Activate protocol when safe to do so. Complete Stage 1. ** Principal/Administration informed, and decision made to activate the protocol.</p>	<p>Immediate Threat-<u>Call 911</u> Include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weapon in possession that poses serious threat to others • Plan for serious assault • Homicidal/suicidal behaviour that threatens safety • Fire setting resulting in harm <p>**Activate protocol when safe to do so. Complete Stage 1. ** Principal/Administrator informed and decision made to activate the protocol.</p>
<p>Principal/Administrator informed</p>	<p>Stage 1 – Data collection immediate risk reducing intervention is completed within hours. School/Campus TAT – administrators, counsellor, RCMP</p>	
	<p>School Divisions or partner organization activate protocol following their internal guidelines. If activated by the TAT, Superintendent/Administration with responsibility for ARTO, proceed to Stage 2</p>	
	<p>Stage 2: Comprehensive multidisciplinary risk evaluation completed as soon as possible. Community Threat Assessment Support Team (Superintendent, Administration, RCMP, Community Partners)</p>	
	<p>Conduct interviews as required. Meet with appropriate protocol partners and complete Threat Assessment Report Form. If activated by the Superintendent/Administrator with the responsibility for ARTO, proceed to stage 3.</p>	
	<p>Stage 3: Multidisciplinary intervention CTAST – School/Campus TAT, Superintendent/Administration, RCMP and Community Partners Meet with expanded Community TAT. Community TAT develops, implements and monitors a comprehensive multidisciplinary intervention plan and modifies it as appropriate.</p>	

Appendix I - Responding to an Individual of Concern Threat Making Behaviour: A Protocol Partner Guide

Note: When a community partner determines the need to activate the Community TAT, that person will notify his/her designated lead team member who will follow the procedure outlined below

All protocol partners will report behaviours that may pose a risk or threat to others.

Principal/Administrator informed if known. If unknown, contact Superintendent or designate with responsibility for ARTO.

Worrisome Behaviours Include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violent content • Drawings and pictures • Stories/journals • Vague threatening statements • Unusual interest in fire • Within range of baseline behaviour <p>**Does not typically lead to activating the protocol but because it is a 'cry for help' it does involve timely follow-up with the individual of concern, his/her teachers, the school/campus counsellor and the student's parents/guardians/caregivers. **</p>	High Risk Behaviours Include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possession of weapon/replica • Bomb threat plan • Verbal/written threat to kill/injure • Internet website threats to kill or injure self/others • Fire setting • Threatens violence • Hate motivated violence targeting a particular student/group • Anti-social behaviour (empty vessel) • Significant change in baseline behaviour <p>**Activate protocol when safe to do so. Complete Stage 1 **</p>	Immediate Threat Call 911 Include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weapon in possession that poses serious threat to others • Plan for serious assault • Homicidal/suicidal behaviour that threatens safety • Fire setting resulting in harm <p>**Activate protocol when safe to do so. Complete Stage 1 **</p>
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School/Campus Threat Assessment Team (TAT)	Community Threat Assessment and Support Team	Community Threat Assessment and Support Team
Stage 1 Data collection and immediate risk reducing interventions are performed by the School/Campus Threat Assessment Team (TAT) The initial data collection is often accomplished in one to two hours. It focuses on gathering case specific data using the Threat Assessment Report Form (see Appendix F).	Stage 2 Comprehensive multidisciplinary risk evaluation is focused on further data collection beyond the initial data set obtained by the Stage 1 School/Campus TAT. The Stage 2 Community Threat Assessment and Support Team (Community TAST) may involve some or all of the following: additional police-based resources, psychology, psychiatry, mental health, child protection, young offender worker, and others. At Stage 2, the Community TAST members work in collaboration with the Stage 1 School/Campus TAT to conduct the formal risk assessment and evaluation. Stage 2 includes the use of formal, structured professional instruments, concepts, tests, and measures by the appropriate Threat Assessment Unit.	Stage 3 Multidisciplinary intervention is the formal meeting of the Stage 1 School/Campus TAT and Stage 2 Community TAST members following a formal threat/risk assessment. The purpose of Stage 3 is to develop and implement a comprehensive, multidisciplinary intervention and management strategy.

Appendix J – ARTO Risk Evaluation

ARTO Team members are to collate data and discuss all relevant information regarding the student. As a team, ask the questions:

- “To what extent does the student pose a threat to school/campus/student/learner safety?”
- “Does the person of concern pose a threat to himself/herself or someone outside the school/campus (i.e. family)?”

➤ Low Level of Concern

Risk to the target(s), person of concern, staff, and school/campus safety is minimal.

- ☐ The threat is vague and indirect.
- ☐ Categorization of low risk does not imply “no risk” but indicates *the individual* is at little risk for violence.
- ☐ 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 student in question.
- ☐ Monitoring 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. Words in the threat and information gathered suggests that some thought has been given to how the threat will be carried out (e.g., possible place and time).
- ☐ No clear indication that the **person of concern** has taken preparatory steps (e.g., weapon, seeking), although there may be an ambiguous or inconclusive reference pointing to that possibility. There may be a specific statement seeking to convey that the threat is not empty: “I’m serious!”
- ☐ A moderate or lingering concern about the **person of concern’s** potential to act violently.
- ☐ Increase in baseline behaviour.
- ☐ 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 to manage the individual’s future risk.

➤ High Level of Concern

The threat or situation of concern appears to pose 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 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** potential to act violently.
- ☐ Significant increase in baseline behaviour.
- ☐ Categorization of risk indicates the individual is at a high or imminent risk for violence.
- ☐ Immediate intervention is required to prevent an act of violence from occurring.

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

Appendix K – Definitions

Community Threat Assessment Categorizations

- **Low level of concern:** Risk to the target(s), person of concern, staff, and school/campus safety appears minimal.
- **Medium level of concern:** The threat could be carried out, although it may not appear realistic. Violent action is possible.
- **High level of concern:** The threat or situation of concern appears to pose an imminent and serious danger to the safety of others.

High risk behaviours

High risk behaviours express intent to do harm or act out violently against someone or something. High risk behaviours include but are not limited to possession of weapon/replica, bomb threat plan, verbal/written or Internet threats to kill/injure self or others, fire setting, threatening violence and hate motivated violence.

Note: *Do not be deceived when traditional risk behaviours do not exist. There is no profile or checklist for the high-risk person of concern. Some persons of concern who actually pose a threat display very few traits of the traditional high-risk person of concern. Identify when homicidal and suicidal domains exist together. This is critical to the development of a response to the incident, including the creation of a Person of Concern support plan.*

Immediate Threat

In the case of immediate threat, staff will **CALL 911** and take the appropriate emergency response measures. The principal/administrator will contact the Superintendent/administration with responsibility for ARTO who will contact the Director of Education or appropriate partner leader.

Risk Assessment

A risk assessment is typically a lengthier process that involves several standardized tests and measures that go beyond the scope of the school/campus-based multidisciplinary Threat Assessment Team (TAT) assessment. After the “initial level of risk” is assessed and “immediate risk reducing intervention” has occurred, a further risk assessment may be required. Therefore, risk assessment is the process of determining if a person of concern may pose a further risk to some known or unknown target(s) at some unknown period. The student may be evidencing increasing violent ideation or behaviours that suggest that the frequency or intensity of his/her violence or violence potential may be escalating. Unlike the immediate intervention, the risk assessment is meant to be a more comprehensive evaluation of all risk reducing and risk enhancing factors affecting the student’s functioning and to use that data to guide longer term intervention and treatment goals.

Threat

A threat is any expression of intent to do harm or act out violently against someone or something. Threats may be spoken, written, drawn, symbolic, posted on the internet (TikTok, Instagram, MSN, Facebook, etc.) or made by gesture only. Threats may be direct, indirect, conditional, or veiled.

Threat Assessment

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) poses a risk to the target(s) being threatened. Although many persons of concern, and others, engage in threat-making behaviour, research indicates that few pose a risk to harm the target being threatened. Multidisciplinary Threat Assessment Teams (TATs) engage in a data collection process, through semi-structured interviews, to determine “initial levels of risk” that may be posed and plan necessary risk-reducing interventions. Although a person of concern may be assessed as low risk, there may be data that indicates a more comprehensive risk assessment is required.

Worrisome Behaviour

Worrisome behaviour is defined as those behaviours that cause concern and may indicate that a person of concern is moving toward a greater risk of violent behaviour. (The majority of behaviours from pre-kindergarten to grade 12, and mature students, falls into this category.) Worrisome behaviours include but are not limited to violent content in drawings and stories/journals, making vague threatening statements,

unusual interest in fire, and withing range of baseline behaviour. Worrisome behaviours may be an early warning sign of the development of more serious high-risk behaviours. All worrisome behaviours should be addressed in a timely manner.

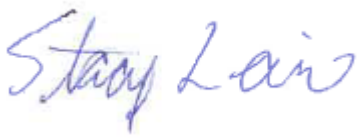





Violence

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.

Appendix L – North East Community Threat Assessment Protocol Signing Members

Date: June 2025, 2025

The North East School Division and community partners are committed to making our schools safe for students, staff, volunteers and visitors through participation in the Community Threat Assessment and Support Protocol.

North East School Division 	Saskatchewan Health Authority 
Ministry of Social Services 	Rhonda Teichreb Ministry of Corrections, Policing, and Public Safety 
Royal Canadian Mounted Police  S/Sgt. Ryan Case Reg# 48510	Suncrest College  Alison Dubreuil, President and CEO
Kinistin Saulteaux Nations	James Smith Cree Nation 