

Section I – Safe & Respectful Schools Violence Threat Risk Assessment

Turtle River School Division is committed to creating and maintaining safe environments for students, staff, parents, and others involved in the school community.

Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) is a structured process used to investigate and assess specific threats or high-risk behaviours, such as threats by students to harm self or others. It involves multi-disciplinary teams that investigate and evaluate all factors of the student's life and is designed to determine the level of concern and to respond accordingly.

#### Two Stages of VTRA:

- Stage one involves immediate risk-reducing intervention conducted by a schoolbased team consisting of the principal, resource teacher, social worker, and police officer, if available. The principal will take the lead and must inform the superintendent.
- 2. After the first level of risk is assessed and immediate risk-reducing interventions have occurred, a further risk assessment may be required. Stage two involves a comprehensive risk assessment with wider community representation, including members of the school-based team, mental health professionals, child protection workers, probation worker, etc.

#### Four Basic Steps of VTRA

- 1. Identify the worrisome or threatening behaviour.
- 2. Conduct a violence threat risk assessment by collecting relevant data (gathered from social media, friends, parents, teachers, others).
- 3. Determine if the threat-maker poses a risk. (Determine how credible the threat is and whether the person has the resources and motivation to carry it out.)
- 4. Implement appropriate risk-reducing interventions to protect the threat-maker as well as the potential target(s).

#### Principal's Responsibilities

- 1. Principals are responsible for responding to threats or worrisome behaviours by:
  - a. Ensuring immediate safety by checking for weapons and assessing the risk of immediate harm. (Check backpack, jacket locker, car.)
  - b. Investigating incident with witnesses.
  - c. If immediate threat exists, call 911 and initiate a lockdown.
- 2. If there is no immediate risk, principals must:
  - a. Consult with the superintendent and call together the stage 1 Threat Assessment Team.

Page 1 of 6

Board Informed:	Last Reviewed:	Last Revision:
March 12, 2024		



Section I – Safe & Respectful Schools Violence Threat Risk Assessment

- b. Review the incident with the team and superintendent and decide whether a Violent Threat Risk Assessment should be completed.
- c. If a VTRA is needed, determine which outside agencies need to be included in the team (CFS, probations, etc.)
- d. Decide if a suspension is appropriate and the possible length of it.
- 3. Interviewing
  - a. Decide who will do which interviews. (Principal interviews staff, principal/resource teacher interviews students, clinicians interview threat maker, parents and siblings.)
  - b. Outside agencies are contacted to attend the review meeting to share information.
- 4. Interview follow-up
  - a. The whole team attends the meeting and shares the information they gathered.
  - b. The information is recorded on the VTRA report template.
  - c. The whole team creates an intervention plan.
  - d. Referrals may be made to external agencies.
- 5. Intake meeting
  - a. The parents and the student (depending on age) are invited to the intake meeting.
  - b. The plan, consisting of requirements and recommendations, will be shared.
- 6. Follow up
  - a. Schedule a follow up meeting for within 4 to 6 weeks.

#### What is a threat?

A threat is an expression of intent to do harm or act violently against someone or something. A threat can be verbal, written, drawn, a gesture, or something posted on the internet.

#### Duty to Report

Staff, parents/guardians, students, and community members must report all threatrelated behaviours to the principal.

#### Purpose of a Threat Assessment

The purpose of a student threat assessment is:

• To ensure the emotional and physical safety of students, staff, parents, and the student making the threat.

Page 2 of 6

Board Informed:	Last Reviewed:	Last Revision:
March 12, 2024		



Section I – Safe & Respectful Schools Violence Threat Risk Assessment

- To understand the context of the threat.
- To understand the factors contributing to the threat maker's behaviour.
- To develop an intervention plan that addresses the emotional and physical safety of the threat maker
- To promote the emotional and physical safety of everyone.

Behaviours That Require a Violent Threat Risk Assessment to be completed A VTRA will be initiated for the following activities:

- Clear, direct, and plausible verbal or written threats to harm/kill others
- Threats on social media to harm/kill others or damage property
- Violence with the intent to harm or kill
- Suicidal ideation
- Possession of weapons
- Bomb threats or possession of bomb devices
- Hate incidents
- Sexual intimidation, sextortion, or assault
- Gang-related activity
- Setting fires

Information for Parents and Students

- Any and all threats need to be reported to the principal
- Investigations may involve police, divisional staff, and other community agencies.
- Investigations may involve backpacks, lockers, and cars
- Interviews will be held with the threat maker and others who have information about the incident.
- Parents/guardians of the students involved in the incident will be notified.
- Threatening behaviour may result in disciplinary actions.
- An intervention plan may be created for the person of concern.
- A support plan may be created for the individuals who were targeted by threats.
- It is important for all parties to take part in the VRTA process. If some individuals are reluctant to participate, the process will still continue

Turtle River School Division acknowledges the importance of adhering to personal information privacy laws. They commit to collecting, storing, and using personal information in accordance with these laws. The division will only collect information that is relevant and necessary to address a risk or threat. Information will only be collected as part of a threat assessment if there is a reason to believe that a risk exists. This ensures that the division doesn't engage in unnecessary surveillance or data collection.

Page 3 of 6

Board Informed:	Last Reviewed:	Last Revision:
March 12, 2024		



Section I – Safe & Respectful Schools Violence Threat Risk Assessment

Information collected as part of a threat assessment may be shared with law enforcement authorities in appropriate circumstances in order to address potential threats effectively.

Turtle River School Division emphasizes the need for transparency, legality, and a cautious approach to the collection and use of personal information, particularly in the sensitive context of threat assessment within our school division. For more information regarding the threat/risk assessment process, please visit the North American Center for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response website at: <a href="http://www.cctatr.com">www.cctatr.com</a>

Page 4 of 6

Board Informed:	Last Reviewed:	Last Revision:
March 12, 2024		



Section I – Safe & Respectful Schools Violence Threat Risk Assessment

### **VRTA Flowchart**

The	decision to eng	age in any of the	•	ow is at the discre	etion of the
<ul> <li>Worrisome Behaviour</li> <li>Concerning behaviour</li> <li>(drawings, writings, vague statements, uttering threats – even in jest).</li> <li>Observer reports concern to principal</li> <li>Principal consults with stage 1 or stage 2 VRTA team – is the threat generalized of direct?</li> </ul>		pr Exceptional Case: High Profile Behaviour Worrisome behaviour – with an audience that may be traumatized. Audience	HighPerson has access to a weapon, threatens to destroy school, is making verbal/written threats to injure or kill self or others.ome our -• Report incident to principal • Notify superintendent. • Plan for immediate risk reduction. • Activate stage 1 VRTA team.		Immediate Risk Individual is in possession of a weapon and poses a serious threat to self/others Immediate Response Notify principal Phone RCMP Initiate lock down protocol
Generalized (no target, no time frame) • Principal, superintendent Meet – is stage 1 VTRA team to be activated? • Complete VTRA Incident Report Form • Develop School Plan • Monitor behaviour	Direct (specific target)	reaction may trigger a broader trauma response • Activate stage 1 or stage 2 VTRA team • Contact superintendent • Complete VTRA Report • Develop VTRA Intervention Plan • If appropriate: -send letter home to parents/school -Facilitate a parent meeting with superintendent and RCMP -Organize a debriefing session	assessment, d implement VTF Plan or activate Team to assist Stage 1 -Define roles and tasks -Develop plan of action -Complete VRTA intervention plan If appropriate: •Send letter he parents/school •Facilitate a pa with superinter •Organize a d	evelop and RA Intervention e stage 2 VTRA Stage 2 -Define roles and tasks -Develop a plan of action -Complete VTRA Invention Plan ome to arent meeting adent and RCMP ebriefing session aff and parents erintendent to	<ul> <li>Take steps to ensure safety of students, staff, and identified victims.</li> <li>Secondary Response</li> <li>Stage 1 Team is activated.</li> <li>Develop and implement VTRA Intervention Plan or active stage 2 Team to assist.</li> <li>If appropriate -Send letter home to parents/school -Facilitate a parent meeting with superintendent and RCMP</li> <li>Organize a debriefing session for students, staff, and parents</li> <li>Contact superintendent to brief the media</li> </ul>

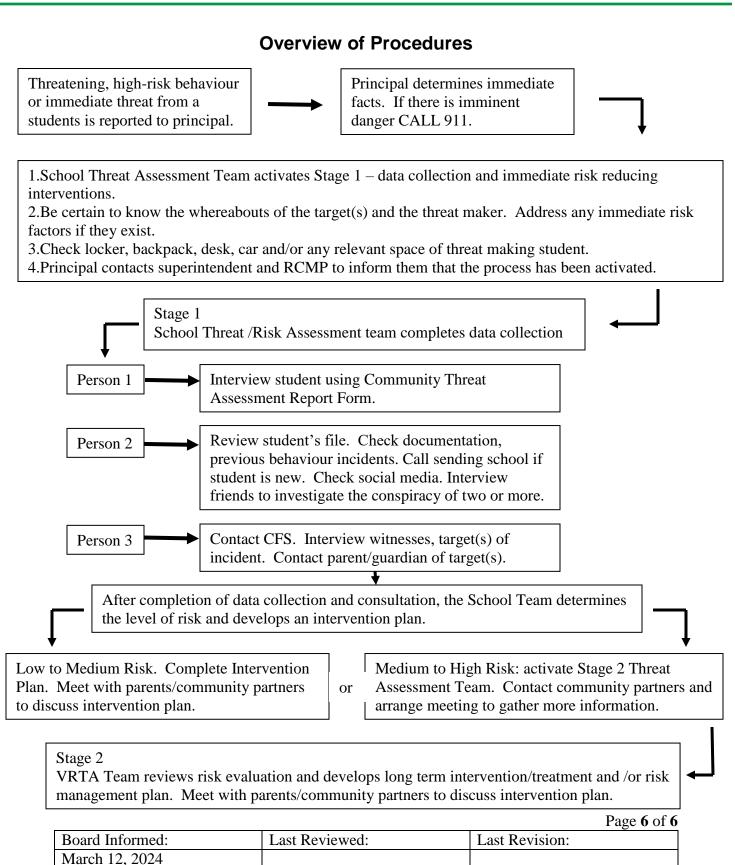
Page **5** of **6** 

Board Informed:	Last Reviewed:	Last Revision:
March 12, 2024		



Section I – Safe & Respectful Schools

Violence Threat Risk Assessment



# PARENT/CAREGIVER INTERVIEW FORM

Student Name:	Date of Birth:
Parent/Guardian name:	Relation to Student:

#### Be sure to ask parents to check student's bedroom, computer and social media

nily Dynamics:
Family composition
Current living/custody arrangements
Relationship with siblings/parent
Other significant relationships
Privacy/supervision (e.g. computer in bedroom, etc.)
CFSA involvement
dical Concerns:
Prenatal/delivery complications
Developmental milestones
Previous/pending assessments/diagnoses
Medications (prescribed by who/when/ for what/ effectiveness)
Hospitalizations/ head injury with loss of consciousness
Seizures
Trauma
Suicidal ideation/ attempts
Sleeping / eating
erests:
Books/ movies / music
Videos games
Internet searches
Free time / evening activities
ool:
Family relationship with school
Student's relationships with teachers/ administration/ support staff
Attendance
General achievement
r Group:
Who does person associate with?
What activities at school does the student participate in with peer group?
estions Related to the Current Situation:
Access to weapons / materials
Indicators (drawings, comments, general concerns)
er Worrisome Behaviour:
Fire-setting, cruelty to animals, etc

Police Contact:				
Previous contact			 	
• When:				
Occurrences:				
Family History:				
• Learning				
Mental health				
Drug / alcohol abuse				
• Trauma				
Police involvement			 	
Additional Comments:				
·	·			
	·····		 	
Completed By:		Date:		

## COMMUNITY THREAT ASSESSMENT REPORT FORM

#### STAGE 1 VTRA REPORT FORM

#### Data collection and Immediate Risk Reducing Intervention

*Violence/Threat making behaviors examples (addressed in this protocol but not limited to)* 

- Serious violence with intent to harm or kill
- Verbal/written threats to kill other (Clear, Direct and Plausible)
- Internet (Facebook, YouTube, etc.) text messaging, other social media-threats to kill others
- Possession of weapons (including replicas)
- Fire setting
- Sexual intimidation or assault
- Gang related intimidation and violence

Student	School	
Date of Birth	Date of Incident	
Grade	Parents/Guardian Names	
Age	I	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·

#### **Three Primary Hypotheses for VTRA**

- 1. It could be a conscious or unconscious cry for help.
- 2. It might be a conspiracy of two or more. (Who else could know? Who else could be involved?)
- 3. There may be evidence of fluidity.

#### **Pre-interview Considerations:**

- When possible, interview the threat maker or student of concern **after** the initial data has been collected such as locker check, interviewing the individual who reported the threat as well as the police partner doing an occurrence check for prior police contact. This will help to avoid the "uni-dimensional assessment" and provide interviewer(s) with data to develop case specific hypothesis and verbatim questions that can be asked in a strategic VTRA interview to test those hypotheses.
- There should **never** be more than 2 people in the room interviewing the threat maker or student of concern
- Remember to distinguish between <u>Assessing the threat</u> versus <u>Assessing the threat</u> <u>maker</u>

# Step 6: Stage 1 VTRA interview report form

÷	Series 1 Questions: The Incident
1.	Where did the incident happen and when?
2.	How did it come to the interviewee's attention
3.	What was the specific language of the threat, detail of the weapon or gesture made?
4.	What was there stated
	• Justification for the threat?
	Means to carry out the threat?
	• <b>Consequences</b> weighed out (I don't care if I live or die!)?
	• Conditions that could lower the level of risk (unless you take that Facebook post down
_	I will stick a knife in your throat!)?
5.	Who was present and under what circumstances did the incident of occur?
6.	What was the motivation or perceived cause of the incident?
7.	What was the response of the target (if present) at the time of the incident? <b>Did they add</b>
	or detract from Justification Process?
8.	What was the response of others who were present at the time of the incident? Did they
	add or detract from the Justification Process?
	Notes

1.	Series 2 Questions: Attack Related Behaviours Has the student sought out information consistent with his/her threat making or threat
	related behaviour?
2.	Have there been any communications suggesting ideas or intentions to attack a target currently or in the past?
3.	Has the student attempted to gain access to weapons or do they have access to weapons they have threatened to use?
4.	Have they developed a plan and how general or specific is it (time, date, identified target selection, site selection, journal or justifications, maps, floor plans)?
5.	Has the student been engaging in suspicious behaviour? Such as appearing to show inordinate interest in alarm systems, sprinkler systems, and video surveillance in school or elsewhere? Schedules and location of police?
6.	Have they engaged in rehearsal behaviour, including packing or brandishing fake but realistic looking weapons, air rifles, pistols, or engaged in fire setting?
7.	Is there any evidence of attack related behaviour in their locker (back pack, car trunk, etc.) at the school or bedroom at home (shed, garage etc.)?
8.	Have others been forewarned of a pending attack or told not to come to school because "something big is going to happen"?
	Notes

Series 3 Question: Threat Maker Typology
1. Does the threat maker (subject) appear to be more:
<ul> <li>Traditional Predominately Behavioural Type?</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Traditional Predominately Cognitive Type?</li> </ul>
Mixed Type?
Non-Traditional?
2. Does the threat maker (subject) have a history of violence or threats of violence? If yes, what is
his/her past:
(HTS) History of Human Target Selection
(SS) History of Site Selection
• (F) Frequency of Violence or Threats
Intensity of Violence or Threats
• (R) Recency
3. In the case at hand, what is his/her current:
(HTS) Human Target Selection
(SS) Site Selection
• Does it denote a significant increase in <b>BASELINE</b> behaviour?
<b>NOTE:</b> In Stage I VTRA, history of violence is a significant risk enhancer but the best predictor of future
violent behaviour is an <i>increase or shift</i> in <i>Baseline</i> . This may also include an individual who has become
more withdrawn or quiet as opposed acting out.
• Does the threat maker (subject) have a history of depression or suicidal
thinking/behaviour?
<ul> <li>Is there evidence of fluidity in his/her writings, drawings or verbalizations?</li> </ul>
• Does the threat maker (subject) use drugs or alcohol? Is there evidence it is a risk
enhancing factor in the case at hand?
• Is there a mental health diagnosis or evidence of a mental health diagnosis that may be a
risk enhancing factor in the case at hand?
Notes

#### Series 4 questions: The Target

\*Remember that in some cases the target is higher risk for violence than the threat maker with the most common case being where the threat maker is the victim of bullying and the target is the bully.

1. Does the target have a history of violence or threats of violence? If yes, what is his/her past:

2. If yes, what is the frequency, intensity & recency (FIR) of the violence?

3. What has been his/her past human target selection?

4. What has been his/her past site selection?

5. Is there evidence the target has instigated the current situation?

Notes

#### Series 5 questions: Peer Dynamics

1. Are others involved in the incident that may intentionally or unintentionally be contributing to the justification process?

2. Who is in the threat maker's (subject's) peer structure & where does the threat maker (subject) fit (i.e. leader, co-leader, and follower)?

3. Is there a difference between the threat maker's individual baseline & his/her peer group baseline behaviour?

4. Who is in the target's peer structure & where does the target fit (i.e. leader, co-leader, and follower)?

5. Is there a peer who could assist with the plan or obtain the weapons necessary for an attack?

Notes

Series	6 questions: Empty Vessel
	) have a healthy relationship with a mature adult?
	nowledge versus general knowledge or interest in violent
events, themes, or incidents, including	
3. How has he/she responded to prior	
	books, music, Internet searches, does the student (subject)
fill himself/herself with?	
	s filling him/herself with is influencing his/her behaviour?
(Imitators vs. Innovators?)	
6. What related themes are present in h	
7. Is there evidence of fluidity and/or r	eligiosity?
na se en entre a para da la capacita entre a ser en entre da ser en entre de la capacita en entre de la capacit En este entre e	Notes

# Series 7 Questions: Contextual Factors 1. Has the threat maker experienced a recent loss, such as a death of a family member or friend; a recent break-up; rejection by a peer or peer group; been cut from a sports team; received a rejection notice from a college, university, military etc.? 2. Have his/her parents just divorced or separated? 3. Is he/she the victim of child abuse & has the abuse been dormant but resurfaced at this time? 4. Is he/she being initiated into a gang & is it voluntary or forced recruitment? 5. Have has had an argument or "fight" with a memory of the resurfaced at the second secon

5. Has he/she recently had an argument or "fight" with a parent/caregiver or someone close to him/her?

6. Has he/she recently been charged with an offence or suspended or expelled from school?

7. Is the place where he/she has been suspended to likely to increase or decrease his/her level of risk?

Notes

Series 8 questions: Family Dynamics
1. How many homes does the student (subject) reside in (shared custody, goes back and forth
from parent to grandparent's home)?
2. Is the student (subject) connected to a healthy/ mature adult in the home?
3. Who all lives in the family home (full-time and part-time)? Has anyone entered or left the home who may be influencing level of risk?
4. Who seems to be in charge of the family and how often is he/she around?
5. Has the student engaged in violence or threats of violence towards his/her siblings or parent(s) caregiver(s)? If so, what form of violence and to whom including Frequency, Intensity, Recency (FIR)?
6. What is the historical baseline at home? What is the current baseline at home? Is there evidence of evolution at home?
7. Are parent(s) or caregiver(s) concerned for their own safety or the safety of their children or others?
8. Does the student's level or risk (at home, school, or the community) cycle according to who is in the home (i.e. the student is low risk for violence when his/her father is home but high risk during the times his/her father travels away from home for work)?
9. Does the student have a history of trauma? Including car accidents, falls, exposure to violence, abuse, etc.
10. Has the student been diagnosed with a DSM IV diagnoses?
11. Is there a history of mental health disorders in the family?
12. Is there a history of drug or alcohol abuse in the family?
Notes

#### Step 8: Review Findings with the Threat Assessment Team.

VTRA Team members collate the data and discuss all relevant information regarding the student. As a team, ask the question: *"To what extent does the student pose a threat to school/student safety?"* "Does the student pose a threat to himself/herself or someone outside the school (i.e. family)?" The Stage I Assessment is an overall assessment of current level of risk and is a precursor to (if necessary) a more comprehensive Stage II Risk Evaluation.

#### □ Low Level of Concern

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 of the matter may be appropriate.

#### □ <u>Medium Level of Concern</u>

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. 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).
- There is no clear indication that the student of concern has taken preparatory steps (e.g., weapon seeking), although there may be ambiguous or inconclusive references pointing to that possibility. There may be a specific statement seeking to convey that the threat is not empty; e.g., "I'm serious!"
- There are moderate or lingering concerns about the student's potential to act violently.
- There is an increase or change 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 in an effort 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. Student 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 student has acquired or practiced with a weapon or has had a victim under surveillance.
- Information suggests **strong** concern about the student's potential to act violently.
- There is a significant increase or change in baseline behaviour.
- Immediate intervention is required to prevent an act of violence from occurring.

#### **Step 9: Determine a Course of Action**

With the input of *all* Threat Assessment Team members, decide on a course of action. If the student presents a low to medium level of concern, the student can likely be managed at school with appropriate (increased) supervision. If the student presents a medium to high level of concern, the Threat Assessment Team has determined that more information is required and will initiate the Stage 2 threat assessment.



Low to Medium Level of Concern

Implement the Intervention Plan (Most students can be managed at school with interventions.)



Medium to High Level of Concern

The Threat Assessment Team has determined that a Stage II Threat Assessment is needed.

#### **Step 10: Develop an Intervention Plan**

Use the following Intervention Plan to address all concerns which were identified during Stage I Assessment.

Stage 1 Intervention Plan (attach additional pages as needed)
Disciplinary action taken:
Intended victim warned and/or parents or guardians notified.
Suicide assessment initiated on:     By:       Contract not to harm self or others created (please attach).
Communicate with staff and teachers on a need-to-know basis.
□ Daily or □ Weekly check-in with (Title/Name):
Hold student accountable for being on time and remaining where they expected to be.
Backpack, coat, and other belongings check-in and check-out by:
Late arrival and/or early dismissal.
Increased supervision in these settings:
Modify daily schedule by:
Drug and/or alcohol intervention with:
If relevant, IPP goals and placement options reviewed.
Review community-based resources and interventions with parents or caretakers.
Obtain permission to share information with community partners such as counselors and therapists.

Other action:

# PARENT/GUARDIANS (attach additional pages as needed)

Parents will provide the following supervision and/or intervention:

Parents will:

#### **Possible Home and Community Interventions:**

- Parents agree to make sure the student does not have access to materials to facilitate the implementation of the threat (inspection of bedroom and computer for evidence of plans, maps, lists or materials to implement the violent act).
- Parents agree to allow law enforcement officers to search student's belongings to help determine progress towards threat development.
- Parents have been provided contact information to Alberta Health Services Addictions and Mental Health and have agreed to follow up.
- Future internet access will be limited and/or monitored (i.e. computer will be in a public area of the house).
- Parents agree to inform school administration ASAP if student makes further threatening statements.
- Student's travel to and from school will be supervised by the parent or guardian.

Team members	Date	Name	Signature
Principal			
Ĩ			
A soistant Principal			
Assistant Principal			
Coordinator-Division			
Supports and Services/Division			
VTRA lead person or			
designate			
RCMP/City or Camrose Police			
Cannose i once			
FSLW			
Children's Services			
children b bervices			
Alberta Health Service- Mental Health			
Mental Fleath			
Other( e.g. Alberta			
Health Services-			
Addictions, Victim Services)			

Review date:	Meeting called by:		

Step 7: Notify the Threat Maker(s) and Target(s) Parent(s) or Guardian(s) at the earliest opportunity.

Parents/guardians have been notified of the situation and this Stage I data collection phase. Parents/guardians have NOT been notified because:\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Use Parent/Caregiver Interview Form when interviewing the parents/guardians of threat maker.