
214 Students AP – Assessment of Risk to Others -- ARTO (VTRA Model) -- Process

Assessment of Risk to Others -- ARTO / VIOLENCE THREAT RISK ASSESSMENT (VTRA Model)

(Based on the Southeast Alberta Regional ARTO Protocol)

Background and Purpose:

The goal of this Administrative Procedure is to ensure that PRPS staff respond to behaviors that may pose a potential risk for violence to any individual or members of the community in a manner consistent with the established regional protocol. The ultimate purpose of the ARTO process is to intervene as early as possible when an individual may be moving toward violence, serving as an avenue to **reduce risk** rather than a disciplinary measure.

Key Definitions:

- **Assessment of Risk to Others (ARTO):** This is the current practical application of the VTRA model, utilizing softer language for communication with non-professionals involved in a case concerning an Individual of Concern (IOC).
- **High-Risk Behaviours:** These automatically activate the Stage 1 ARTO process.
- **Worrisome Behaviours:** These are behaviors that cause concern and may indicate a student is moving toward a greater risk of violence
- **Site Specific Threat Assessment Team (SSTAT - Stage 1):** This multidisciplinary team includes the school principal/designate, a VTRA trained clinician (SWC, member of the Student Experiences Team) and the police of jurisdiction, along with others deemed appropriate. SSTAT conducts the Micro Assessment and initial data collection.
- **Community Threat Assessment Team (CTAT - Stage 2):** This team is activated for a Macro Assessment when an SSTAT determines an individual poses a medium or high level of concern. The CTAT involves SSTAT members, central office staff, and may include community partners such as child protection or other provincial personnel.

Procedures:**1. Providing Notice (Fair Notice):**

- Prairie Rose Public Schools will ensure that **fair notice** of policies and procedures regarding ARTO is provided to individuals, families, and staff members.
- This notification will be sent to parents/guardians and students at the beginning of every school year and posted permanently on the jurisdiction website.

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- The notification makes clear that PRPS has "**zero tolerance for not responding to threat-making (or threat-related) behaviours,**" and that the process will continue even if the threat-maker or parent/guardian is reluctant to participate.

2. Reporting and Duty to Respond:

- Any person in the school community must promptly report knowledge of high-risk student behaviour or potential for violent behavior to the school administration.
- In school-based cases, the principal or their designate is responsible for activating the protocol when threat-making or worrisome behavior is reported.
- If information regarding a **clear, direct, and plausible threat** is received after school hours, police must be called, and parents/guardians notified immediately to protect the target(s).

3. Immediate Risk Situations:

- Situations involving armed persons or active shooter scenarios require the **immediate activation of the school lockdown protocol, and 911 must be called**. Police intervention and protection of students and staff is the first response.

4. Responding to Worrisome Behaviours:

- Worrisome behaviours will be communicated to the school administrator for **consultation** with the jurisdictional leads (Assistant Superintendent - Student Experiences or Director of Psychological Services).
- Unless further data suggests a significant shift in baseline behavior, violence, or weapon possession, the ARTO team is generally not formally activated for worrisome behaviors alone.

5. Assessment and Intervention (Stage 1 and 2):

- Upon activation for high-risk behavior, the SSTAT begins immediate data collection (Micro Assessment) and implements a Trauma-Informed and Least Intrusive (TILI) Intervention Plan.
- Data collection involves structured interviews and considering four dynamics: personality of the student, family dynamics, school dynamics, and social dynamics.
- If the incident is deemed low risk, or the information is unsubstantiated, the case may be resolved at Stage 1.
- If the risk is moderate or high, or Stage 1 interventions are ineffective, the case proceeds to the Stage 2 Macro Assessment (CTAT).

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6. Use of Suspension:

- **Threat assessment trumps suspension;** Stage 1 data collection should occur before a suspension is considered.
- Suspension, if used, is considered an intervention strategy and should be carefully planned as a poorly timed out-of-school suspension may create a high-risk context for a struggling individual.

7. Parent/Guardian Notification and Support:

- Parents/guardians of the threat maker are notified at the earliest opportunity after the Stage 1 team has confirmed the threat and determined the potential for violence. Parents/guardians are considered vital sources of insight and data during the assessment.
- Parents/guardians of the target(s) must also be notified, and a plan for emotional supports must be made. The VTRA trained clinician is responsible for ensuring the target/victim receives necessary services.

8. Re-entry and Follow-up:

- The ARTO team will guide the planning for re-entry into the school environment following any suspension. The team may require a written contract detailing necessary steps for the individual, family, and school prior to re-entry.
- The director of Psychological Services is responsible for storing the VTRA/ARTO documentation.

9. Information Sharing:

- PRPS and its community partners are committed to sharing relevant information to avert or minimize violence that affects health and safety, operating within the framework of relevant privacy legislation (such as the Alberta Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and the Alberta Children First Act). Timely sharing of information ensures supportive plans are put in place.