

8.15 Employee Safety Planning Manual



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Introduction to the Employee Safety Planning Manual

Maintaining a safe and caring school environment is of critical importance to all personnel in the school system. It is equally important for personnel to work in environments that are safe and free from the risk of violence. Unfortunately, incidents do occur from time to time, and this manual is a guide to Employee Safety Planning procedures when such incidents occur.

These procedures were first developed by School District No. 36 (Surrey) and School District No. 42 (Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows) in consultation with the Workers' Compensation Board. This collaboration led to a training of all districts around the province and each district now uses a version of this manual as the template for their unique needs. This manual is adapted from School District No.33 (Chilliwack) for our district with permission.

Section 1: Safety Planning

EMPLOYEE SAFETY PLANNING

Rationale

Working within the Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools Framework.

Our schools work hard to meet the educational, behavioural, and emotional needs of students, in classrooms that not only accommodate diversity, but that also provide optimum opportunities for learning. In British Columbia, a vision of how to meet some of these challenges is outlined in the document [Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools: A Guide](#), (Ministry of Education, 2008). When we consider the role that Employee Safety Planning has in this discussion, certain descriptors from this document are relevant.

Safe, caring, and orderly schools:

... focus on prevention ...

... respond consistently to incidents in a fair and reasoned manner, using interventions that repair harm, strengthen relationships, and restore a sense of belonging.

... participate in ... policies, procedures and practices that promote school safety.

The Employee Safety Planning process used by School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake) is consistent with these Ministry guidelines and may be seen as a demonstration of our efforts to develop consistent practices and procedures that provide for the safety of district employees due to risk of violence from students.

Working within WorkSafe BC Framework

The Employee Safety Planning process addresses the issue of violence toward SD8 staff members from students. Violence, as defined by WorkSafeBC, relates to “...the attempted or actual exercise by a person, other than a worker, of any physical force so as to cause injury to a worker, and includes any threatening statement or behaviour which gives a worker reasonable cause to believe that he or she is at risk of injury” (Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 4.27/WorkSafe BC, 2005).

In addition, WorkSafeBC regulations require that employers have procedures in place for assessing “... a risk of injury to workers from violence in the workplace ...” and to “establish procedures, policies and work environment arrangements to eliminate the risk to workers from violence” or if this “... is not possible, establish procedures, policies and work environment arrangements to minimize the risk to workers.” (Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 4.28/Worksafe BC, 2005).

For more information and publications refer to [WorkSafeBC](#)'s website.



THEORETICAL BACKGROUND FOR EMPLOYEE SAFETY PLANNING

Safety Plans are Not Behaviour Plans

Employee Safety Planning is a process to protect the safety and well-being of staff and other students in an emergency situation, and more important, to prevent such situations from arising at all. Safety plans, while sharing some key components with behaviour plans, are not effective intervention plans on their own since they do not teach new skills or focus on long-term educational approaches designed to make problem behaviours unnecessary (Carr, 1997). Safety plans are one part of a larger intervention process which would ideally include a functional behaviour assessment of the problem behaviours that would enable the team to develop a positive behaviour plan for the student in question.

Employee Safety Planning is a Process

It is fundamental to understand that Employee Safety Planning in an educational context is a process that is designed to, in the language of Safe, Caring, and Orderly Schools, “... respond consistently to incidents in a fair and reasoned manner, using interventions that repair harm, strengthen relationships and restore a sense of belonging.” (Ministry of Education, 2004). Parents and school teams are often traumatized by incidents of violence and the writing of a safety plan can guide the team into a collaborative discussion about keeping staff safe while maintaining a positive focus on the student.

Safety Plans Utilize Behavioural Principles

Part of the Employee Safety Planning process includes the identification of setting events and antecedents to behaviour in an attempt to identify those situations where staff members are most at risk from a student behavioural escalation.

Prior Events (the situations that set the student up for a problem):

- Are most often events or situations that occur out of school and are biological, physiological, or social in origin.
- Do not cause the behaviour but increase the probability that the student will react to antecedents at school – May involve sleep, diet, physical health or family factors.
- Need the involvement of home to mitigate these factors.

Immediate Triggers:

- Are typically those situations or events that occurs at school just prior to a problem behaviour.
- Can be a particular work demand, a particular negative interaction with others, being ignored, or a particular setting variable such as too much noise or movement.



- May not always lead to problem behaviour, but could, especially when prior setting events are present.

Safety Plans Seek to Identify the Stages of Escalation and Identify Appropriate Responses

The escalation cycle for aggression is outlined in the Nonviolent Crisis Intervention Foundation Course (2015) and outlines the process for responding to behaviour within safety plan.

The Stages of Frustration and Appropriate Responses:

1. Anxiety: Student sighs or uses other nonverbal cues. Teacher can respond by active listening and nonjudgmental talk.
2. Stress: Student exhibits minor behavior problems. Teacher can use proximity control, boost student interest, or provide assistance with assignments.
3. Defensiveness: Student argues and complains. Teacher can remind student of rules, use conflict resolution, and encourage student to ask for help.
4. Physical Aggression: Student has lost control and may hit, bite, kick, or throw objects. Teacher can escort the student from class, get help, and protect the safety of the other children.
5. Tension Reduction: Student releases tension through crying or verbal venting or student may become sullen and withdrawn. Teacher can ... help the student gain insight into feelings and behavior. (Myles & Simpson, 1998).

The safety plan as used by SD8 identifies four of the five stages of escalation: anxiety, defensiveness, risk behaviour, and tension reduction. Immediate responses for each stage are identified and the safety plan team will identify appropriate student-specific responses for each stage.

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR EMPLOYEE SAFETY PLANNING

Use Trained District Staff

The safety plan process is most effective when trained district personnel are employed by school staff in the writing of a safety plan. In SD8, the personnel who are trained are principals, Inclusion Support Teachers (IST), and CPI Trainers. Final approval of safety plan approval is made by the Manager of Safe Schools & OHS. Using trained district staff to write safety plans ensures that

- there is a facilitator who is “somewhat” removed from the immediate situation.
- consideration is given to Employee Safety Planning as a process.
- the safety plan meets or exceeds WorkSafeBC expectations.
- district personnel are informed of all incidents of violence.



Safety Plans are for Staff Safety

At times, schools may have concerns about the safety of students and request a safety plan. As a result of consultation with WorkSafeBC, currently, safety plans are exclusively for incidents of violence or risk of violence toward staff. The safety plan process becomes cumbersome and difficult to administer if student to student incidents are included and it is difficult to delineate which incidents would involve a safety plan. In these circumstances, a response plan for a particular concern (such as leaving the school grounds) or a behaviour plan to improve peer to peer interactions would be appropriate.

Develop District Practices and Procedures

It is important to develop district practices and procedures so that all personnel in the district, particularly principals, know when a safety plan:

- is necessary
- must be reviewed (within 90 days after creation)
- can be terminated or renewed depending on if the behaviour is still present

Consistent implementation and documentation is critical for effective Employee Safety Planning. It is also important to have procedures in place that ensure:

- All personnel on staff are aware of when a safety plan is needed and all principals need to bring procedures to staff meetings.
- Personnel working directly with the student have an opportunity to read the safety plan before working with the student (kept in Principal's file and should be part of TTOC and temporary EA orientation)
- That procedures are in place to have a signed copy in the student's school and district files (one person assigned to be responsible).
- That appropriate resources and follow-up is provided in any situation of violence toward staff members and EFAP information is provided to affected staff.

References

A Brief to the Royal Commission on Worker's Compensation in British Columbia from the British Columbia Teacher's Federation, May 1997, British Columbia Teacher's Federation, 100-550 West 6th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C., V5Z 4P2. (unable to access reference)

Carr, Edward G., et al. *Communication-based intervention for problem behavior: A user's guide for producing positive change*. Paul H Brookes Publishing, 1994.

Safety Plans: Pro-Active Planning for Staff Safety. CUPE 411 Health and Safety News. Sept. 2005.

Ministry of Education, British Columbia, (2008). *Safe, Caring, and Orderly Schools: A Guide*: Queen's Printer, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada.

Nonviolent Crisis Intervention Foundation Course. Crisis Prevention Institute, Inc. (2015).

Occupational Health and Safety Regulations (2005), Worker's Compensation Board of BC (WorkSafeBC). Crown Publications, Victoria, BC, Canada.

Section 2: Safety Planning Guide

DISTRICT POLICY/PROCEDURES

Employee Safety Plans: Overview

- Are risk control plans implemented when there is reasonable cause to believe that a student may injure a staff member or district employee.
- Satisfy the WorkSafeBC requirements and district need for employees to be informed of the potential risk of workplace violence and to mitigate against the possibility of such risks.
- Do not work to improve the behaviour of students.
- Require careful documentation and implementation.
- Should always be followed by the development or review of a behaviour plan.

An Employee Safety Plan must be written if the Workplace Risk Assessment (WRA) threshold indicates it is needed.

Worker's Report of Injury, Occupational Disease, Violence or Near Miss.

When an incident of violence directed towards staff occurs, the following steps must be followed.

1. Incidents of violence as defined by the WorkSafeBC must be reported promptly to the principal by the affected staff member or district employee using the **Worker's Report of Injury, Occupational Disease, Violence or Near Miss** located in the school office. The completed report must be forwarded as per the directions.
2. The principal must initiate an investigation immediately following a report of violence directed toward a staff member or district employee.



3. During the investigative process, it may be appropriate to send home or suspend the student in question for behaviours that are concerning and/or violent. **Note:** On a case-by-case basis, it may be necessary to restrict the student from returning to school until an employee safety plan is developed or amended. Please consult with the Assistant Superintendent, Inclusive Education in the case of a student with disabilities and diverse abilities.
4. The principal will complete the Workplace Risk Assessment (WRA) form to determine if a safety plan is required for the student.
5. ***A Safety plan must be written when: A WRA form indicates a risk of violence to staff.***
6. Based on the results of the investigation and completion of a WRA form following a concerning incident, the principal will call a meeting within three business days – if appropriate – to design a safety plan as an action to control risk.
7. A member of district staff from inclusive education services, trained in writing safety plans will assist/consult with the development of a safety plan.
8. A meeting will be convened which must include the principal, all personnel who work directly with the student, the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student, and a member of district staff from inclusive education services.
9. A safety plan will include:
 - Awareness of early warning signs relative to escalation of behaviour.
 - Strategies for early intervention, de-escalation, and appropriate responses to end escalating behaviours.
 - A progress crisis intervention plan that details staff actions, specifically:
 - keeping a safe distance
 - clearing the area
 - assigning a team leader who directs the actions of intervening adults
 - using physical restraint strategies as a last resort when there is a danger to self/others and a plan to train staff – if necessary – in a crisis response.
 - A place to sign and date the safety plan.
 - A reintegration plan for a student restricted from attending school until a safety plan is developed/modified (see # 3 above).



- A review and/or termination date.
10. The principal will review all safety plans and risk assessments and communicate hazards at regularly scheduled meetings of the schools **Joint Health and Safety Committee** (JHSC). **Names will not be used in minutes or during the review.*
 11. A meeting must be called to **review and/or modify** an existing safety plan if a change occurs such that the risk of violence between a student and a staff member is different and/or an incidence of violence occurs.
 12. The safety plan will require careful documentation:
 - All persons who attended the safety plan meeting are encouraged to sign one copy of the completed safety plan.
 - A copy of the safety plan must be kept at the administrator and all personnel (e.g., TTOC, bus drivers, etc.) who will work with the student in question must read the safety plan and sign that they have done so before interacting with the student. **Note:** The principal is responsible to ensure that this provision is followed.
 - A copy of the signed safety plan must be forwarded to the Manager of Safe Schools for documentation purposes.
 13. If any required member of the safety plan development group refuses to sign the plan or attend the meeting, the principal must contact the Assistant Superintendent, Inclusive Education and the Manager of Safe Schools & OHS.

WORKPLACE RISK ASSESSMENT (WRA)

Overview

The WRA form completion requirements are in accordance with Workers' Compensation Board Inspection Report Orders and the [Workers' Compensation Board Occupational Health and Safety Regulations](#) - Violence in the Workplace 4.27 through to 4.31.

Instruction

The WRA form assesses the threshold of student violence directed toward a school district employee. Ultimately, the purpose of completing this form is to determine if a threshold of violence has been met (see below) that warrants the development of a safety plan.

The WRA form must be completed by the principal when:

1. Early identification (e.g., file review, information sharing, interview, etc.) indicates that reasonable cause exists that a student has presented concerns (i.e., violence directed toward a school district employee) in the past; or
2. Incidents of student violence directed toward a school district employee are reported by the employee to the principal.



When completing the WRA form it is essential that consideration be taken of previous employee experience with the student. Conducting a permanent records file review and speaking directly to involved staff to determine if a prior risk was established normally accomplish this. When the WRA form is being completed for the first time because a student new to the school system (arriving from pre-school, home school, or other district) presents concerns, contact with persons who have recent experience with the student is required.

The WRA must be reviewed by the school JHSC.

Please feel free to contact the Assistant Superintendent, Inclusive Education at any time with regard to WRA form completion.

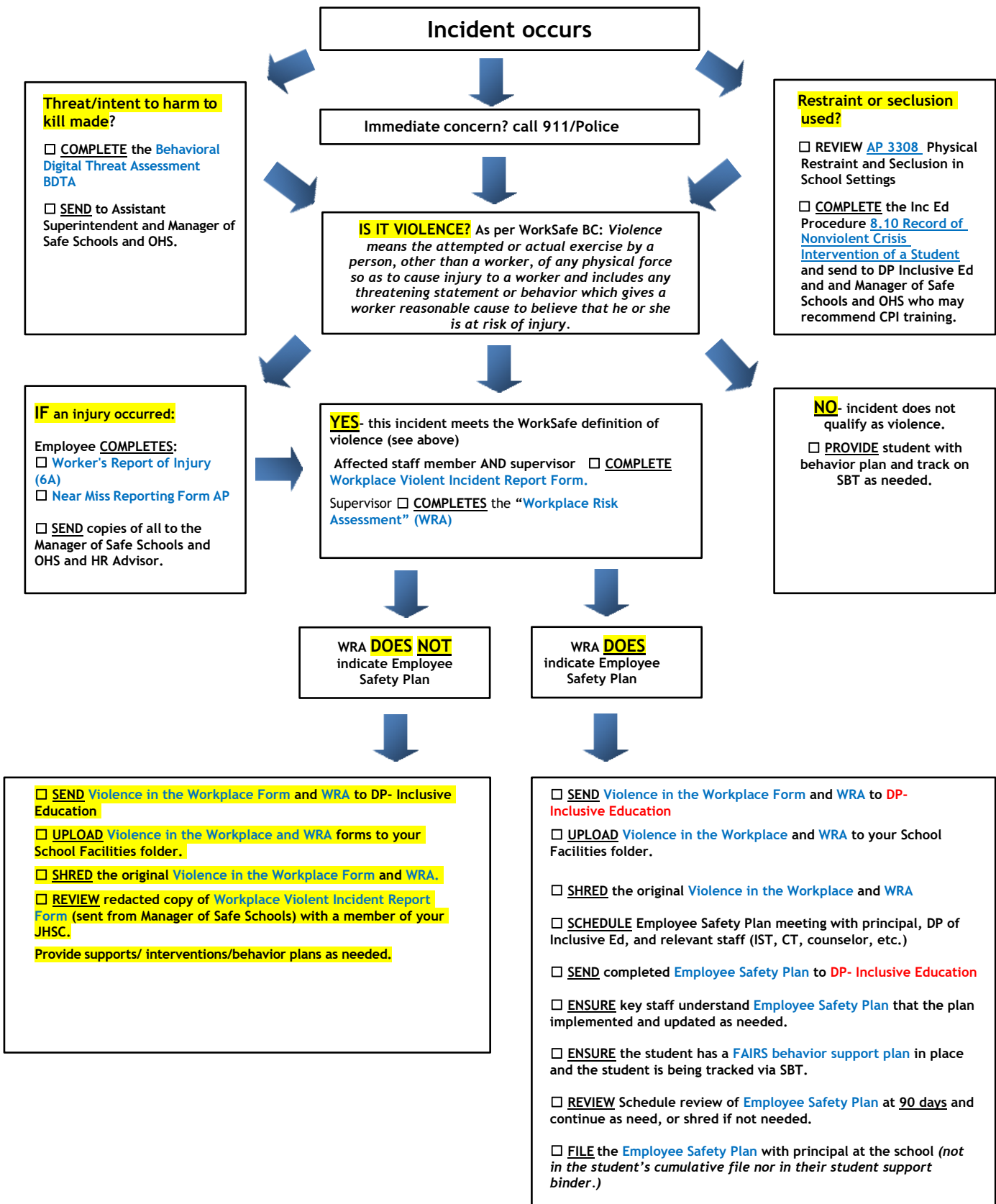
Violence Threshold Indicator

A safety plan is MANDATORY when:

1. The **Intensity indicator** on the WRA form exceeds “Low”, or
2. The **Frequency indicator** on the WRA form exceeds “Low” while the **Intensity indicator** exceeds “None”.

When a risk to staff safety is determined, it is essential that a safety plan be established IMMEDIATELY.

8.15.1 Employee Safety Plan Flow Chart



Section 3: Forms

8.15.3 Workplace Risk Assessment (WRA)

If a student initiates a violent incident, this form is to be used by Principals, in consultation with the affected staff member and a member of the Joint School Health and Safety Committee, to determine if a Safety Plan for that student is required.

Definition: "Violence means the attempted or actual exercise by a person, other than a worker, of any physical force so as to cause injury to a worker and includes any threatening statement or behavior which gives a worker reasonable cause to believe that he or she is at risk of injury." - Reg 4.27



Date: _____ School: _____

Name of person reporting a concern: _____

Name of student involved in concern/incident: _____ D.O.B. _____

Date of incident: _____

Nature of the concern/incident: _____

Persons investigating risk: _____

The following chart is meant to assess behavioural incidents directed **toward staff ONLY**.

INTENSITY	FREQUENCY
<p>If an incident has occurred, how severe was the injury?</p> <p>High - a severe injury requiring hospitalization</p> <p>Medium - moderate injury such as a sprain or fracture</p> <p>Low - a minor injury such as a bruise or scratch</p> <p>None - not applicable</p>	<p>How often have the incidents occurred?</p> <p>High - at least once a week up to once or more a day</p> <p>Medium - at least once a month up to once a week</p> <p>Low - at least once a year up to once a month</p> <p>None - not applicable</p>
<p>The intensity of the incident(s) is:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> High</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Medium</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Low</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> None</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-left: 100px;"> <p><i>Please check (f) the box that best describes the risk at school.</i></p> </div>	<p>The frequency of the incidents is:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> High</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Medium</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Low</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> None</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-left: 100px;"> <p><i>Please check (f) the box that best describes the risk at school.</i></p> </div>

A safety plan **must** be written when:

- (1) the intensity indicator exceeds "low" **OR**
- (2) the frequency indicator exceeds "low" while the intensity indicator exceeds "none"

- 1) A Safety Plan is presently in place for this student.
- If an Employee Safety Plan is already in place for this student, do not proceed to question 2 or 3, unless the behavior is new and another Employee Safety Plan meeting is required.
 - Student meets WRA threshold and presents a risk of violence toward staff (see chart above).
 - The principal or designate signature is required on this form.
 - The principal or designate will send this form to the District Principal, Inclusive Education immediately to confirm or arrange for a safety plan meeting.
- 2) The WRA indicates the student does NOT present a risk of violence toward staff.

Principal Signature

Date - Form Completed

Names of others who contributed to the risk assessment:

<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>

8.15.4 Employee Safety Plan Template

Student
Date: _____
Name: _____
DOB: _____
School: <u>Choose School</u> _____
Grade: _____

Team Members
Principal: _____
IST: _____
Classroom Teacher: _____
Other: _____
Other: _____

Objective: To ensure that staff working with the student are aware of responses and safety procedures in place to maintain a safe, productive learning environment for the student and staff.

Safety Issue: The student, on occasion, will

1. Planning Information:

Staff working with _____ will read and sign this safety plan.

Key Understandings about Student (Provide a brief positive profile of this student)

Strengths:

Interests:

2. Prior Events:

Behaviours are more likely in the presence of certain early warning signs:

Prior Events (Prior situations/events that predict the student will have more difficulty in a day e.g., missing breakfast, morning routine off, feeling sick, constipation, allergies, medication effects, negative interactions with peers/siblings before school)	Strategies (Immediate actions to take when the student presents as anxious, unwell or upset - steps to prevent escalation e.g., monitor the student upon entry, Plan B day, offer breakfast)

3. Immediate Triggers:

Be aware of situations and events that are immediate triggers for the escalation of behaviour:

Immediate Triggers (Actions or events that often occur immediately before problem behaviour e.g., verbal overload, non-preferred task demand, noisy environment, unstructured social situation, student perceives someone is upset with them, unpredicted change of routine, being corrected, hearing NO)	Strategy (Immediate actions to prevent escalation e.g., warning before transitions, allow processing time, break outside of room if too noisy, monitor tone of voice to use with student. Avoid strategies that need implementation time - these are for a behaviour plan. Focus on actions that anyone can use immediately.

4. **Crisis Response Plan:** (Staff responses to student's behaviour. Remove examples.)

Designated staff will implement the following crisis management plan when necessary.

Precursor Behaviours (What you see)	Staff Responses (What you do)
<p>Anxiety: (Noticeable increase or change in) e.g.: glassy eyed, tense, hunched over, repetitive language</p>	<p>Be Supportive: (Empathetic, non-judgmental response)</p>
<p>Defensive: (Cues that this student is beginning to lose the ability to think or process information) e.g.: stands up, flops down, argues...</p>	<p>Be Directive: (Set simple, clear, enforceable limits)</p>
<p>Acting Out: (Risk to self or others*)</p>	<p>Crisis Intervention Plan*: (Injury prevention):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) keep a safe distance. b) clear the area. c) assign one person to direct the actions of intervening adults. d) physical restraint strategies <u>as a last resort</u> when there is a danger to self/others.
<p>Tension Reduction: (Cues that this student is calm)</p>	<p>Therapeutic Rapport: (Re-establish rapport - do not recriminate)</p>

* If there is contact with body fluids, refer to SD8 Health & Safety Procedures.

5. Other Means to Minimize Risk:

(It is essential to consider any environmental factors that may affect risk, such as the wearing of clothing or jewelry, the positioning of furniture and doorways/exits, the availability of loose objects, for example).

6. Post Incident Debriefing: (ensure all involved employee(s) are included)

7. Criteria for Calling Home:

8. Reintegration Plan: (if required)

9. This Plan will be Reviewed:

- Regularly by the principal or designate, and
- If any change in behaviour occurs such that the risk of violence is different and/or an incidence of violence occurs, and
- At school health & safety meetings.

10. A 90 day Safety Plan Review Meeting will be Convened:

The principal or designate will call a safety plan review meeting if new information indicates that the safety plan needs to be reviewed or modified no longer than 90 days.

Plan Review Date (Within 90 calendar days): _____

11. Next Steps:

A Behaviour Plan is in place yes no *If “no”, create a Student Behaviour Plan.

Action (example: Behaviour plan meeting has been set, parent will take child to the doctor, school will arrange for art therapy...)	Person Responsible

Statement to be shared with Employee Safety Plan meeting participants:

Section 115 of the Workers Compensation Act requires that employers inform their workers about all known or reasonably foreseeable health and safety hazards, including workplace violence.

I have read this plan and am aware of safety procedures to be followed when

working with _____.
(Student’s name)

Signature:

Title:

Date:

(DIST or DP Inclusive Ed)

Clear Form



Principal Signature

Date - Form Completed

Names of others who contributed to the risk assessment:

<hr/>	<hr/>
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