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ALERT

April 18, 2017

**Extended Critical Period
Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA)
And
Traumatic Aftermath**

As many are aware, we are experiencing the largest extended critical period we have ever faced as we head into this week's anniversary of Columbine. This critical period has been exacerbated by the ongoing dynamic political climate. There have been a number of recent hate crimes that were identified through the Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) process responding to threat-related behaviour. These include: cultural/ethnic specific threats and incidents of violence, violence against sexual and gender minorities. We are expecting that this critical period will take us to the end of the academic year. This will increase the complexity of our work, as professionals, children and youth alike become increasingly tired as the school year winds down.

As the more recent high-profile incidents have not occurred in our country we need to be reminded that Canada is not immune to these types of incidents. In the field of VTRA we distinguish between "Traditional" versus "Non-Traditional" offenders and most of the high-profile crimes are being committed by the Non-Traditional (those with no history of violence until they commit the crime). We have also never seen a time in which serious violence and the justification for it has become so widespread and commonplace. Therefore, as has always been a theme in these ALERTS, increase your connections with those you are most concerned about.

It is clear that we need to recognize the work of our school communities and all partner agencies throughout the country in the field of VTRA. We would prefer these high profile targeted incidents of violence were not occurring but we have seen many proactive targeted prevention and intervention plans developed and implemented. We need to remind ourselves that through thoughtful collaboration and good information sharing, without a doubt, more lives have been saved than lost.

Different than previous Alerts where we provide VTRA specific reminders, we wanted to acknowledge your work, and also remind your communities about the importance of the community protocols and the need to revisit existing protocols to determine the need for any changes or additions. Take this time to celebrate your work, dedication, and commitment to the VTRA process and most of all take care of yourself and your own well-being.

Here in British Columbia, we should celebrate the current and ongoing commitment to this work by all levels of government through the ERASE strategy.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us directly.

Sincerely,

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