



Health and Safety/ Workplace Violence and Harassment Policies

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Policy adapted from work of Ted Postma
Calvin Christian School, Hamilton, ON



HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

Thunder Bay Christian School, as a Christian community is devoted to the welfare of its employees and students and recognizes its responsibility to promote their health and safety. In keeping with its mission, TBCS undertakes to provide a healthy and safe work environment and to make every effort to achieve this objective. The Board of Trustees gives its promise that every reasonable precaution will be taken to protect all employees and students from violence, harassment, injury or occupational disease.

Thunder Bay Christian School will make every effort to provide a safe, healthy work environment. As employer, the Board is ultimately responsible for the health and safety of its employees; as owner and operator of the school, the Board is also ultimately responsible for the health and safety of the students. All the workplace parties must be dedicated to the continuing objective of improving workplace health and safety. The Board requires the ongoing cooperation of its employees in the exercise of their responsibilities.

Thunder Bay Christian School will be responsible for the health and safety of its workers and all others who are under its supervision. This includes the responsibility to ensure that all machinery, equipment and resources are safe and that workers work in compliance with established safe work practices and procedures. Workers will receive adequate training in their specific work tasks to protect their personal health and safety and that of their students.

Every worker must protect his or her own health and safety by working in compliance with the law and safe work practices and procedures, established by Thunder Bay Christian School. Every worker is responsible to bring to the attention of the Board or the Board's principal or other leadership team member, the existence of any unhealthy or unsafe conditions or practices.

It is in the best interest of all the workplace parties to consider health and safety in every activity. Commitment to health and safety must form an integral part of all positions at Thunder Bay Christian School.



I. CROSS REFERENCING TBCS POLICIES & PROCEDURES

At Thunder Bay Christian School, the following selected documents serve to provide further support in terms of health and safety for employees. Documents focused on students give the employees parameters or boundaries within which workers are protected if they follow school policy and/or procedures. The worker is also urged to review the Parent Handbook, the Staff Handbook and the Operations Manual for other particulars. Finally, as the following list is not exhaustive, it is the responsibility of each worker to inquire if he or she feels uninformed, unsure, unsafe.

Item	Location
1. Criminal Record Check Policy	800-Anaphylaxis
2. Schedule I: Conflict Resolution Policy	902-Grievance
3. Privacy Policy	703-Personal Privacy
4. Workplace Violence and Harassment Policy	801-Health and Safety
5. Violence Risk Assessment Checklist	801-Health and Safety
6. Workplace Incident Report	801-Health and Safety
7. Parent Grievances	902-Grievance
8. Computer/Internet Guidelines	303-Parent Handbook
9. Transportation Code of Conduct	Student Handout
10. Academic Honesty (Plagiarism Policy)	301-High School Handbook
11. Student Discipline Policy and Guidelines	901-Discipline
12. Crisis Response (TERT)	804-Traumatic Events Response Team
13. Fire Safety and Explosion Procedures	302-Staff Handbook
14. Threats & Harm Procedures (Shelter in Place, Hold and Secure)	Safe School
15. Child Abuse Policy and Guidelines	803-Abuse Policy
16. Anaphylaxis Policy	800-Anaphylaxis
17. Communicable Diseases Policy	Parent Handbook
18. Student Accident and Illness Guidelines	302-Staff Handbook 303-Parent Handbook
19. Sexual Harassment Complaints Involving Staff Members Policy	702-Sexual Harassment
20. Child Abuse Complaints Involving Employees Policy	In draft stage
21. Anti-Bully Plan	To be drafted
22. Tornado/Severe Weather	Drafted; not approved



II. INTRODUCING OHSA

The Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA), first introduced in 1990, is the minimum standard for health and safety in the workplace. The Act gives the Government of Ontario broad powers to make regulations for specific circumstances.

The OHSA was recently amended (Dec. 2009, Bill 168) to strengthen protections for workers from workplace violence and address workplace harassment. The implementation of such amendments means an increasing number of statutes and regulations now have an increasing impact on health and safety related diligence and practices. Furthermore, definitions have been broadened. For example, harassment is no longer confined to the Ontario Human Rights Code but now involves situations or behaviours that explicitly or implicitly cause, or would reasonably tend to cause offence, humiliation, discomfort or embarrassment. The Human Rights Code only requires a complainant to establish harassment based on prohibited ground of discrimination (eg. race, gender, religion, etc.). Furthermore, Bill 168 also gives the workers the right to refuse work if workplace violence is likely to endanger the worker. The Bill sets out rules governing the investigation of such work refusals.

The OHSA contains instruction for the administration of occupational health and safety measures regarding these key areas:

1. the duties of the employer, supervisor and worker
2. workers' rights
3. participation in health and safety programs
4. control of toxic substances
5. delivery of information

The OHSA provisions are contained within ten parts:

http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90o01_e.htm

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 1. Part I: Application | 6. Part VI: Reprisals |
| 2. Part II: Administration | 7. Part VII: Notices |
| 3. Part III: Duties of Employers and Others | 8. Part VIII: Enforcement |
| 4. Part IV: Toxic Substances | 9. Part IX: Offences and Penalties |
| 5. Part V: Right to Refuse | 10. Part X: Regulations |

The OHSA creates an interlocking set of duties and obligations on the part of employers, supervisors and workers. This is designed to ensure compliance with government regulations. The Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) serves to ensure that employers and workers are meeting their responsibilities and are in position to exercise their rights.

Our school falls within the definition of “workplace” under this Act and therefore the Act and its regulations apply. More specifically, the OHSA applies to all persons who are employed as teachers as defined in the Education Act – including any member of the Ontario College of Teachers.

Other related legislation which apply to schools are listed below.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Workplace Safety and Insurance Act | 5. The Youth Criminal Justice Act |
| 2. Smoking in the Workplace Act | 6. The Criminal Code of Canada |
| 3. The Education Act | 7. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms |
| 4. The Child and Family Services Act | 8. Ontario Human Rights Code |



- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 9. Safe Schools Act | 12. Ontario Building Code |
| 10. First Aid Regulation | 13. Electrical Safety Code |
| 11. Ontario Fire Code | |

Regardless of the size of the workplace or the number of employees, a health and safety program must be in place. The OHSA does not exempt smaller organizations from health and safety obligations. Having a functioning health and safety program in place can go along way towards proving due diligence in case of a serious accident.

WORKPLACE

A workplace, by definition, is any land, premise, location or thing at, upon, in or near which a worker works. A work place could be a building, mine, construction site, vehicle, open field, road or forest. The test is: "Is the worker being directed and paid to be there or to be near there?" If the answer is "yes," then it is a workplace.

DUTIES

For OACS family of schools, the Board of Directors is considered the employer. An employer is a person who employs one or more workers, or contracts for the services of one or more worker. The principal of the school represents the BOD, and as such acts on behalf of the employer. The principal may have to assume some of the BOD duties on site. The OHSA recognizes general and prescribed duties for employers. Prescribed duties means that a regulation must exist in order to put into effect the requirements of a section of the OHSA. The employers' duties are spelled out in sections 25 and 26 of the OHSA. It is up to the BOD to ensure that its officer, the principal, follows through on the employer's responsibilities.

Here are some of the key duties and responsibilities of employers:

1. ensure that the OHSA and the regulations are complied with
2. ensure that measures and procedures, where "prescribed" are complied with
3. provide prescribed protective equipment
4. provide information, instruction and supervision to a worker to protect the health and safety of the worker
5. conduct risk assessments
6. assist in a medical emergency by providing all information
7. inform a worker, or supervisor, about any hazard in the work and ensure that appropriate training is provided
8. assist the JHSC
9. post the workplace copy of the OHSA in the majority language
10. prepare and post a written occupational health and safety policy, review the program once a year and develop a program for implementation
11. post a copy of the Workplace Violence and Harassment Policy
12. take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of a worker
13. notify appropriate authorities are required in case of workplace incidents

Supervisors:

The supervisor is in charge of the workplace and has authority over a worker. In schools, the supervisor may include the principal, the vice principal and department head. The supervisor's duties are spelled out in section 27 of the OHSA. Duties include:

1. ensure that a worker complies with the OHSA and the regulations
2. ensure that any equipment, protective devices or clothing required by the OHSA or the employer is used or worn by the worker



3. advise a worker of any potential or actual danger known by the supervisor
4. take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of workers
5. conduct risk assessments

Workers:

The workers' duties are detailed in Section 28 of the OHS Act. The worker, by definition, is a person who performs work or supplies services for monetary compensation. Duties include:

1. work in compliance with the Act and regulations
2. use or wear any equipment, protective devices or clothing required by the employer
3. report any known missing or defective equipment or protective device to the supervisor or employer
4. report any known hazard to the supervisor or employer
5. report any known violation of the Act or regulations to the supervisor or employer
6. not remove or make ineffective any protective device required by the regulations or the employer
7. not use or operate any equipment or work in a way that may endanger a worker
8. not engage in any prank, contest, feat of strength, unnecessary running or rough and boisterous conduct
9. contribute to risk assessments
10. seek support when confronted with violence/threats of violence

RIGHTS

The Act gives three basic rights to workers:

1. The Right to Participate

Workers have the right to be part of the process of identifying and resolving workplace health and safety concerns. Participation can be exercised through membership on the Joint Health and Safety Committee and/or through fulfilling duties as listed in section 28.

2. The Right to Know

The workers have the right to know about any potential hazards to which they may be exposed. This means the right to be trained and to have information on machinery, equipment, working conditions, processes and hazardous substances. The Act and WHMIS (workplace hazardous materials information system) play an important role in giving workers the right to know.

3. The Right to Refuse Unsafe Work

Workers have the right to refuse work that they believe is dangerous to either their own health and safety or that of another worker. The Act describes the exact process for refusing dangerous work and the responsibilities of the employer in responding to such a refusal.

Teachers have a limited right to refuse unsafe work as they are bound to ensure the safety of their students. The teacher may refuse if the student(s) are not put in imminent jeopardy by the refusal. Support staff members have the unrestricted right to refuse unsafe work.



III. Joint Health and Safety Committee Activities

The committee is an advisory board that is expected to stimulate an awareness of safety issues and an atmosphere of co-operation between employer, employees, and students. It is important to understand that a safety committee does not have direct responsibility for the management or conduct of the work; that is the management's responsibility. Although the safety committee consists of management and employee representatives who may be directly involved in operations, the committee itself is only advisory and cannot direct management to carry out its recommendations. Notwithstanding this limitation, the safety committee plays an important role in health and safety in the workplace, and serves as an excellent vehicle for communication on health and safety matters between employees and management.

A Health and Safety Committee comprising of members, with equal representation of management and workers, will meet at least three times a year. This committee will investigate concerns and recommend action.

The Board of Directors and maintenance committee members will actively participate in and support the actions of the Health and Safety Committee.

Consultation with the IAPA (Industrial Accident Prevention Association) is at the discretion of the Health and Safety Committee.

In addition to complying with the obligations imposed by legislation or contract, every member of the Health and Safety Committee is responsible for:

1. taking an active role in the protection and promotion of the health and safety of all employees and students,
2. performing in a timely, efficient, and effective manner those responsibilities of the Health and Safety program applicable to his/her discipline,
3. acting as a resource for the Board of Directors
4. conduct safety audits on a regular basis to identify hazards and unsafe conditions, and
5. investigate accidents/incidents when requested.



IV. Workplace Violence and Harassment Policy and Program

1.0 Purpose and Commitment

In accordance with our Health and Safety Policy (R 47), which exists pursuant to the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) and other related legislation, and in keeping with God's holy word, the Thunder Bay Christian School (TBCS) Board of Directors (Board) is committed to the prevention of workplace violence and harassment.

2.0 Application and Scope

1. The TBCS Workplace Violence and Harassment Policy and Program (hereafter referred to as "policy") serves all workers of the Thunder Bay Christian School Board of Directors.
2. The scope of this policy applies to all students in attendance, parents and family members, visitors and volunteers, contractors and subcontractors engaged by TBCS.

3.0 Requirements

1. The Board will:
 - a. develop a written policy with respect to violence and harassment prevention and intervention in the workplace;
 - b. make the policy readily available (including posting in a conspicuous place if six or more workers are regularly employed);
 - c. maintain and review the policy on a regular basis in consultation with workers and/or the Joint Health and Safety Committee;
 - d. develop, implement and communicate measures which assess and control risks;
 - e. collaborate with the Joint Health and Safety Committee in risk assessment;
 - f. establish reporting and incident investigation procedures;
 - g. establish emergency response procedures;
 - h. disclose personal information (only what is reasonably necessary to protect the worker from physical injury in the workplace) concerning a co-worker's history of violence (it is advisable to seek legal advice in this matter);
 - i. provide workers with information, instruction and supervision to protect the health and safety of the worker;
 - j. take reasonable precautions where the Board is aware (or ought reasonably to be aware) that domestic violence is likely to expose worker(s) to the risk of physical injury in the workplace.
2. The Board and its workers are subject to the legislation, definitions and requirements mentioned and/or outlined in the TBCS Health and Safety Policy (R 47).
3. The Board and its workers will abide by all TBCS official policies, procedures and guidelines, including those that relate to health and safety as listed in the TBCS Health and Safety Policy (see section 1, Cross Referencing TBCS Policies and Procedures).



4.0 Definitions

1. See the TBCS Health and Safety Policy regarding related definitions including workplace.
2. The definition of workplace violence is broad enough to include acts that would constitute offenses under Canada's Criminal Code.
3. Workplace violence is defined by the OHSA to mean:
 - a. the exercise of physical force by a person against a worker, in a workplace, that causes physical injury to the worker;
 - b. an attempt to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker;
 - c. a statement or behaviour that is reasonable for a worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker.
4. Workplace violence includes domestic violence that could cause physical injury to a worker in a workplace. (See appendix for additional examples and explanations of workplace violence.)
5. Workplace harassment is defined by the OHSA to mean:
 - a. Engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome. (See appendix for additional examples and explanations of workplace harassment.)
6. Harassment is also prohibited by the Ontario Human Rights Code. Employees may not be harassed or discriminated against because of race, religion, gender, etc.

5.0 Roles and Responsibilities

1. The Principal, as officer of the Board, has the responsibility for the health and safety of all employees. It is duty of the Principal to ensure that Board requirements are implemented.
2. The Joint Health and Safety Committee conducts its responsibilities as per OHSA and the TBCS Health and Safety Policy.
3. The worker contributes to the creation of a safe and healthy workplace. The TBCS Health and Safety Policy spells out the worker's responsibilities.

6.0 Risk Assessment of Workplace Violence and Harassment

1. Risk Assessment is conducted by the Joint Health and Safety Committee as often as necessary (it is recommended to do one on an annual basis).
2. Risk assessment should reference a wide range of policies and practice including but not limited to background record checks, lockdown, supervision practices, the worker's awareness of documents and procedures.
3. The OHSA does not require an employer to assess the risk of workplace harassment.
4. See the attached Risk Assess Checklist

7.0 Reporting Process

1. In the case of immediate and vital danger to any worker's health and safety, the worker calls 911 then, if possible or necessary, activates the fire alarm, lockdown alert, etc.
2. In the case of workplace violence resulting in injury, anyone calls 911.



3. In the case of recent workplace harassment or violence, the worker, if able, shall complete the TBCS Workplace Incident Report Form and submit it to the Principal. This form is attached to the policy.
4. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the Principal will investigate the allegation/incident as soon as possible (keeping in mind related TBCS policies and legal obligations i.e. reporting to JHSC, MOL, WSIB – see the appendix).
5. Reporting to MOL is not required for incidents of harassment.

8.0 Response Process

1. The Principal must first ensure the safety of all workers including contacting appropriate authorities and consultants.
2. Reports and findings are reviewed with the intent of determining trends and recommendations.
3. Recommendations addressing prevention and response are shared with staff and further assessment or training or drills implemented as needed.
4. The worker has the right to refuse work if conditions are deemed unsafe or unhealthy, however a worker, who protects others, cannot refuse to work if the refusal would endanger the life, health or safety of another person (see the TBCS Health and Safety Policy, section 2, Introducing the OHSA, subsection, Rights).
5. The worker cannot refuse to work on the grounds of workplace harassment.

9.0 Enforcement

1. The Ministry of Labour health and safety inspectors will enforce the new OHSA provision for workplace violence and workplace harassment and determine if employers are complying with their new duties.



V. APPENDIX

FURTHER GUIDELINES:

1. Types of workplace violence and/or harassment include:
 - a. criminal intent – committed by a perpetrator who has no relationship to workplace but engages in acts such as: physical assault, theft, hostage taking, drugs
 - b. client – committed by a parent or a student with the intent to cause harm
 - c. worker to worker – repeated and persistent negative acts toward one or more individual(s) creating a toxic working environment; the worker could be a past worker who is the perpetrator
 - d. personal relationships i.e. loved one/family member that commits a violent act against a worker; this includes domestic violence
2. Workplace harassment can include bullying, teasing, intimidating or offensive jokes or innuendos, displaying or circulating offensive pictures or materials, or offensive or intimidating phone calls or e-mails. Inappropriate sexual touching, advances, suggestions or requests.
3. Workplace harassment involves comments or conduct that typically happen more than once. They occur over a relatively short period of time or over a longer period of time. They often involve repeated words or actions, or a pattern of behaviours, against a worker or group of workers in the workplace that are not welcomed, belittling a worker, spreading malicious rumours.
4. A workplace harassment policy should not limit or constrain the reasonable exercise of management functions in the workplace even if it sometimes leads to unpleasant consequences for a worker. Examples could include changes in work assignments, scheduling, job assessment and evaluation, workplace inspections, implementation of dress codes and disciplinary action
5. The risk of violence is higher in service sectors, including education.
6. Workplace violence can include shaking a fist, destroying/throwing objects, written/verbal threats (includes e-mail); arson, murder, carrying or wielding a weapon, hitting or trying to hit a worker, sexual violence against a worker, kicking an object the worker is standing on such as a ladder, trying to run a worker down, bullying, stalking, tampering with workspace or belongings, sabotaging a worker's work.
7. Workplace violence can be committed by anyone at the workplace including family members and unauthorized intruder.
8. Domestic violence occurs when a person who has a personal relationship with a worker, such as a spouse or a former spouse or a family member, should physically harm, or attempt or threaten to physically harm that worker at work. In these situations, domestic violence is considered workplace violence.
9. Injury to a worker who tries to intervene between two non-workers constitutes workplace violence.
10. Injury to a worker who tries to intervene between two non-workers constitutes workplace violence.
11. An employer is not required to do a risk assessment between two individual workers unless there is a likelihood of violence.
12. Risk Assessment should be conducted by the Joint Health and Safety Committee if the workplace moves or is renovated or reconfigured; if there are significant changes to the type of work; if there is new information on the risks of workplace violence; in response to an incident.



13. OHSa clarifies that employers must provide personal information of a person if there is a history of violent behaviour. Only personal information that is necessary to protect the worker(s) from physical injury should be disclosed. This duty is limited and applies only if the worker can be expected to encounter the violent person in the course of his or her work and the risk of workplace violence is likely to expose the worker to physical injury. In order to determine what is likely to expose a worker to physical injury, the employer should consider whether the history of violence was associated with the workplace or work, whether the violence was directed at a particular worker or workers in general and how long ago did the violence occur. Information need not be disclosed to every worker and information should not be disclosed if the worker was not likely to encounter the violent person in his or her work; or is not at risk of physical injury from that person. There are laws which govern the release of personal or medical information (YCJA, PIPEDA, PHIPA) and so it is advisable for the employer to seek legal advice.
14. A criminal background check is not required by the OHSa yet it is advisable to include this in risk assessment.
15. The OHSa clearly spells out that a teacher cannot refuse work when a pupil's life, health or safety is in imminent jeopardy.
16. Crisis response procedures should spell out where workers go to locate a safe place.
17. In case of workplace violence resulting in a person being killed or critically injured, the employer must immediately notify by telephone a MOL inspector and the JHSC; notify in writing within 4 days a director of the MOL. If workplace violence causes a worker to be disabled or in need of medical attention, the employer shall notify the JHSC within 4 days. The employer should call a MOL inspector in order to determine if the MOL should be officially notified.
18. Red flags indicators of potential violence include: making overt or veiled threats; showing aggressive, belligerent, intimidating behaviour; frequent conflicts with supervisors and co-workers; drug or alcohol abuse; mood swings; increased absenteeism; deteriorating hygiene; a slip in job performance; statements of suicide; showing a fascination with weapons and acts of violence.

Acronyms:

JHSC:	Joint Health and Safety Committee
MOL:	Ministry of Labour
OHSa:	Occupational Health and Safety Act
PIPEDA:	Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act
PHIPA:	Personal Health Information Protection Act
TBCS	Thunder Bay Christian School
YCJA:	Youth Criminal Justice Act



VI. WORKPLACE INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Incident: violence, harassment, injury, accident

Please see the back of this form regarding specifics involving workplace violence and harassment.

<p>Date/Time</p> <p>Name of Staff Member</p> <p>Form Completed by: (if other than injured staff member)</p>
<p>List Witness(es)</p> <p>Briefly describe the nature of the incident or the alleged harassment and its impact</p>
<p>Briefly describe any action in dealing with the incident or allegation</p> <p>When was the Principal notified?</p>
<p>Response Information (completed by office)</p>

In case of harassment, complainant's signature:



Further Information if Workplace Violence and Harassment was involved:

Classification of Incident:

- perpetrator has no relationship to TBCS
- parent or student
- worker to worker
- personal relationship to worker (domestic violence)

Incident Type:

- threat
- physical assault
- verbal assault
- harassment
- carrying a weapon
- arson, robbery, vandalism

Nature of Injury:

- life threatening injury
- physical injury requiring medical attention beyond first aid
- physical injury requiring first aid only
- psychological injury

Notification:

- 911
- TBCS Principal
- JHSC
- WSIB
- MOL



VII. VIOLENCE RISK ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST FORM

1) JOINT HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE AUDIT

GROUNDNS AND FACILITY

YES NO

EXPLANATION / ACTION

GROUNDNS AND FACILITY	YES	NO	EXPLANATION / ACTION
Are the entrances and exits well marked and signs posted?			
Is lighting sufficient at parking lot?			
Is lighting sufficient at entrances and exits?			
Are there outside physical objects that someone can hide behind?			
Are the entrance doors locked during evening meetings?			
Is there a system in place to track the distribution of keys?			
Are locks replaced if keys are lost or stolen?			
Is the PA system easy to operate?			
Can the office receptionist see incoming visitors?			
Is the building locked or easily locked during school hours?			
Are signs posted to advising visitors to report to the office?			
Can objects in the reception area be easily used as weapons?			
Can objects in the classroom be easily used as weapons?			
Can the lights in the washrooms be turned off?			
Can the lights in the gym washroom / change rooms be turned off?			
Do classroom doors lock?			
Are filing cabinets containing confidential files/records locked?			



POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	YES	NO	EXPLANATION / ACTION
Are emergency/crisis response documents in place?			
Are lockdown drills being practiced annually?			
Are relevant policies (as stated in the TBCS Health and Safety Policy) reviewed and accessible?			
Are there incident report forms in place?			
Do any workers work alone on a regular basis?			
Are there safeguards or precautions in place to protect them?			
Are there existing factors that might lead to violence?			
Do you believe that all reasonable steps have been taken to prevent or reduce the risk of violence?			

2) SELF - AUDIT

GENERAL	YES	NO	EXPLANATION / ACTION
Are there areas where you do not feel safe?			
Are there secure areas to store personal belongings?			
Are there emergency policies in place which you do not understand or cannot locate?			
Do you feel sufficiently trained for lockdown situations?			
Has your first aid training prepared you to respond to injuries?			
Are you given opportunity to provide input in updating the Workplace Violence and Harassment program?			
Does the principal investigate incidents without undo delay?			
Do you ever work alone?			
Are you concerned about working alone with a particular co-worker?			
Have you ever noticed a situation that you thought could or would lead to violence?			
Do you believe that all reasonable steps have been taken to prevent or reduce the risk of violence?			