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Youth Officer / School Resource Officer Programs

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To Whom It May Concern:

Please accept the following as an endorsement of the Youth Officer / School Resource Officer program that has become an essential part of the ongoing collaboration between many school jurisdictions and police agencies across Canada and the United States. Sworn police members, in full uniform working in schools with students, staff and parents have proven to assist in early intervention and prevention initiatives relative to their roles. In the field of violence threat/risk assessment they have become a primary adult that many high-risk children and youth seek out to disclose sensitive information that they would not otherwise have disclosed to school personnel.

The belief that students will not report concerns to school police officers is unfounded. If the police member is dedicated and comfortable with children and youth they can uncover peer dynamics and circumstances that others could never identify. Ongoing police presence, in this generation, does not denote a "police state" as some might argue but reflects an openness to address school climate and safety in a generation where threats of violence, violence, and the drug culture have become more complex. I have consistently said, "there is no better violence prevention program than dedicated police members in schools". Although funding is always a debate, the benefit of joint school district and police (and others) funding is that it gives the school jurisdictions more say in ensuring that school friendly police officer(s) are hired or assigned to this key school role.

Sincerely,

J. Kevin Cameron, M.Sc., R.S.W., B.C.E.T.S., B.C.S.C.R.

Executive Director, Canadian Centre for Threat Assessment & Trauma Response