SUSPECTED & SURVEILLED

A REPORT ON COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM IN CHICAGO

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INTRODUCTION

WE ARE IN AN ERA OF UNPRECEDENTED LEVELS OF SURVEILLANCE, INFORMATION-SHARING, AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES.

Black, migrant, indigenous, queer, Arab, Muslim, and other diasporic communities continue to experience immense levels of policing and incarceration. The Trump administration has intensified the vilification and criminalization of marginalized communities through new policies and mechanisms of social control and state violence. The violent logics of the global war on terror continue to justify the investment in and expansion of the police and surveillance state, alongside airstrikes and warfare abroad resulting in thousands of civilian deaths every year.

At the same time, grassroots social movements to end police violence against Black communities, abolish ICE, and rein in the tech industry's collaboration with law enforcement are growing every day. For example, FBI sting and entrapment operations have been discredited widely as ineffectual and racist.[1] Support for US military action abroad, though largely undeterred, has become unpopular at unprecedented levels across the United States.[2] As a result, law enforcement agencies are facing a crisis of legitimacy and engaging in public relations campaigns to rebrand agencies as racially- and gender-diverse and committed to community participation in policing projects.[3]

The government has rolled out one specific program in recent years in an explicit effort to rebrand anti-terrorism efforts as softer, smarter, and more community-driven and intensify its domestic war on terror agenda: Countering Violent Extremism (CVE). Funded by the Department of Homeland Security and Department of Justice, CVE programs enlist community members as partners in local anti-terrorism efforts. More specifically, CVE programs ask communities to identify, report, and work with individuals perceived to be on the "pathway to terrorism."[4] Despite the flawed assumptions underlying CVE and its disproportionate impact on Muslim and Arab communities, national and local leaders have expanded CVE both nationally and globally.

In the context of this nationwide commitment to CVE, the National Governors Association chose Illinois as one of four states to pilot its Roadmap on Preventing Targeted Violence. This development has made our work to investigate CVE in Chicagoland even more timely and necessary for those wanting to prevent the expansion of CVE in other cities and states.

In this report, we provide a brief overview of what CVE is and what assumptions drive CVE programs. Given the illusive nature of CVE (and the ways that practitioners intentionally distance themselves from critiques of CVE), we also describe local CVE programs currently underway in Illinois and identify the key players advancing this anti-terrorism project. Because CVE programs often are rebranded under different names and funding sources, we also detail ways to identify CVE. Lastly, we share the experiences of community partners across the country to illustrate the nature and impact of CVE, and how people have been exposing and resisting CVE.

Our hope is that in addition to identifying clear evidence of the dangerous and disruptive nature of these programs in targeted communities, readers will gain concrete ideas for how to stop the spread of CVE in Chicago, in Illinois, and nationwide. Furthermore, we want our partners and allies in related fields to understand how the mechanisms that facilitate CVE, including community policing and self-surveillance, are being adopted and expanded across law enforcement agencies, public institutions, and nonprofits. For example, the use of social media monitoring in the name of national security also has been used to repress the Movement for Black Lives (marked as "Black Identity Extremists") and youth suspected of gang activity. Understanding the mechanisms of CVE is as important as being able to name the individuals and organizations currently driving the program.

We have carried out this research in response to concerns initially raised over four years ago by the Arab American Action Network,[5] which has been a vocal critic of CVE in Illinois. We also participate in the national #StopCVE coalition, whose members have been key allies in carrying out and disseminating this research.[6]

WHAT IS CVE?

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) is a federal anti-terrorism framework that claims to prevent people from becoming terrorists by mobilizing community resources.[7] Through police partnerships with community members like mental health professionals, librarians, and imams, CVE programs purportedly protect individuals from terrorist radicalization— becoming terrorists—and intervene when individuals express interest in radical violence. Guided by flawed scientific studies on the

CHECK ALL THOSE THAT APPLY!

HAVE YOU EVER...

* BEEN OUTRAGED BY US OR WESTERN FOREIGN POLICY?

* BECOME INVOLVED IN SOCIAL ACTIVISM OR COMMUNITY ISSUES?

* TRAVELED TO A COUNTRY WHERE YOU BELONGED TO THE MAJORITY RELIGIOUS GROUP?

* GROWN FACIAL HAIR?

* EXPERIENCED A DESIRE FOR POLITICAL OR MORAL CHANGE?

* BEEN AT A TRANSITIONAL TIME IN YOUR LIFE?

IF YOU CHECKED ONE OR MORE BOXES, CONGRATULATIONS! YOU HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED BY THE US GOVERNMENT AS A POTENTIAL VIOLENT EXTREMIST!

radicalization process that position communities as co-producers of national security, CVE efforts range from policing social media content to subjecting individuals to psychotherapy. The majority of these programs rely on community members to identify and report individuals perceived to be vulnerable to or in the process of radicalizing. As we will see, these programs are informed by disproven research and burden communities with policing their own children as terrorist threats.

HOW DID CVE BEGIN?

When he formalized this new anti-terrorism strategy in 2014, President Obama pitched CVE as an alternative to law enforcement-led anti-terrorism efforts, like FBI stings where informants and undercover agents prey on "individuals with no capacity to do any significant harm," provide them with "the ideas, the means, and the opportunities for horrific plots," and then arrest them.[8] Instead, he claimed, CVE would call on mental health professionals, teachers, imams, and other community leaders to identify, report, and work with individuals perceived to be vulnerable to or in the process of terrorist radicalization. The Obama administration argued that this new model would offer a friendlier alternative to more aggressive counterterrorism initiatives. Unfortunately, CVE equates certain types of dissent or difference with violence and recruits community organizations to serve as terrorist watch-dogs, ultimately providing law enforcement access to spaces otherwise unavailable to them.[9] In addition, controlling narratives that conflate entire religious and racial communities with radicalized violence typically inform CVE programming.[10] Despite the promises made by the Obama administration, CVE, by design, has intensified, not mitigated, anti-Black, anti-Muslim, and anti-immigrant policing by expanding policy frameworks that historically have targeted these communities, such as Operation Boulder (1972-1975) which authorized the FBI to conduct special screenings of Arab visa applications.[11]

WHAT RESEARCH INFORMS CVE?

In this section, we outline the research that guides CVE programs and explore what this research looks like in practice.

RADICALIZATION RESEARCH

The CVE approach to anti-terrorism assumes that radicalization is a predictable process, similar to a conveyor belt where individuals progress along a linear path toward radical violence. According to radicalization research, law enforcement officials and community members can use the known warning signs, or "red flags," to identify where an individual is in the radicalization process. Once identified, individuals can be subjected to different interventions to reverse this process, typically through community-police partnerships.

The NYPD, for example, published a report, *Radicalization in the West: The Homegrown Threat*, to increase law enforcement understandings of the radicalization process. The NYPD argued that the radicalization process unfolds linearly through four distinct phases, each with its own "typical signatures" that law enforcement could use to identify radicalizing individuals. The NYPD has encouraged communities to look for these "typical signatures," such as "wearing traditional Islamic clothing," "growing a beard," and "becoming involved in social activism and community issues."[12]

Despite the primacy of radicalization research in new national security models like CVE, social scientists routinely have disproven these theories.[13] Even the NYPD concedes that these warning signs cannot be used reliably to predict or identify possible terrorists.[14] In detailing the scientific flaws of the NYPD report and other similar models, legal scholar Faiza Patel concludes that

> ## IT IS SIMPLY NOT POSSIBLE TO IDENTIFY 'MARKERS' OF RADICALIZATION..THAT ALLOW EARLY IDENTIFICATION OF WOULD-BE TERRORISTS.[15]

This means that there are no indicators, risk factors, or warning signs that can predict who may commit an act of mass violence or identify who may be vulnerable to terrorist radicalization. Instead, these "signatures" or "red flags" criminalize constitutionally-protected speech, religious practices, and political activism expressed by Muslim communities.

WHAT RESEARCH INFORMS CVE?

Over time, CVE has widened its scope to target "faith communities, Black Lives Matter, diverse communities, refugee communities, among others, facing disenfranchisement by society", in addition to Muslim, Somali, and other diasporic communities.[16] In fact, over 50% of CVE initiatives funded by the Department of Homeland Security grant program explicitly target marginalized groups. Although communities understandably want to identify individuals who may commit an act of mass violence, especially given the recent school shootings, there is no scientifically-supported way of doing so.

Table I: Terrorism Indicators Identified by Government Agencies and Programs

Date	Source	Indicators
2006	FBI[92]	• Isolation from former life; • Wearing traditional Muslim attire, growing facial hair; • Frequent attendance at mosque or prayer group; • Travel to a Muslim country; • Increased activity in a pro-Muslim social group or political cause.
2007	New York City Police Department[93]	• Giving up cigarettes, drinking, gambling, urban hip-hop gangster clothes; • Wearing traditional Islamic clothing, growing a beard; • Involvement in social activism and community issues; • Reading religious scripture; • Showing unusual maturity and seriousness.
2011	Los Angeles Police Department[94]	• Strong need to join a social group, psychiatric disorders; • Pattern of violent behavior; • Outrage over U.S. or western foreign policy; • Perceived glory of fighting for a cause; • Interest in adventure and action.
2014	National Counterterrorism Center[95]	• Perceived economic stress; • Sense of being unjustly treated; • Low trust in institutions and law enforcement; • Expressions of hopelessness and futility; • Lack of access to healthcare and social services; • Isolation from friends, family, community; • Personal ties to other violent extremists; • Concerns about anti-Muslim discrimination; • Foreign policy concerns relating to U.S. operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, Israel's treatment of Palestinians and others.
2015	Montgomery County[96]	• Ideology, beliefs, and values: notion that West poses a threat to group, bifurcated world view of "us v. them," justifying violence; • Psychological factors: PTSD, mental illness, search for purpose or adventure; • Sociological motivators: alienation, acculturation problems, marginalization, discrimination, kinship ties; • Political grievances: human rights abuses, lack of political rights and civil liberties, corruption, conflict and foreign occupation; • Economic factors: unemployment, relative deprivation, financial incentives.
2015	"Don't Be a Puppet,"[97] FBI online game for high school students	• Personal need for excitement, power, purpose, importance, and achievement; • Fears and frustrations such as social alienation and anxiety.
2015	Minneapolis CVE Framework[98]	• Disaffection; • Disconnect between youth and religious leaders; • Internal identity crises; • Community isolation; • Lack of opportunity, including high unemployment, lack of activities for youth, and few mentors.
2015	Boston CVE Framework[99]	• Feeling isolated and alienated • Frustration at U.S. policy and events around the globe.
2015	United Kingdom Prevent Strategy[100]	• Feelings of grievance and injustice; • A desire for political or moral change; • Over-identification with a group or ideology; • "Them" and "us" thinking; • Being at a transitional time of life.

Source: https://www.brennancenter.org/sites/default/files/publications/Brennan%20Center%20CVE%20Report.pdf

WHAT RESEARCH INFORMS CVE?

COMMUNITY POLICING
MODELS OF CVE

CVE also facilitates "third-party policing," a type of community policing that encourages (and incentivizes) community participation in local efforts to identify, report, and work with individuals perceived to be at risk of terrorist radicalization. University of Illinois at Chicago professor Stevan Weine and his colleagues, for example, argue that "adopting a community policing model is a necessary approach to better protect and serve communities at risk for violent radicalization," including "communities comprised of Muslim immigrants and refugees from countries where the police are feared and citizens learned to turn away."[17] This CVE approach aligns with calls for preventative interventions that "serve youth and adults who are believed to be at risk of committing a violent act but are still in the pre-criminal space."[18] In Maryland, for example, school resource officers identified Muslim and Arab youth who expressed "acculturation-related stress," "homesickness," and "economic stressors" as possibly "at risk of violent extremism."[19] By encouraging communities to police certain non-criminal behaviors and thoughts as possible precursors to criminal violence ("pre-criminal"), CVE practitioners, and their community collaborators, criminalize constitutionally-protected acts and ideologies as well as communities perceived to be more vulnerable to violent extremism.

PUBLIC HEALTH
MODELS OF CVE

Proponents also frame CVE as a "public health" approach to reduce susceptibility to, and contain the spread of, terrorism using the same methods as infectious disease control. Given the perceived parallels between infectious disease and violence, physician and violence prevention specialist Gary Slutkin "began to apply some of the same methods and applications of public health to reducing the spread of violence, which means detecting and interrupting events and changing behaviors."[20] These methods, developed by UIC professor Stevan Weine, include primary prevention, secondary prevention, and tertiary prevention:

CVE IN MINNEAPOLIS

where Somali youth have been primary targets of CVE

"The CVE program has caused immense harm to the communities it targets. From fear of biased targeting and unjust prosecution to stifling civic engagement - young Somalis and their families continue to experience loss even after the program's end date.

CVE has policed and criminalized Islam and Somaliness/Somalinimo to the point that some young people are self-censoring to deflect targeting.

CVE has eroded community trust by embedding law enforcement with nonprofit organizations, public agencies, and philanthropy. It created a blueprint that continues to fuel similar initiatives under different names."

- Ramla Bile, community activist, Minneapolis

- Primary prevention "aims to prevent injury and disease before it occurs by preventing exposure to the causes and promoters of injury and disease," like healthy eating to prevent diabetes.[21] Primary prevention measures include limiting the availability of "extremist" media across entire communities.
- Secondary preventions, like counseling and mentoring, are "directed at individuals who have been identified as having some characteristics that render them at elevated-risk for violent extremism" like "exposure to extremist ideologies."[22]
- Tertiary prevention efforts like psychotherapy and intensive case management target radicalizing individuals before they engage in acts of violence.

Through these measures, this public health model attempts to "move to a more proactive and positive paradigm to address violent extremism through non-coercive means in the pre-criminal space."[23]

While this approach may be effective in the field of infectious disease control, "even if we accept the implication that terrorism spreads like a virus from a person already infected to his associates, all we have done is explain the process of infection; we have said nothing of why the virus exists in the first place."[24] In fact, **this approach pathologizes communities while erasing the role of foreign policy and military aggression in the making of political violence**. More dangerously, many of these efforts rely on identifying individuals perceived to be vulnerable to, or in the process of, radicalizing using the same flawed indicators, warning signs, or red flags of radicalization. Although a preventative public health model sounds like a less punitive and more therapeutic approach to countering violent extremism, this model necessarily relies on punitive institutions like the criminal-legal system, even opening criminal investigations of referred individuals **"*before* the line of criminal activity is crossed"**[25]—much like Chicago's Gang Database, which stores information about suspected or confirmed members of street gangs using criteria "almost entirely unrelated to criminal conduct or participation in gang activities."[26]

CVE IN BOSTON

"Individuals with whom we work — including those experiencing distress as a result of discrimination — occasionally share with us that they are experiencing a mental health issue and would like to seek counseling or treatment but feel unsafe doing so given an inability to know which providers may now or in future be collaborating in CVE. Muslim Justice League believes mental health services benefit many individuals invaluably, and we would like to offer unqualified assurances that seeking help is safe. However, given known instances of CVE recruitment of mental health providers, and the reality that CVE is being deployed in a non-transparent manner, we cannot ethically, and do not, give such assurances."

- Shannon Al-Wakeel, Director of Muslim Justice League, Boston

HOW DOES CVE SHOW UP IN ILLINOIS?

In Illinois, CVE is referred to as Targeted Violence Prevention (TVP). It is implemented through the state-wide Targeted Violence Prevention Program (TVPP), which was created by the Illinois Terrorism Task Force (ITTF).[27] It is run by the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA), which is a state law enforcement agency.[28]

TVPP is led by director Junaid Afeef, in addition to two researchers, Megan Alderden and Lily Gleicher. ICJIA also has named the following individuals as consultants in their 2016 CVE grant application to the Department of Homeland Security: Stevan Weine (UIC), Nancy Zarse (Chicago School of Professional Psychology), Linda Langford (Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health), Sadia Covert (DuPage County Board), and Matthew Clarke. ICJIA has collaborated with the Illinois Department of Public Health, Illinois Department of Human Services/Department of Mental Health, Interfaith Mental Health Coalition, and the Council of Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago (CIOGC) in TVPP planning and implementation.[29]

WHAT IS TVPP?

The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA) Targeted Violence Prevention Program (TVPP) is a new initiative funded by a $187,000 CVE grant from the Department of Homeland Security, in addition to $208,206 in state funding.[30] ICJIA frames TVPP as a "non-punitive," "therapeutic," and "community-driven" approach to preventing violent extremism. More specifically, TVPP asks trusted community members like imams and mental health professionals to **"off-ramp individuals who exhibit <u>warning signs of radicalization to violence as well as those who exhibit behaviors signifying they may be in the early stages of planning an act of ideologically inspired targeted violence.</u>"**[31] Although ICJIA suggests that TVPP is distinct from CVE,

> TVPP STILL RELIES ON THE FLAWED ASSUMPTION DRIVING DISPROVEN RADICALIZATION THEORIES: THAT WE CAN IDENTIFY WHO MAY BE VULNERABLE TO VIOLENT EXTREMISM, OR VIOLENCE MORE GENERALLY, USING A CHECKLIST OF WARNING SIGNS AND RISK FACTORS.[32]

WHY IS IT **DANGEROUS?**

Although TVPP claims to borrow practices from public health models of gang- and suicide-prevention programs, **there are no scientifically-proven indicators that a person may be radicalizing or vulnerable to violence.** As the Brennan Center for Justice concludes, "it is only in retrospect that changes in behavior—particularly subtle ones—appear consequential." [33]

Using disproven "warning signs" or lists of "concerning behaviors" to identify people vulnerable to "ideologically-inspired violence" is unscientific and justifies racist policing by our doctors, counselors, teachers, imams, community leaders, FBI agents, and local law enforcement. TVPP *is* CVE, re-branded and re-packaged, carried out by a *law enforcement* agency, and funded, in part, by the Department of Homeland Security and Cook County Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHSEM). Obtained documents,[34] for example, reveal that ICJIA is using law enforcement trainings to guide its work:

> The Cook County DHSEM agreed to allow ICJIA to use its previously developed trainings on targeted violence as appropriate in this project. These previously developed training materials were also funded by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and this will allow ICJIA to create a more effective training while maximizing the impact of federal funds.

#StopCVE-Chicago workshop at the Teachers for Social Justice Curriculum Fair

#StopCVE-Chicago teach-in at the Council on American-Islamic Relations

In addition, a 2015 budget report lists "interdiction and disruption"—intercepting, halting, or apprehending threats—and "intelligence and information-sharing"—collecting and sharing intelligence information—as primary homeland security capacities and strategies advanced by this project. ICJIA also reiterates in this report its desire to "educate communities on **behavioral indicators that may be early indications of possible violence and what to do if they are observed.**"[35]

HOW DOES CVE
SHOW UP IN ILLINOIS?

WHAT DOES IT **LOOK LIKE?**

Because TVPP is still in development, we still are learning what it looks like in practice. We know that ICJIA has conducted "community focus groups" to cultivate community relationships and develop its trainings aimed at "help[ing] community members intervene before crime or violence occurs."[36] These focus groups have been led by ICJIA researchers Megan Alderden and Lily Gleicher.

ICJIA also has conducted at least one training for mental health professionals to learn how to prevent violent extremism, in partnership with UIC.[37] Participants could earn continuing education credits, which incentivized participation. Although ICJIA has sought to distinguish TVPP from CVE and downplay its relationship with law enforcement, training advertisements listed FBI Special Agents and a DHS representative as speakers.

ICJIA's Project Implementation and Project Evaluation Plan reiterates a desire to develop an "Engaged Bystander-Gatekeeper Training" to "build and foster community resilience to targeted violence by training community members to: (1) engage effectively with individuals who **exhibit warning signs of radicalization** to violence and/or to targeted violence, (2) help individuals get access to assessments and services within the community, and (3) prevent community members from adopting violent ideologies and also prevent those who have adopted such ideologies from pursuing acts of targeted violence." Again showing how CVE programs rely on flawed premises, this approach rests on two assumptions: 1) that there is a scientifically-proven method to identify individuals vulnerable to or in the process of radicalization and 2) that violent ideologies lead to violence. Social scientists repeatedly have disproven these two premises. In fact, mass violence often has little to do with a person's ideology.[38]

TVPP and broader CVE efforts sometimes have included organizations that address white supremacists, like Life After Hate. Practitioners use these collaborations to claim they do not solely target Muslims and Arabs. However, academic analyses have found that CVE programs continue to disproportionately target Muslim and Arab communities.[39] Even if these programs try to address all kinds of mass violence, they still are based on flawed scientific research that identifies common experiences - "acculturation-related stress" and religious practices ("frequent attendance at a mosque or prayer group") as signs of a vulnerability to violence.

Moreover, these programs incorrectly equate ISIS with white supremacist violence, conveniently attributing all violence to a handful of "troubled" individuals while ignoring the broader economic and political contexts as well as power relations that differently organize these forms of violence and their objectives.[40] This individualized approach to mass violence provides a handy alibi for US foreign policy and erases the integration of white supremacy into social institutions.

HOW DOES CVE
SHOW UP IN ILLINOIS?

Despite these flaws, ICJIA has claimed TVPP is different from other CVE programs, even though it still seeks to identify individuals vulnerable to radicalization using disproven warning signs.[41] This follows efforts across the United States to rename CVE programs and hide their connections to law enforcement agencies, from PEACE (Boston) to BRAVE (Maryland) to bystander-gatekeeper trainings (Illinois).[42] The Brennan Center for Justice notes that "the language to describe CVE initiatives is often muddled and deceptive," especially as CVE programs "change their names regularly, often in the face of community opposition or other public criticism, which thwarts accountability and obscures the nature and purpose of the renamed programs."

Despite these renamings, these programs still engage in CVE practices organized around the same flawed assumptions. ICJIA, for example, sometimes describes its TVPP work as addressing hate crimes, rather than violent extremism. This means that communities must look at the practices and funding streams of individual programs, rather than their names and descriptions, to determine their connection to CVE. In the recommendations section of this report, we outline some guiding questions communities can ask to help assess certain programs and organizations.

HOW DOES CVE
SHOW UP IN ILLINOIS?

In Elgin, the Gail Borden Library has worked with the Elgin Police Department, particularly Police Chief Ana Lalley, in its collaboration with ICJIA's TVPP. The library, for example, helped coordinate ICJIA's focus groups, which are being used to develop its "bystander-gatekeeper training" aimed at teaching communities how to identify individuals vulnerable to violent extremism. Capitalizing on community concerns with growing hate crimes, ICJIA-TVPP representatives have framed TVPP as a solution to this violence. ICJIA-TVPP also invited the Elgin Police Department to participate in a two-day "Community Awareness Briefing on Violent Extremism in the US" training that included one-hour modules on radicalization and mobilization to violence, domestic terrorism, and international terrorism. This is being done in partnership with: Elgin City of Peace, and the local YWCA.[43] These partnerships deputize community workers, including librarians, as national security agents tasked with identifying and working with individuals perceived to be vulnerable to violence.

JOIN OUR COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUP

Purpose: Gather community input to develop a training to help community members prevent violence before it occurs. The program will focus on helping community members recognize behaviors or actions that might indicate a concern worth paying attention to and know how to respond.

The focus groups will be:
- Confidential.
- Voluntary.
- Used for research & program development purposes.

Wednesday
January 17th, 2018

Gail Borden Public Library
District Conference Room

2:00 p. m. to 4:00 p. m.
OR
6:00 p. m. to 8:00 p. m.

Conducted by: Researchers at the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority.

Questions? Contact Megan Alderden PhD, Research Director, ICJIA, Megan.Alderden@illinois.gov

CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHT 📢

The Arab American Action Network

"The CVE (countering violent extremism) program was started in 2014. The main objective of CVE is to counter extremism, but is biased towards, and targets, Arabs and Muslims. Grants are issued through the CVE program to law enforcement agencies so they can work with organizations and universities to collect information on members of our community. The Arab American Action Network has been targeting CVE through our campaign to end racial profiling. **Youth of the AAAN have taken part in direct actions targeting CVE practitioners such as the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA), the FBI, and CVE "expert" professor Stevan Weine.** We have also carried out mass community education going door-to-door and hosting two community town halls where we educated members of the Arab community of Chicagoland about the CVE program and its effects.

On September 27, 2018, the AAAN filed a federal lawsuit against ICJIA and DHS to force them to release information about what the program is doing, and how the money is being spent. We maintain our demand that ICJIA needs to disavow CVE and return the grant money to DHS."

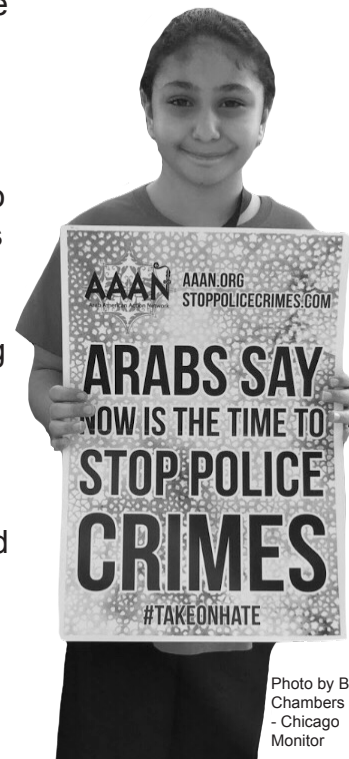- Adam Yousif, Arab American Action Network, Chicago

AAAN AAAN.ORG
STOPPOLICECRIMES.COM

ARABS SAY NOW IS THE TIME TO STOP POLICE CRIMES
#TAKEONHATE

Photo by Bill Chambers - Chicago Monitor

OTHER CVE
MECHANISMS & PLAYERS

In the following three sections, we detail 1) how the Chicago Police Department contributes to TVPP, 2) how local practitioners use community concerns with white supremacist violence to advance their work, and 3) how CVE logics have been used to strengthen anti-gang policing in schools.

CVE AND THE CHICAGO POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Chicago Police Department (CPD) is a listed partner in the TVPP grant application and has helped facilitate the coordination of TVPP, despite the department's documented history of racial profiling against Muslim and Arab communities, condoning of anti-Muslim social media posts authored by its police officers, and systematic failure to respond to anti-Muslim hate crimes.[44] For example, FOIA obtained emails reveal that TVPP director Junaid Afeef reached out to CPD officials, including Gang Investigations Division Commander Chris Kennedy, in an effort to connect with community partners willing to participate in local programming. The email demonstrates Afeef's lack of community relationships and his reliance on CPD to establish these relationships, particularly in Albany Park.

From: Afeef, Junaid [mailto:Junaid.Afeef@Illinois.gov]
Sent: Friday, August 12, 2016 9:07 AM
To: Sachs, Larry E.; Ford, Beth A.; Kennedy, Christoph J.
Subject: Partners in Chicago
Dear Larry, Chris, and Beth:
Good morning. I hope this email finds you all well. I would like to include a neighborhood in Chicago for the piloting of the bystander training that we proposes to develop and roll-out using the Homeland Security CVE grant. However, I have not been able to identify community-based, non-law enforcement entities that are prepared to partner with us. Please let me know if you have relationships with community leaders who may be willing to partner with us. I've been out of town since Sunday, so I apologize Larry for not returning your telephone call sooner.
Thanks.
Junaid

This exchange confirms an earlier report by *WTTW*, which showed that ICJIA "secured a nearly $200,000 federal grant earlier this year without approval from several 'partner' organizations listed in the agency's grant application."[45] Furthermore, ICJIA admitted in its own quarterly report that Albany Park's Makki Masjid "disengaged in the project citing concerns over discrimination against the Muslim community."[46]

Another email exchange revealed a discussion "about CVE as it pertains to schools" between CPD Commander Chris Kennedy and Chicago Public Schools' Chief of Security Jadine Chou.

> **From:** Kennedy, Christoph J.
> **Sent:** Monday, July 25, 2016 3:23 PM
> **To:** Afeef, Junaid; Ford, Beth A.; Kennedy, Christoph J.
> **Cc:** Board of ed Jadine Board of ed Chou
> **Subject:** RE: CIOGC Viral Peace Youth Workshop – Register NOW!
> Jadine
> Hoping your may able to find use of the attached. I know we have talked about about CVE as it pertains to schools.
>
> Christopher J. Kennedy
> Commander
> Gang Investigation Division/Intel. Section
> Bureau of Org. Crime
> Chicago Police dept.
> 312 746 7901

Given the extensive relationship between CPD and ICJIA, we expect to see the continued development of CPD's role in facilitating TVPP and participating in ICJIA's trainings. We also expect to see TVPP's reach grow as it implements its trainings - from schools to mosques to healthcare providers to community organizations.

Communities across the country already have experienced the increasing role of schools in CVE programming. In *Countering Violent Extremism Programs in the Trump Era*, the Brennan Center for Justice reports that "Despite the opposition from teachers, at least 14 out of the 26 programs funded by DHS target schools and students, some as young as 5 years old, effectively turning schools into surveillance hubs. Such programs often encourage schools to report broadly defined or undefined suspicious behavior." Given these findings, communities must be aware of the intensifying relationship between CVE and schools.

OTHER CVE
MECHANISMS & PLAYERS

WHITE SUPREMACISTS AND CVE

Since the Trump administration took office, visible white supremacist mobilizations have gained national attention, such as the events in Charlottesville in August 2017. A new trend among liberals has emerged, which alleges that CVE is an effective way to fight white extremist violence. This approach first made headlines when the Trump administration froze many CVE grants previously approved by the Obama administration. Critics cried foul, alleging that Trump was defunding groups like Life After Hate that work to de-radicalize white extremists.[47] Despite this speculation, the Trump administration was explicit in its desire to prioritize CVE programs with stronger relationships with law enforcement.[48]

Critics of CVE have pointed out the flawed assumption that white extremism can be fought with law enforcement-led surveillance and online recognition tools, all while funded by the Department of Homeland Security—itself an arm of institutionalized white supremacy.[49] **Furthermore, Muslim organizations emphatically have rejected this kind of "equal opportunity CVE" because it continues to harm Muslim communities and offers legitimacy to a dangerous program driven by anti-Muslim racism and disproven science.**[50]

In Chicago, a primary proponent of using CVE to fight white supremacy is Christian Picciolini, co-founder and former director of Life After Hate. As a self-described former neo-Nazi, Picciolini has used his personal platform to promote CVE and encourage law enforcement collaborations. After Charlottesville, he was a featured guest on CNN, *60 Minutes*, *Samantha Bee*, and more. His media appearances helped Life After Hate fundraise over $400,000 to make up the funds they lost when their CVE grant was cut, and pushed the narrative that CVE is an effective way to fight white supremacist violence. Locally, he has co-hosted events with Junaid Afeef (ICJIA) and Stevan Weine (UIC), and frequently collaborates with local and federal law enforcement.

Despite his fame, Picciolini's work to help self-identified white supremacists "leave a life of hate" relies on the same flawed logics that organize CVE programs. His interventions include "immersion meetings" where violent white supremacists are placed in the same room as the targets of their hate so they can learn to "humanize the subject." In this troubling model, a Jewish person might be called on to help a white supremacist unlearn anti-Semitic hate. This practice exposes marginalized people to the violence of white supremacists and is in no way supported by social science research.

Moreover, Picciolini has turned to online tools like Moonshot CVE's Digital Shepherds technology to preemptively identify individuals vulnerable to white supremacist violence and "jihadism," such as those watching ISIS videos on YouTube. This CVE-style approach abandons Life After Hate's practice of only working with self-identified white supremacists seeking to leave a life of hate. Meanwhile, FOIA-obtained emails reveal that Picciolini personally profits from his history as a neo-Nazi and CVE practitioner, charging upwards of $250 for these "de-radicalization" sessions, despite having no formal training in mental health or counseling provision.

From: christian@goldmill.com <christian@goldmill.com> on behalf of Christian Picciolini <christian@lifeafterhate.org>
Sent: Monday, August 7, 2017 1:36 PM
To: DAVID M WILLIAMS (States Attorney)
Subject: court-ordered "off-ramping" of individual

Dear David,

Thank you for your call. I am very familiar with the case you are referencing. I am willing to help.

RATES (*payment from client directly to provider at time of service*)

- Initial 60-minute consultation with client and legal teams (prosecution & defense) - FREE
- Additional consultation with client and legal team (defense) - $200/hour
- Preparation & research - $100/hour (capped at 5 hours - prior to first session)
- Hourly Session Rate - $200/hour
- Immersion Session Rate - $250/hour
- Online aftercare support network - FREE
- Court appearances - $100/hour
- Travel Expenses (if necessary) - billed at cost

SOCIAL MEDIA SURVEILLANCE

The CVE drive to identify individuals vulnerable to violence also has influenced the policing of youth perceived to be involved in street gangs. In 2014, Chicago Public Schools received a $2,197,178 grant from the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) to establish a social media monitoring program called **Connect and Redirect to Respect.** In its grant application, CPS argued that social media is "potentially one of the leading sources for information on violent behavior and confrontations between students."

Using social media monitoring software and surveillance conducted by CPS staff, the Connect and Redirect to Respect program "monitor[s] social media to identify students most in need of remediation, link[s] high-risk individuals to the district's [CPD] Gang School Safety Team (GSST), refer[s] students to follow-up social-emotional intervention strategies within the school or community, and maintain[s] continual post-intervention follow-up to ensure successful outcomes."[51] By **"dispatch[ing] the Chicago Police Department's Gang School Safety Team (GSST) to perform interventions,"** this social media monitoring program increases young people's contact with law enforcement and subjects them to individualized interventions, on the pathologizing assumption that participation in gangs is facilitated by bad choices rather than broader economic contexts.[52] In fact, one goal of the program is to "increase the number of GSST interventions by 20%," meaning the program actively seeks to strengthen the role of CPD in CPS. Today, CPS relies on keyword searches conducted by its "intelligence analysts," rather than social media monitoring software, to identify students and refer them to the GSST.

As interagency agreements detail, police officers have access to computer terminals in CPS schools with the Citizen and Law Enforcement Analysis and Reporting (CLEAR) system, which maintains the Chicago Gang Database.[53]

RECOMMENDATIONS

ASK QUESTIONS & REFUSE TO PARTICIPATE IN CVE PROGRAMS

Given the dangerous shortcomings of CVE and TVPP and the steady expansion of CVE into other city agencies, Illinois communities should approach solicitations for **focus groups, bystander or upstander trainings, and workshops for mental health professionals with suspicion.** Because local CVE programs often go by other names, like "bystander-gatekeeper training," we provide a few guiding questions to ask before deciding to collaborate with an organization that may participate in CVE:

- Does this program ask me to develop or use a checklist of warning signs or concerning behaviors to identify individuals vulnerable to violence?

    - Be aware that some programs use activist language like bystander training or exploit concerns about hate crimes to encourage community participation.

- Who is hosting the event and what is its purpose?

- Who are the listed speakers? Do they include key CVE/TVPP players? FBI agents? DHS representatives?

- Who provided the funding for these events? What are the reporting requirements for this funding?

    - Be aware that "third-party intermediaries" like CVE-friendly community organizations have been hosting these events across the nation to make it even more difficult to establish the connections between the trainings and the Department of Homeland Security funding.

RECOMMENDATIONS

POLICY DEMANDS

ICJIA: Defund and End TVPP Immediately

Ensuring that any agency receiving funding for CVE programming denounces and rejects that funding is the first major step to recognizing and supporting communities that historically have been criminalized by law enforcement agencies and treated as national security threats. Funding community-driven programs and social services independent of law enforcement agencies, rather than disproven anti-terrorism initiatives, cultivates healthy communities and minimizes divisiveness. In Illinois, this means demanding that ICJIA ends TVPP and refuses to accept funds for CVE programming.

CPS: End Connect and Redirect to Respect

Given the dangers of racialized surveillance, social media monitoring risks intensifying the school-to-prison pipeline, especially in low-income communities and communities of color. Instead, mental health professionals and educators should be well-trained and well-resourced to best address issues in their respective communities, without relying on law enforcement agencies and social media monitoring for support. Schools should not contribute to policing practices that harm children and their families. This means ending the Connect and Redirect to Respect program and related practices.

UIC: Return CVE Grant Money and End CVE Research

For Chicago to live up to its status as a Sanctuary City, its colleges and universities must not participate in research and programs that intensify the surveillance and criminalization of Arab, Muslim, and other immigrant communities. UIC therefore should immediately end all CVE-related research and academic partnerships. This must include reevaluating the ethics that inform its Institutional Research Board to ensure that all research projects that directly affect and potentially harm people of color are reviewed by constituents from the targeted group.

City of Chicago: Say "No" to All Community Surveillance

Although Chicago often celebrates its status as a Sanctuary City for immigrants, there are many loopholes through which ICE and local law enforcement continue to collaborate. Community surveillance programs such as CVE and Connect and Redirect to Respect also undermine Chicago's commitments to its immigrant communities. For far too long, state actors have sought to identify and eliminate dangerous or suspicious activity by conducting surveillance in low-income communities and communities of color. Rather than solve crime, surveillance induces fears, creates divisiveness, and criminalizes social difference. To support our communities, we must pass policies that prevent any kind of surveillance. This also means refusing to expand or participate in Chicago Police Department programs that solicit community partnerships in order to share information and promote profiling and racially-motivated fear tactics, and ending use of the Chicago and Cook County Gang Databases.

RECOMMENDATIONS

TAKE ACTION

Sign our pledge to say "No" to CVE in Chicago, and refuse to participate in any CVE-related trainings or activities: http://www.stopcve.com/take-action

Call ICJIA director John Maki and demand he ends TVPP immediately.
John Maki - (312) 793-8550: "Hello, my name is _____ and I am calling to request that you immediately end the TVPP program, and return any and all CVE funds. This program is based on flawed and disproven science that is dangerous for Muslim communities, and communities of color throughout Illinois."

Share info with your communities, friends, coworkers, and families about CVE and TVPP.
Download this report at stopcve.com/chicago/report
Share the report with mental health professionals and teachers you know.

Contact us at stopcve@gmail.com to host an event on TVPP, which could include strategizing about how to end CVE in Chicago.

Ultimately, we want TVPP and similar programs de-funded in Illinois. We are building a campaign to do just that. If you or an organization of which you are a part want to become involved in this emerging effort, please contact us at stopcve@gmail.com.

CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHT

The Los Angeles Coalition

"When the Department of Homeland Security announced Los Angeles as a recipient of its CVE initiative in 2016, Muslim community members and leadership—alongside organizations like MPower Change, VigilantLOVE, Advancing Justice LA, CAIR LA, ACLU Southern California, and the California Immigrant Policy Center—came together and organized against the program. The #StopCVE coalition in LA worked for over a year to defeat the program through Public Records Act requests, petitions, and lobbying visits. This victory would not have been possible without the efforts of each member in the coalition—including organizing done by partner coalitions like the Stop LAPD Spying Coalition (SLAPDS) and United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA). It's important to note that the Muslim community in Southern California, as represented by the Islamic Shura Council of Southern California, rejected CVE. Notably, Bayan Claremont rejected a grant totaling $900K. The #StopCVE coalition in LA is carrying forward its work after the victory by addressing Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) programs targeting youth in local schools, and aiming to scale organizing against surveillance programs across California."

- Kifah Shah, Organizing Manager at MPower Change, Los Angeles

LIST OF ACRONYMS

Acronym	Name
CLEAR	Citizen and Law Enforcement Analysis and Reporting (houses the gang database)
CPD	Chicago Police Department
CPS	Chicago Public Schools
CRR	Connect and Redirect to Respect
CVE	Countering Violent Extremism
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DOJ	Department of Justice
GSST	Chicago Police Department's Gang School Safety Team
ICJIA	Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority
ITTF	Illinois Terrorism Task Force
TVPP	Targeted Violence Prevention Program
UIC	University of Illinois at Chicago

#StopCVE-Chicago workshop legislative break-out group

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