

#STOPCVE

Don't let the Department of Homeland Security's Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) program turn trusted community members into informants!



WHAT IS CVE?

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) is a U.S. Department of Homeland Security program purportedly designed to prevent domestic terrorism. The program gives major grants to community and law enforcement organizations in exchange for information about individuals exhibiting warning signs of “radicalization.” The program claims to be:



but that couldn't be farther from the truth. CVE (rebranded in Chicago as the Targeted Violence Prevention Program - TVPP) effectively turns trusted community members—including teachers, neighbors, mental health professionals, and imams—into quasi-informants, asking them to identify “suspected” individuals from their own communities and report them to the federal government.



WHY IS IT DANGEROUS?

CVE is based on junk science. There are no scientifically proven indicators that a person might be "vulnerable to radicalization" or violence. Instead, CVE uses racialized indicators that target the Muslim community. Anything from growing a beard to wearing a hijab to going to the mosque could be considered suspicious behavior.



Essentially, CVE makes commonplace appearance, activities, and political activity of Muslims seem criminal or inherently threatening. In fact, programs like CVE internationally have been criticized for reinforcing anti-Muslim stereotypes.

What's more, U.S. government documents show that CVE programs are often designed for intelligence collection rather than to identify and serve the needs of the community.

HOW DO YOU SPOT CVE?

Despite government efforts to rebrand or redefine CVE programs, they often use similar language, share key characteristics, and follow recognizable patterns. Use these tools to decode and identify what CVE programs are active in your schools & communities!



FUNDING

While CVE funding typically comes from DHS, the Department of Justice, or law enforcement, sometimes the money is funneled through via community organizations.

BRANDING

CVE is typically branded as community programs that are “building resilience” and often take a public health approach that draws from suicide- or gang-prevention models. They claim to “predict violence” and teach community members how to identify suspects based on vague, often political, indicators (e.g. if a person exhibits “concern about U.S. drone strikes”) that could apply to large swaths of the population.



QUESTIONS TO ASK:

WHO ARE THE ACTORS?

Are social service providers and law enforcement collaborating?

WHO ARE THE TARGETS?

Is the program targeted toward or located in immigrant or Muslim communities or communities of color?

Does the program include a mechanism to gather data about community members (ie: an afterschool sports program that will collect rosters of team members)?



CVE DECODED

"Stop the spread of violent extremist radicalization and recruitment!"

WHAT IT ACTUALLY MEANS:

Radicalization is firmly a myth. Anything from going to the mosque to growing a beard to expressing discontent with the U.S. government can and have been cited as steps toward radicalization. This criminalizes natural, healthy behaviors of young people, based on debunked theories that there is a pathway toward committing violent acts.

"To avoid the problem of racial profiling and the use of disproven indicators of violent extremism, we focus on behaviors and use warning signs that suggest a person may be radicalizing."

WHAT IT ACTUALLY MEANS:

CVE uses 'behaviors' as a cover for racial profiling: the behaviors, the records of these behaviors, and the use of these records are usually racialized.

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"RADICALIZATION"

"BEHAVIORS NOT PROFILES"

"BY-STANDER/GATEKEEPER"

"COMMUNITY-DRIVEN CVE"

"Our communities have been targeted by the FBI for decades. We need a community-driven alternative like CVE!"

WHAT IT ACTUALLY MEANS:

CVE uses community organizations at its behest, sidestepping communities working to define local issues and solutions for themselves.

"Teachers, counselors, family, and friends who can recognize signs of trauma, and radicalization that could lead to Violent Extremism in vulnerable members of their community."

WHAT IT ACTUALLY MEANS:

This approach turns community members into informants, compelling them to exploit their relationships and profile and report individuals based on flawed indicators of "radicalization."

WHAT CAN I DO?

There are many ways that you can take action and resist CVE with your community! Here are just a few:



NO

REFUSE!

Refuse to participate in any “bystander-gatekeeper” trainings that ask participants to identify individuals vulnerable to radicalization.

ASK!

Find out if your school or community organization has a relationship with CVE partners, and what their participation is in CVE programs. Are they involved with Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA)’s TVPP trainings or the FBI’s ‘Don’t Be a Puppet’ online learning module?



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EDUCATE!

Educate your family, peers, and community on the dangers and harms of CVE.

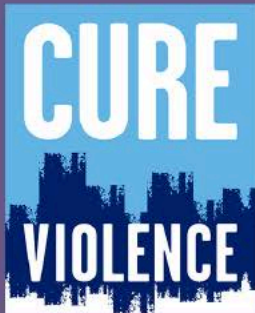


PARTICIPATING ORGS

Here are the organizations in Illinois that currently have or historically had relationships to CVE programs.



Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority



THE COUNCIL
OF ISLAMIC ORGANIZATIONS
OF GREATER CHICAGO



Islamic Center of Naperville



Compassionate
Care Network
Providing Access To Affordable Healthcare



#STOPCVE

For more information, resources,
and ways to get involved, visit our
website: www.stopcve.com