SAFE SPACES INITIATIVE

TOOLS FOR DEVELOPING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

ABOUT MPAC

FOUNDED IN 1988, MPAC IS AN AMERICAN INSTITUTION WHICH INFORMS AND SHAPES PUBLIC OPINION AND POLICY BY SERVING AS A TRUSTED RESOURCE TO DECISION MAKERS IN GOVERNMENT, MEDIA AND POLICY INSTITUTIONS. MPAC IS ALSO COMMITTED TO DEVELOPING LEADERS WITH THE PURPOSE OF ENHANCING THE POLITICAL AND CIVIC PARTICIPATION OF AMERICAN MUSLIMS.

SAFE SPACES INITIATIVE:

## TOOLS FOR DEVELOPING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

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"What could we have done differently to prevent this senseless violence from taking place?"

This toolkit is a culmination of more than two and a half decades of the Muslim Public Affairs Council's (MPAC) policy advocacy and engagement in the sphere of public affairs and public policy. At the core of MPAC's mission is amplifying the voice of American Muslims on critical issues facing our community and our country and advocating for policies that uphold the faith and security of all Americans.

The toolkit's contents are based on a deep examination of the research literature across many disciplines including psychology, counseling, terrorism studies, criminology, law and public policy. Sources include peer-reviewed academic articles, mainstream media coverage, court documents, empirical studies and government and non-government reports.

On one hand, MPAC works with policy-makers, think tanks and media outlets to provide a mainstream American Muslim perspective on timely issues. On the other hand, it works with Muslim communities around the country – particularly youth – to empower them to engage directly with elected officials and local community groups for mutual benefit. Since the tragic attacks of 9/11, MPAC has doubled its efforts to both understand what drives people to commit acts of violence in the name of Islam and also what drives people to spread Islam's message of equality, mercy and justice. The horrific attack, which took place at the Boston Marathon on April 15, 2013, shook American Muslims to their core – and revealed a challenge they could no longer afford to ignore. This toolkit is the first step in answering the question we heard over and over again in the weeks and months after the Boston attack: "What could we have done differently to prevent this senseless violence from taking place?"

In addition, the toolkit reflects the collective insight and wisdom of a diverse set of perspectives and voices who were interviewed for this project. In total, 20 individuals were interviewed, in addition to several others who assisted in cultivating background information.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

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More than a dozen years after the horrific attacks of 9/11, the scourge of violent extremism – in the form of terrorist attacks, intra-faith attacks on minority Muslim populations or violent attacks on girls seeking an education – is one of the most daunting and complex dilemmas the American Muslim community continues to face. The Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC) has a 20-year track record of examining the threat of violent extremism and examining the most effective strategies that law enforcement and American Muslim communities can utilize to work together to promote strong communities and prevent violence.

In 2005, MPAC launched its "National Grassroots Campaign to Fight Terrorism," which was borne out of concerns, both nationally and within local communities, about how to deal with extremist intrusion into American Muslim mosques and other institutions.

At the center of this campaign was a handbook that provided a statement of principles, guidelines for managing mosques and institutions and resources to counter the justifications for hatred and violence made by violent extremists such as al-Qaeda and others. The campaign's main message was, "If you see or hear any hint of extremism, get that person out of your mosque or group." Endorsed by the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) and the Department of Justice, the campaign was one of a small number of community-led initiatives intended to prevent acts of violent extremism. Dozens of mosques and community groups adopted the campaign and implemented its recommendations in their institutional bylaws.

Indeed, American Muslim leaders have shown a willingness to openly tackle tough issues facing their communities, including condemnations of terrorism and investing in the substantive work needed to prevent it from taking place.

Our years of experience at MPAC have shown us that grassroots leaders more often lack the resources and knowledge, not will, to properly address any possible cases of dangerous extremists.

In the past decade, we have learned a number of important lessons from on-going research and advocacy. First, law enforcement must focus on criminal activities while local communities and leaders must focus on extreme ideas that may cause a person to eventually pursue violence. We also have learned that simply removing people with problematic views from the mosque is not enough to prevent acts of violence.

This truth became abundantly clear in the aftermath of the Boston Marathon attack perpetrated by the Tsarnaev brothers. Tamerlan Tsarnaev, the older brother, was reportedly told to leave a Boston-area mosque, at least twice, for disrupting Friday prayers (*jumah*) with his loud opposition to the preacher's (*imam*) message of co-existence and mutual respect. This incident encouraged community leaders all around the country to come forward in recent months

to inform us that they need new, effective ways to deal with individuals who they fear may be leaning toward acts of violence.

One act of violent extremism is one too many. Unfortunately, since 9/11 there have been at least 212 U.S.-based al-Qaeda violent extremists arrested[1], over a combination of more than 60-plus attempted and successful plots. American Muslims, like other communities in our nation, are not immune from the various factors that push and pull people toward violence, including acts motivated by extreme ideologies.

We're not blind to acts of violence committed by other communities and ideologies. We also want to be clear: Our communities are hardworking, contributing members to society, whose historical connection to our country goes back to the time of the establishment of the early colonies, before America became an independent nation.[2] That said, violent extremism isn't "someone else's problem." If someone thinks that this couldn't happen to my child, my friend, or my brother they're wrong. Dangerously wrong.

The Boston Marathon attack is the perfect case in point. The attack was tragic for many reasons; it resulted in the deaths of three people, injured at least 264 others and affected many more family members who were hurt by the harm done to their loved ones. The attack was a destructive, feeble and senseless attempt to undermine a longstanding symbol of a great city's traditions of unity, pluralism and civic pride.

Part of this tragic tale includes the story of the bombers whose complicated histories seemed to point them to success, but ultimately led toward a path of violence. Where these young men made a wrong turn or series of wrong turns remains a point of debate and intense fact-finding.

What we currently know suggests that both young men had significant problems in their lives, but that those issues might have been turned around with the right of kind outside intervention and assistance. However, lacking that outside help, the Tsarnaev brothers took a step that had reached an absolute point of no return. Their actions tore apart their family, which had been struggling in the years and months before the bombings.

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In hindsight, it appears that there were many subtle and overt signs that suggested things were going wrong. Perhaps one of the many red flags toward the Tsarnaev brothers' path to violence was Tamerlan Tsarnaev's outbursts during two separate Friday prayers (*jumah*) at a local mosque. Understandably, mosque congregants reacted by kicking him out of the service and community leaders warned him to knock off the disruptive behavior.

However, could more have been done? Could communities have used incidents like these as opportunities to see if there were more to these behaviors than simply religious fervor? That's where this toolkit comes in. It is designed for an American Muslim grassroots leadership audience, by acting as a practical resource to help deal with the possibility of small, but concrete cases of extremism and violence that may occur. The toolkit doesn't claim to have all the answers to our communities' challenges; that would be naïve and dangerously misleading.

We do, however, provide a viable set of alternative options and strategies for communities that do not have to end in arrest or someone getting hurt. Our toolkit's content is based on insights from the latest and most rigorous research across many disciplines including psychology and counseling, terrorism studies, criminology, law and public policy. Its findings are also based on interviews with experienced imams, counselors, academic experts, ex-members of extremist movements and others.

RESOURCES IN THIS TOOLKIT:

- Suggestions for building strong communities who actively oppose violence
- Steps communities can take to move a person away from a path toward violence
- Tips for determining a legitimate threat
- Knowing when to report a suspicious behavior or threatening communications to law enforcement versus intervening to provide the person with counseling
- A list of social services and other resources to help your community institution
- Advice specifically for college/university Muslim student organizations

FAQS: WHY THIS TOOLKIT MATTERS TO MY COMMUNITY

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Why does violent extremism matter to me as an American Muslim? Are we talking about this only because the government is concerned?

The Qur'an says that if anyone murders a person, it is as though he has murdered all of humanity; and if anyone has saved a life, it is as though he has saved all of humanity. We are talking about this issue because it is what God commands us to do.

Let's be very clear: our communities are hardworking, contributing members to society, whose historical connection to our country goes back to the time of the establishment of the early colonies, before America became an independent nation. That said, violent extremism isn't "someone else's problem". If someone thinks, "this couldn't happen to my child", "my friend", "my brother", etc…. they're wrong. Dangerously wrong.

Unfortunately there's a very small, but dangerous minority of violent individuals who falsely claim to act on behalf of the interests and aspirations of all Muslims. In order to recruit people to their backward ideology, they prey on vulnerable and misguided members of our communities. Some of these individuals have gone on to do terrible things such as carry out the Boston marathon bombings.

Is this a real problem or is the FBI just "setting us up"?

There's no doubt there have been controversial court cases involving the use of FBI informants, sometimes called "agent provocateurs". As a result, some have claimed that most arrests of Al-Qaeda suspects in our country were the result of informants entrapping defendants. As a result of this assumption, some have argued that the FBI is responsible for manufacturing most of these cases. However, the evidence doesn't support that notion.

A 2013 study directed by Ohio State University professor John Mueller, a national security expert and outspoken critic of the "War on Terror," found that 26 out of the 53 (49%) post-9/11 U.S. Al-Qaeda arrests involved an informant.[a] While the

a - Terrorism Since 9/11: The American Cases. Ed. John Mueller. (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University, 2013): 3-7.

FAQS: WHY THIS TOOLKIT MATTERS TO MY COMMUNITY

numbers clearly show informants are frequently used by federal law enforcement, a majority of these cases do not involve them at all.

What is "Violent Extremism" exactly?

Violent extremism is basically another term for "terrorism". Violent extremists can range from domestic U.S.-based groups like Far-Right militias and violent Neo-Nazis to foreign groups such as the Armed Revolutionary Forces of Colombia (FARC) and Al-Qaeda and its affiliated groups. As our short list of examples indicate, it is clear that groups claiming to act in the name of Islam aren't the only ones threatening our nation.

What is MPAC's approach to this issue?

There's no doubt that we need law enforcement to keep our nation safe. However, we also believe that not every case of extremism involving an American Muslim has to end in an arrest or someone getting hurt. *Our approach to this issue is similar to how*

public schools and universities across our nation prevent tragedies like Columbine and Virginia Tech.

Research suggests the paths to violence taken by school shooters and violent extremists are very similar.[b]

In those situations, schools formed teams of teachers, psychologists, and other staff to identify problems and see if there are alternatives to arrest, such as counseling. That method of intervention has been effective, preventing 120 incidents of violence in the past decade.[c] Similarly, we believe our communities can establish processes to identify and properly intervene in situations where a person may be heading down a path of *fitna* and violence.

In 2010, 17 year-old Mohamed Osman Mohamud was arrested and convicted of attempting to bomb a Christmas tree ceremony in Portland, Oregon. Coming from a broken home whose parents fled a civil war,

Mohamud had been experiencing personal problems that led him to a path where he began supporting extreme ideologies, but wasn't yet doing anything violent.
Noticing his son's troublesome path, his father called the FBI because he didn't know where else to turn. We believe people like Mohamud's father should have community-led alternatives to violence or arrest in the form of anti-violence intervention processes.

What does this toolkit do exactly?

This toolkit looks to provide communities with practical advice on what those intervention processes can look like. It also gives a quick background on why some people adopt divisive ideologies and others go a step further by deliberately committing acts of violence.

But the toolkit goes further than that. Unfortunately, in some cases, despite the help and assistance being offered, some may choose to continue down a path of destruction. In those cases, we provide information to help communities decide when it is time to

b - Adam Lankford, "A Comparative Analysis of Suicide Terrorists and Rampage, Workplace, and School Shooters in the United States From 1990 to 2010," Homicide Studies, Vol. 17, (3), August 2013: 255-274.
c - "The Path to Violence," Public Broadcasting System, February 20, 2013. http://to.pbs.org/1akjx47

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call law enforcement versus when they should offer intervention assistance.

The best solution, however, is to prevent a crisis from happening in the first place. In this regard, our toolkit also provides suggestions that offer healthy outlets and guidance on issues ranging from increasing religious knowledge and political activism training to discussing "hot topic" issues like foreign policy, gender relations, and alcohol/drug abuse.

We collectively call these three different types of community-based assistance the *Prevention, Intervention, Ejection* model, or PIE, for short.

Why aren't you talking about violence from groups like the KKK? Don't their ideologies need to be addressed?

Organizations like the Southern Poverty Law Center, Life After Hate, and the One People's Project have dealt with those groups and their ideologies for many years. The fight against racist extremism and violence has been, and continues to be, openly discussed, debated, and debunked

largely due to these organizations' efforts over the past several decades.

We focus on American Muslims because it is the community we are the most familiar with and the one upon which our organization was founded to serve and advocate for. That said, we don't shy away from discussing other extremist ideologies. In fact, we draw upon some of the successes against those other groups in order to help inform our communities about effective prevention and intervention.

How can I help?

We invite you to check out our toolkit! In it, there are suggestions for leaders of mosques/community centers, as well as Muslim college student organizations. If you're not a leader in your community, you can still help by providing your local institution/organization with a copy of our toolkit and request to start putting its ideas into action.
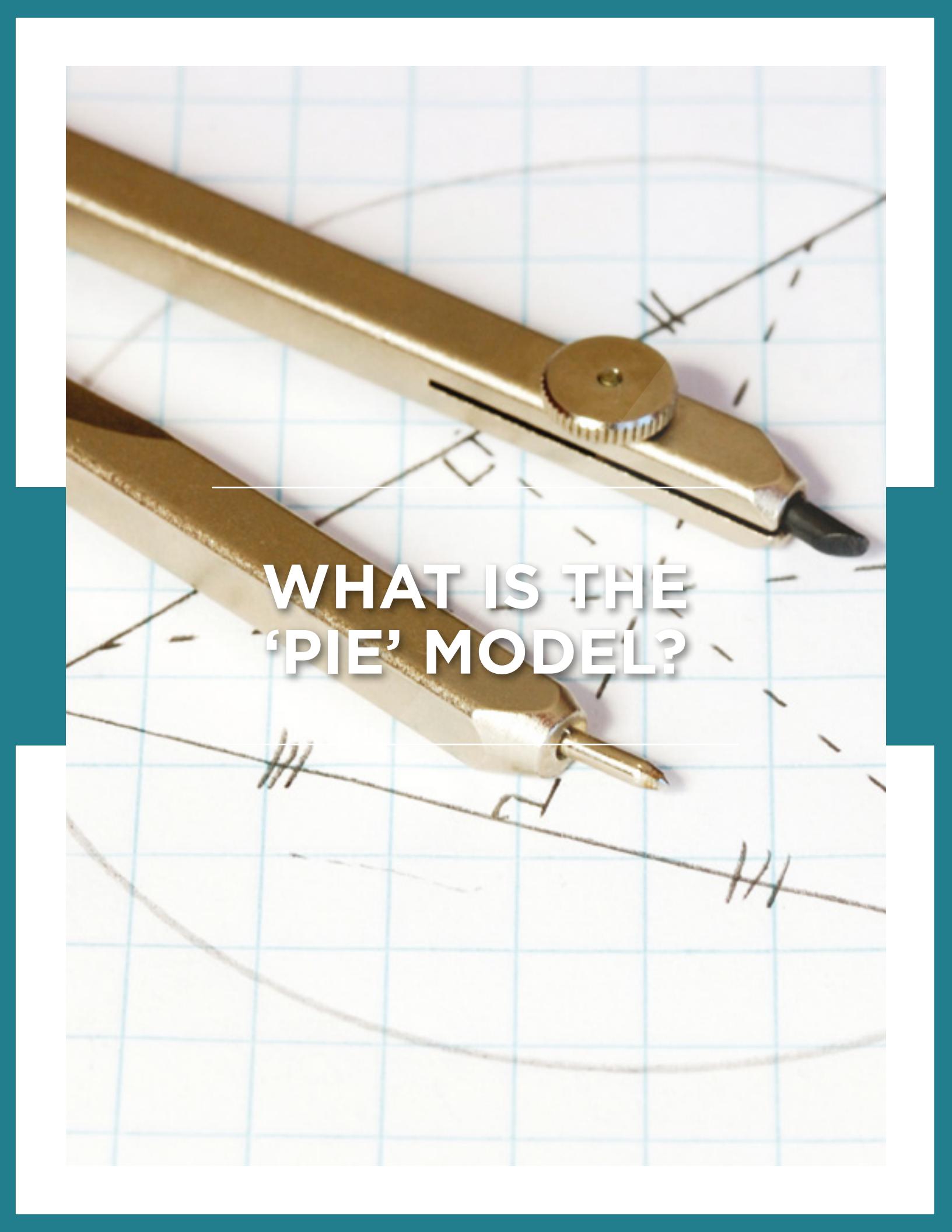
WHAT IS THE 'PIE' MODEL?

WHAT IS THE 'PIE' MODEL?

MPAC's approach to tackling violent extremism is based on two assumptions:
1. **A person's path to violence is unique, gradual and involves many factors.**
2. **The path to violence can be slowed, stopped, reversed and/or prevented with proper community support.**

Our solution rests on three pillars – Prevention, Intervention, Ejection, or PIE for short.

PREVENTION

As the famous proverb says, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." The ideal solution is to prevent a crisis from happening in the first place. In this regard, our toolkit provides suggestions that offer healthy outlets and guidance on issues ranging from increasing religious knowledge and political activism training to discussing hot topic issues such as foreign policy, gender relations and alcohol/drug abuse.

INTERVENTION

There are some individuals who are at the edge of committing acts of violence. However, not every case of extremism involving an American Muslim has to end in an arrest or someone getting hurt. We believe the best approach in these situations, based on the best scientific evidence, is similar to how schools and universities across our nation prevent violent tragedies such as those that took place at Columbine High School and Virginia Tech University.

In those cases, schools formed teams of teachers, counselors and other staff to identify problems and alternative solutions to arrest, such as counseling. That method has been effective, preventing 120 incidents of violence in the past decade. Our toolkit provides communities with practical advice on creating and implementing those processes.

EJECTION

Unfortunately, in some cases, despite help being offered, some individuals may choose to continue down a path of destruction. In those cases, we provide guidance to communities in how best to remove a person from their institution, when to call law enforcement and when to offer intervention assistance.

WHAT IS THE 'PIE' MODEL?
APPLYING THE 'PIE' MODEL

(COMMUNITY RESPONSES)
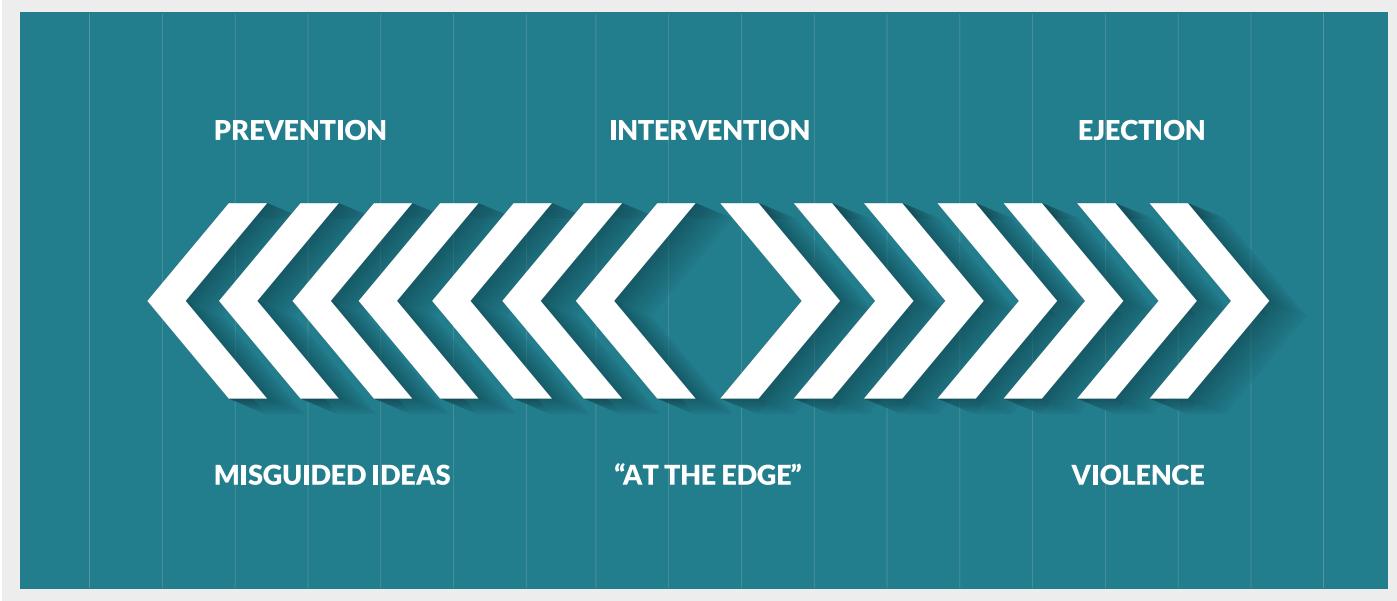
PREVENTION	INTERVENTION	EJECTION
MISGUIDED IDEAS	"AT THE EDGE"	VIOLENCE

(MOVEMENT TOWARD/AWAY FROM VIOLENCE)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Understanding the Challenge

Precise terminology is key to achieving a clearer, more accurate and more nuanced understanding of violent extremism. In this executive summary, we wish to highlight one of the most important terms in our toolkit:

Takfirism – This is an ideology espoused by violent people that include al-Qaeda Central and its affiliated and allied organizations, movements and lone individuals. This is often imprecisely referred to as "jihadism," "Islamist violent extremism," "Islamic extremism," etc. (We categorically reject using the latter set of terms for reasons that are explained in Appendix B.)

Common Risk Factors for a Person's Movement Toward Extremism

By its very wording, violent extremism has two components:

1. **An ideological (extremism) component.**
2. **A (violent) criminal component.**

Both aspects pose challenges for our communities, but only one aspect, the criminal behavior, is illegal. The ideological extremist component is a different matter. The process of how someone can become an ideological extremist is complex and does not lend itself to a single description. Before delving deeper into this discussion, it's important to state a couple of important caveats up front:

Just because someone may face some of the risk factors that push people toward extremism, it does not mean s/he is an extremist or will become one.

Equally important, just because someone may hold extreme political or religious views, it does not make that person a violent criminal.

Finally, violent extremism is neither a common occurrence, nor is it representative or the sole domain of certain communities.

With those caveats in mind, to the extent that extremism and violence occurs, research has considerably sharpened our understanding of why and how it happens. There are multiple elements that can contribute to a person's risk toward ideological extremism:

1. **Concerns about political/social grievances:** This includes issues such as civil liberties and foreign policies.
2. **Economic struggles**
3. **Person's identities:** Some experts point out that second- and third-generation Muslim youth (and converts) struggle with trying to reconcile their American civic identity with their Islamic religious values and identity.
4. **Social networks:** Who someone frequently talks to and socializes with.
5. **Encountering extremist ideologies:** General recruitment and propaganda efforts by ideologues and violent extremists.
6. **Lack of parental guidance and community support**

Common Risk Factors for a Person's Movement Toward Violence

Many factors raise a person's risk of moving from extreme thoughts into illegal and violent behavior.

- **The emotional "pull" to act in the face of injustice**: For many, the desire to engage in violence is less about intellect and more about by emotion. In this context, being intellectually convinced by particular details of an ideology is less important than seeing oneself as a defender of Muslims against perceived Western aggression.
- **Thrill, excitement and "coolness":** Some individuals may move into violence for simple reasons, such as it being "cool" and providing a sense of adventure.
- **Status and internal code of honor**: The path to gaining greater status is to be more defiant and violent.
- **Peer pressure**: Internal competition among extremists to achieve greater status.
- **The lack of alternatives**: The movement toward violence can also be facilitated by a lack of alternative activities and/or sources of information that dissuade individuals from going down a ruinous path. Interestingly, one of the most consistent features of *takfiri* violent extremists is their lack of religious knowledge and lack of political activity before joining al-Qaeda.

These internal group dynamics often result in observable warning signs of a possible move toward violence that include:

- Watching "gory" *takfiri* propaganda videos, particularly in a group setting
- Clashes with existing mosque authorities (which often involves unwanted aggressive "morality policing" of other congregants [hisbah])
- Debates between "do-ers" and "talkers"
- Deep engagement in literature explaining how to determine a *kafir* (non-believer/non-Muslim) and criminal activity undertaken in respect to these people.

What Does All of this Mean for Communities?

The most important take-away from these findings is that there are multiple opportunities for communities to protect their friend, family member or brother/sister-in-Islam from going down a dangerous and destructive path.

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PIE: A Recipe for Action

In the second half of our toolkit, we discuss what steps you can take to confront extremism and deal with cases where an individual may be at risk of moving toward violence. This section is further divided into three parts, based on three options available to communities facing a troubled individual:

- **Prevention**
- **Intervention**
- **Ejection**

Prevention

This is about operating regularly in a way that promotes healthy vibrant communities. It's critical to work primarily in prevention before it becomes a larger issue. Some recommended steps include:

1. **Creating Community-Oriented Programs**
   a. **Safe Spaces** to discuss sensitive or taboo subjects in a comfortable and non-judgmental atmosphere. This should include discussions about religious and civic identities, concerns over national and foreign policies, sectarianism, etc.
   b. **Action-Oriented Civic and Political Training** to empower communities to stand up for their rights and promote the public interest (*maslaha*) for all people.
   c. **Increasing Parental Involvement and Supportive Adult Mentorship for Youth** because happiness and health often start at home. Strong families and youth role models are important factors that protects our communities' next generation from getting sucked into dangerous paths such as joining a gang, partaking in drug/alcohol use or displaying violent extremism.
   d. **Media Literacy**. One of the outcomes of increased parental and role model mentorship is having critical conversations about everyday media messages that glorify sexual promiscuity, drug/alcohol use and violence. These conversations should be guided by knowledgeable authoritative adult figures and should include critical discussions on extremist propaganda.

2. **Professional Management of Your Mosque/ Community Center.** Knowing who is using the physical spaces and resources in and around the mosque/community center can go a long way toward ensuring it is not being abused for nefarious purposes. It also helps with general community safety by dissuading hostile outsiders from committing hate crimes.

3. **Expand Your Community Institution's Network of Trusted Contacts.** Many, if not most, mosques/ community centers operate on limited resources. Communities may often need the help of others to take care of important social service functions. That

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help can only happen if they reach out and build relationships with neighboring organizations and institutions, Muslim and non-Muslim, which share a common vision. These contacts include getting to know and building strong working relations with your local law enforcement agencies.

There are also steps that Muslim college student organizations can take, including:

1. **Create a Safe Space for Discussion and Activism**. College is a time to discover and test new ideas. Campus clubs should take advantage of this opportunity by providing a forum where ideas and ideologies can be safely debated and discussed. For those who are interested, training and activism opportunities should be made available to show students how to channel their interests into civic and political engagement.

2. **Receive Training on Strong Management and Leadership.**

An organization is only as strong as its leaders. Some leaders are born, but many more are taught — which is why it is important that executive boards make sure they receive the proper training to improve their leadership and program management skills.

Finally, both mosques/community centers and Muslim college student clubs should work to create a culture of trust and communication.

For years, U.S. schools have dealt with similar situations in order to prevent school shootings such as the Columbine High School or Virginia Tech massacres. Experts have noted that a lack of trust and an environment of silence may actually encourage troubled people to go down a path of violence because they will be less likely to get help, such as mental health counseling. Those with the ability to provide help are also less likely to be aware of those who may need it.[3]

As a result, schools have responded with a firm but caring stance against silence among students by working hard to raise awareness among

their students and faculty and by fostering an environment of trust that encourages communication. Successful trust-building in this context has emphasized the following points:[4]

- Violence prevention is everyone's responsibility. This is about raising awareness and encouraging families and neighbors to contribute to school and community safety, not about blaming an entire community for the actions of a few.
- The school has a process in place to assess threats of violence
- Knowing how the process works and who is involved
- All information will be handled discreetly
- Protecting both the potential victim(s) and perpetrator(s)

Substitute the word "school" or "campus" for "mosque," "community center" or "Muslim college club," and the same principles apply.

Community leaders seeking to foster a climate of trust and communication

must emphasize and reinforce these principles. They can do this in a number of ways, such as sending out emails on their congregational listservs, talk about the importance of communication in Friday sermons and stress to parents and youth peers the confidential and discreet way information about a concern is handled.

Intervention

If you and members of your community find someone who is going down a misguided and possibly violent path, direct intervention may be needed. Here are some recommended steps for an intervention:

- **Develop a Crisis Inquiry Team:** Your team should be composed of a core group of individuals whose skills and contributions include mosque administration, authoritative religious leadership (such as an imam), social work, mental health expertise and legal counsel. A team should also have an information manager who acts as a central point of contact for outsiders, and, if possible, a trusted and respected law enforcement officer who can help determine if any crimes are being committed.

- **For College Students, Engage Your Campus Threat Assessment Team:** This is as simple as contacting your student counselor services center and asking to set up a meeting with its administrators and the threat assessment team. Doing so will help provide

them with the right kind of religious and cultural competency skills they need in the possible event they are faced with a mental health or public safety situation involving a Muslim student.

During a crisis situation, college students should contact their campus threat assessment team and let them handle matters from there, unless they specifically ask otherwise.

For community centers and mosques:

Assemble your Crisis Inquiry Team and determine if the person poses an imminent threat of violence. If the threatening communication or behavior identifies a specific act against a specific target and describes it in a straightforward, clear and plausible manner, then you need to notify law enforcement authorities immediately.

If not an imminent threat of violence, start gathering facts immediately.

a. If your team concludes the person of concern, who made threatening statements or suspicious behaviors, is either:
   o On a path toward violence or
   o There isn't enough reliable information to be reasonably sure the person of concern doesn't pose a threat,

then you should notify law enforcement and let them handle matters from there.

b. However, if your team concludes:
   o There is a enough reliable information to answer the "11 Key Questions" assessment tool (see the full toolkit for more details), and
   o The evidence is convincing enough that the person does not pose a threat of violence,

then your team can conclude their inquiry. However, depending on the results, they may consider developing an intervention plan to provide the person with further assistance and counseling.

In situations where communities may not have the capacity to address a person's needs, such as mental health or social services, assistance from outside partners may be needed.

However, in cases where ideology and religious misguidance are a major factor in a person's movement toward violence, communities can and must take the lead role. Here are four basic principles, taken from interviews with individuals experienced in addressing extremist ideologies and helping people exit from violent groups:

1. **Listen**
2. **Understand the person's references and sources**
3. **Provide the person comfort**
4. **Give alternatives and consistently follow up**

Multiple follow-ups after an initial intervention are important because if the person is non-compliant toward measures to reduce his/her risk of turning to violence, it is probably an indicator of his/her enduring commitment to harm others — making it necessary to notify law enforcement.

Keep in mind that interventions are not an easy process and require careful consideration of both the benefits, as well as the drawbacks. While not necessarily resource-intensive, interventions are time-consuming and will require advance preparation.

Ejection

If Prevention or Intervention measures are not appropriate or feasible, then communities have a third and final option: **Ejection**. **Ejection is a reactive and last-resort option**. It should only be exercised if an intervention has failed or is likely to fail because the person has already demonstrated a committed move toward violence.

While ejection involves physically removing someone from a common space such as a mosque, community center or Muslim student organization, it isn't limited to just that. In the context of a potential threat related to violent extremism, if you have to eject someone from your community space, **you must also contact law enforcement**.

PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THIS TOOLKIT

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This toolkit serves two purposes:

1. **Raise awareness and responsibly inform** our community leaders about the limited, but concrete and complicated challenges that violence and extremism pose to our communities, including to our friends, children, siblings and brothers- and sisters-in-Islam.

2. **Provide tips and tools** to know what to do with any potential tricky situations that may arise at one's mosque/community center and Muslim college student groups.

As such, our toolkit is divided into two sections.

The first section is **"Understanding the Challenge,"** which defines important terms to assist with the concepts and actions that are discussed further in this publication. This section also provides a short, but scientifically-informed introduction, to the appeal of extremism and involvement in violence.

The second section, "**PIE: A Recipe for Action**," is based on three broad categories of measures community leaders can take if they come across an individual who is becoming sympathetic to violent extremism. The three measures are **Prevention**, **Intervention** and/or **Ejection (PIE)**. Each of these parts is discussed further and includes recommendations.

We recognize that no two communities are alike and neither are the contexts and individuals they engage with. **This toolkit, like many other MPAC publications, is a resource for communities. It is ultimately up to local leaders and congregants to decide how they respond to a given situation**.

While our community's lack of centralized leadership can sometimes be a challenge, particularly when it comes to coordinating a unified response to extremism and violence, the rich diversity of its many voices is also a blessing.

PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THIS TOOLKIT

Throughout this document, we provide examples of model programs and organizations that have been developed by American Muslims. We highlight these examples so that other communities have solid examples to emulate or at least draw inspiration from.

This toolkit is entirely a community-funded project. **No money from any government was used to develop this publication; this project was developed for American Muslims, by American Muslims**.

Given the high stakes involved, we developed a set of criteria to carefully select the best studies currently available, particularly with regard to understanding what persuades people to engage in acts of ideologically-motivated violence.

Wherever possible, we also rely on scientific and peer-reviewed studies. (For more details, see Appendix A.) Furthermore, we also examined research on other extremist ideologies, such as U.S. far-right hate and violence, in order to reduce any analytical bias, as well as to better identify and emphasize important lessons that can be applied to *takfiri* al-Qaeda related violent extremism.

In addition, we formally conducted several interviews with highly-regarded community leaders and experts. The list includes imams, certified counselors, current and former law enforcement officials, American Muslim community activists and academic experts. Their cutting-edge insights have helped to elevate the understanding and discussion in this publication.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS
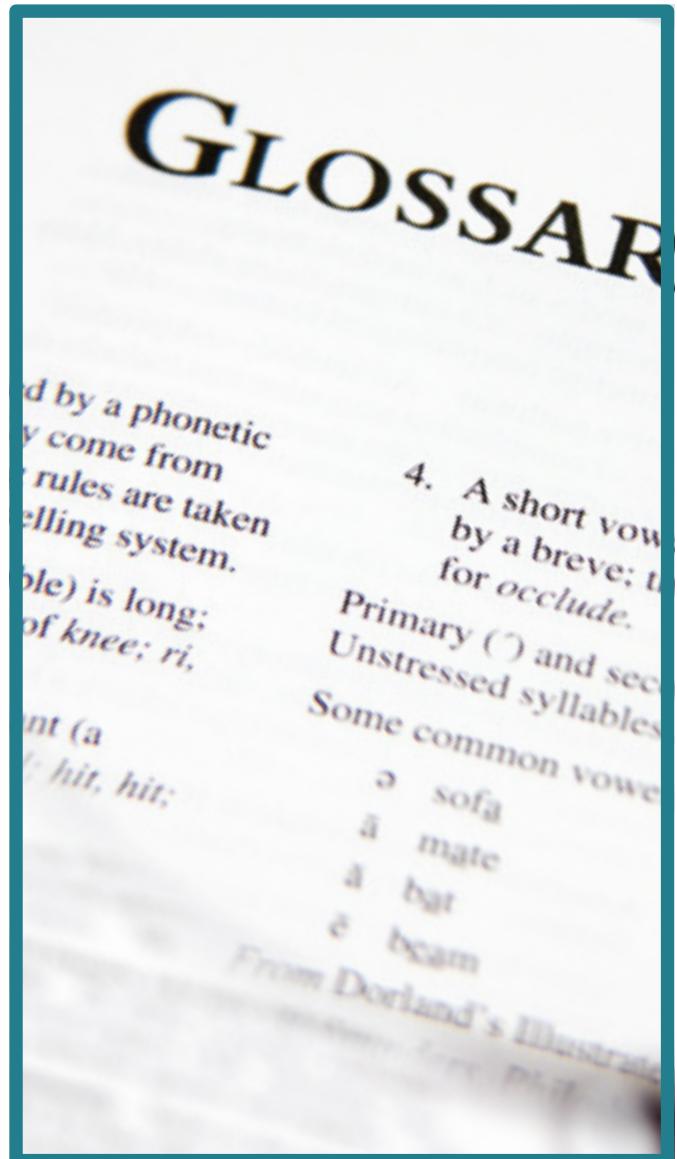
Though, no definition is going to be agreed upon by everyone, it is necessary to define the words and ideas we use and seek to convey. Precise terminology is key to achieving a clearer, more accurate and more nuanced understanding of these concepts.

- **Radical** – Although the term "radical" (particularly in the context of the problematic term "radicalization") has conveyed a negative meaning among many people in recent years, our toolkit defines a radical as someone who simply holds views that are unconventional or outside the majority's opinions and/or behaviors. Radicals are not necessarily violent, nor negative. For instance, during his time, the views held and actions undertaken by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., were considered to be "radical," even though his civil rights views are mainstream by today's standards.

- **This toolkit does not use the terms "radical," "radicalism," or "radicalization."** We find them to be a set of hotly disputed and often ill-defined terms that are often "a source of confusion,"[5] which tend to conflate lawful beliefs with illegal and violent behaviors.

Given the contested and often imprecise concept of radicalization (and other similar-sounding terminology), going forward, this toolkit uses the term "ideological extremism." This helps to better distinguish it from "violent extremism," which is discussed below.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- **Ideological Extremism** – The result of a process where individuals or groups come to intellectually approve of the use of the illegal use of violence against civilians for political or social aims. Ideological extremists engage in lawful, constitutionally-protected free speech and other non-violent and legal activities, but hold extremist beliefs.

- **Violent Extremism** – Synonymous with the term "terrorism,"[d] violent extremism is "the unlawful use of force and violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives." Violent extremism differs from ideological extremism in that violent extremists explicitly commit acts of violence, incite people to violence, or provide material support to those who do. **It moves from the realm of activities protected by the Constitution and other U.S. laws into outright criminal behavior**.

- **Takfirism** – This is an ideology espoused by violent people that include al-Qaeda Central and its affiliated and allied organizations, movements and lone individuals. This is often imprecisely referred to "jihadism," "Islamist violent extremism," "Islamic extremism," etc. (We categorically reject using the latter set of terms for reasons that are explained in Appendix B.)

- **Counter-ideology** – Often labeled "counter-radicalization", this category of actions seeks to prevent an individual's involvement in ideological extremism (and possibly violent extremism) primarily by refuting intellectual justifications for violence and other criminal activity.

- **Anti-extremism** – Often referred to as "de-radicalization", it seeks to facilitate an individual's exit from ideological extremism (and possibly violent extremism) primarily through changes in their existing intellectual views of violence, religion and/or politics.

- **Disengagement** – Refers to a series of efforts seeking to facilitate an individual's movement away from committing acts of violence. Unlike anti-/counter-ideology, which mostly focus on a person's ideas, disengagement focuses on one's behaviors and the factors that facilitate their movement toward violence.

d - It is important to acknowledge that there is no universally accepted definition of "terrorism" (or "violent extremism" in this case). Nonetheless we adopt this definition, which is taken from Title 28, Subpart 0.85 of the Code of Federal Regulations, because this is the legal definition of "terrorism" the FBI operates under. Whether or not some may agree with this definition, it does not change the fact that this is what the country's leading investigative law enforcement agency is required to use. See: 28 CFR § 0.85, available at: http://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/28/0.85.
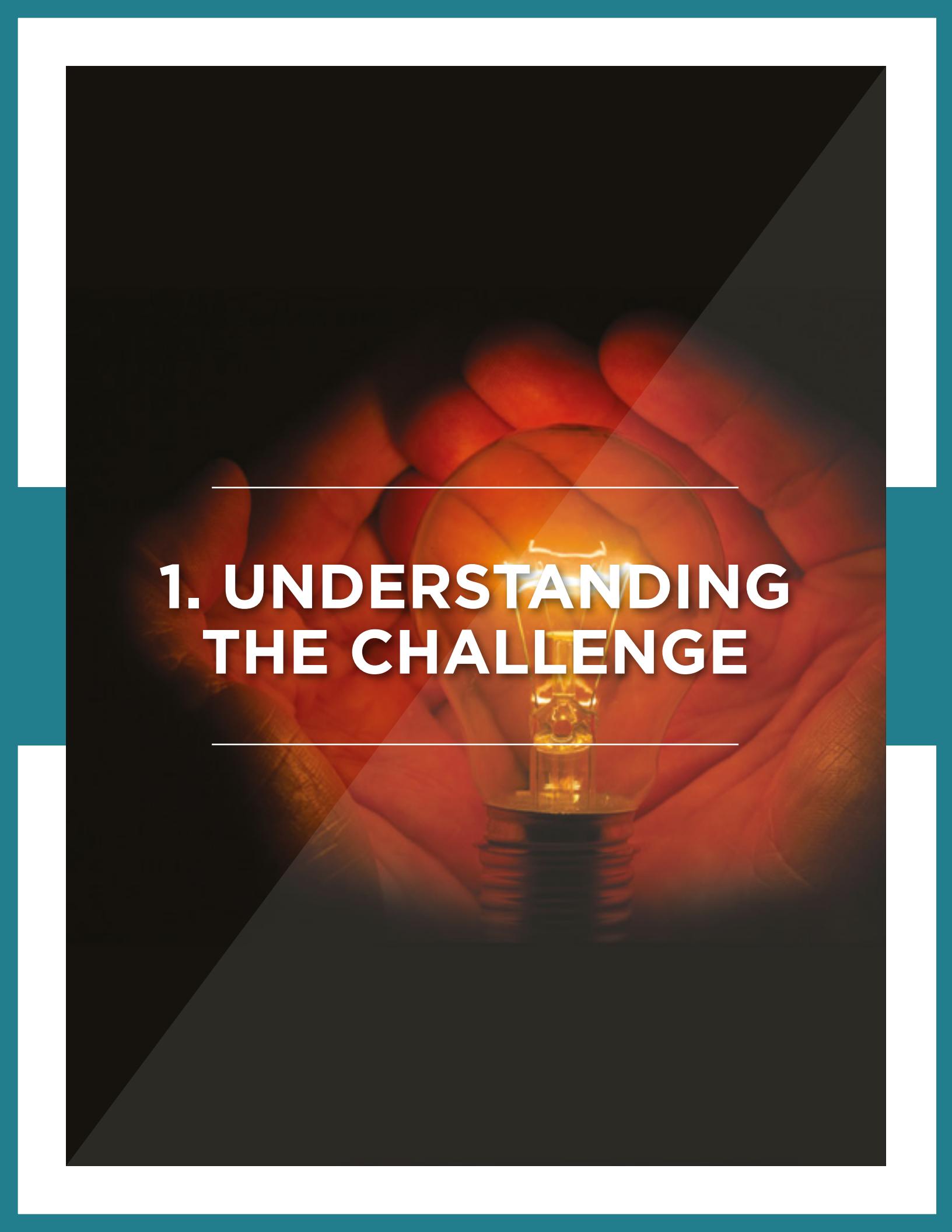
1. UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGE

Overview

This section examines why a small number of individuals decide to become involved in extreme groups or movements and fewer still explicitly turn to violence. To better illustrate some of the ideas and concepts we are discussing, we provide several concrete examples.

Violent Extremism

By its very wording, the term "violent extremism" has two components:

1. **An ideological (extremism) component.**
2. **A (violent) criminal component.**

Both aspects pose challenges for our communities, but only one aspect, the criminal behavior, is actually illegal.[6]

The ideological extremist component is a different matter. The process of how someone can become an ideological extremist is complex and does not lend itself to a single description. Current research suggests there are six major factors that raise the risk of a person joining an extremist movement or group.

However, before going deeper into this discussion, it's important to state three important caveats up front.

First, just because someone may face these factors does not mean s/he is an extremist or will become one. There are millions of individuals in America and around the world who struggle with at least one or more of these factors; however, it is obvious that people overwhelmingly do not go down a path of extremism. In fact, when channeled properly, many of these factors can be used to create and mobilize movements to promote social justice and change.

In pre-independence India/Pakistan, a deeply religious Muslim non-violent activist named Abdul Ghaffar Khan led a mass movement of more than 100,000 ethnic Pashtuns against British colonialism. Called the *Khudai Khidmatgar* (Servants of God), Khan's movement activated and motivated Muslims to peacefully fight for the political independence of the South Asian sub-continent from Britain, social harmony between Muslims and Hindus and equitable land and wealth distribution for the poor.[7]

In the U.S., our nation witnessed the rise of the diverse leadership within the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s

and 1960s. During their time, many of these individuals were labeled "radicals," "subversives," and in the case of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., according to one declassified FBI document, "the most dangerous and effective Negro leader in the country."[8] Born out of a context where racial and socio-economic inequalities were embedded within America's institutions, the Civil Rights Movement succeeded in pushing America further along a path toward equality and justice for all. Although the goals of the Movement remain to be completed, it is undeniable that its leaders have achieved important progress in modern American society.

Second, and equally important, is to remember that just because someone may hold extreme political or religious views does not make that person a violent criminal. The U.S. Constitution and a whole host of other laws—at least in theory—prevent law enforcement from targeting individuals solely or primarily because of their personal thoughts and beliefs. These protections include the First Amendment within the U.S. Constitution, which among other things, grants Freedoms of Speech, Religious Practice and (peaceful) Assembly.

Third, violent extremism is neither a common phenomenon, nor is it representative or the sole domain of certain communities. According to the New America Foundation, a Washington D.C. think-tank, since 9/11, 20 people in the United States have been killed by *takfiri* violence compared to 29 deaths from Far-Right actors during the same period.[9] *Although one act of violent extremism is one too many, to the extent that it does occur does not in any way make it representative of American Muslims.*

CASE STUDY: U.S. FAR-RIGHT VIOLENT EXTREMISM

To illustrate how rare and unrepresentative violent extremism is for communities, we wish to point toward a less-frequently heard example, attacks involving Far-Right actors in the United States. According to data taken from the Southern Poverty Law Center, a civil rights and anti-hate watchdog, there are currently 358 Far-Right "hate groups" across the United States,[10] while others estimate there may be as many as 200,000 to 250,000 "active supporters" of such groups.[11]

While these numbers may come across as a large pool of potential domestic terrorists, comparatively few Far-Right extremists commit acts of violence. According to a higher-end estimate by the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, between 1990 and 2010 approximately 2,221 Far-Right individuals are believed to have committed acts of violent extremism in the United States.[12] Assuming these numbers to be accurate, **at most these attacks represent just above 1% of all American Right-Wing ideological extremists. In other words, U.S. Far-Right violent extremists represent no more than a fringe within a fringe**.

1. UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGE

What are the Common Risk Factors for Moving Toward Extreme Ideas?

Research has considerably sharpened our understanding of why and how extremism and violence occurs. There are multiple elements that can contribute to a person's risk toward ideological extremism: [13]

Concerns about political/social grievances. This includes issues such as civil liberties and foreign policies. Some researchers point out that some Muslims may feel driven toward extremism because they may feel alienated from mainstream politics and feel a sense of their rights being violated due to certain security policies. In other cases, there can be longstanding discontent with foreign policies, such as country invasions, drone strikes and military assistances to dictatorships in Muslim-majority countries. Marginalization and discontent are also sometimes felt within American Muslim communities, especially among youth who may see leaders and elders as not "in touch" with their needs and challenges. Seeking answers and solutions to their challenges, some youth may opt toward extremists who, based on cynical motivations, address their concerns.

Economic struggles. For some people, economic troubles and a lack of self-fulfillment – the likely result of various forms of discrimination (racial, ethnic, religious) – may drive someone toward extremism and violence.

Person's identities. Some experts point out that second- and third-generation Muslim youth (and converts) struggle with reconciling their American civic identity with their Islamic religious values and identity. Individuals who fall into the trap of violent extremism often argue that it is impossible to be a good American (or citizen of another country) and a good Muslim at the same time. *In fact, both deceased extremist propagandists Anwar Al-Awlaki and Samir Khan repeatedly made these arguments to justify their support of al-Qaeda and other violent takfiris.*[14]

Social networks. This is about who someone frequently talks to and "hangs out" with. Some researchers have observed that recruitment and reinforcement of extremism and violence tends to take place through social network ties such as friendship, kinship and discipleship. For instance, a study by al-Qaeda expert Marc Sageman found at least 80 percent of his 500-person dataset was recruited into violent extremism by friendship or family ties. *Who your son or daughter hangs out with and talks to matters a lot.*

Encountering extremist ideologies. Some researchers point to a select minority of outspoken and charismatic preachers as being mainly responsible for fostering the appeal of ideological extremism and pushing individuals to engage in violence.

Lack of parental guidance and community support. A recent study on American Somali youth in the Twin Cities (Minneapolis and St. Paul) area of Minnesota is illuminating. It found that American Somali parents, who often face cultural adjustment and violent trauma issues, are emotionally distant from their children, leaving them without guidance, presenting opportunities for others to influence their lives. Some of these new influences can

be drug dealers, gang members and, in a select number of cases, violent extremist recruiters. In other cases, there simply isn't enough resources to provide the right amount of outreach and support to those in need.

According to one local community service provider interviewed for the study:

"You get out of school at 3:00 and you have almost 4 or 5 hours of nothing to do. The community center, we have can only serve maybe 200 people during the day. So what happens to the rest of the youth that are out here? They have nothing to do. They're just standing around."[15]

However, these challenges can be just as easily applied to many converts, particularly those who lack family support and often need support for social, economic and spiritual needs.[16]

One or more of these issues can be in play in a person's life at any time. It is important to re-emphasize that while these factors raise the risk of engaging in ideological extremism, they do not automatically lead to someone becoming an ideological extremist.

What are the Common Risk Factors for Moving Toward Violence?

There are additional factors to consider that raise a person's risk of moving from extreme thoughts into illegal and violent behavior. Law enforcement officials and academic experts may sometimes refer to this as the difference between "talkers" and "doers."

Although relatively recent, the best available research has started to more scientifically identify certain factors that distinguish the ideological extremists from the violent extremists (again, "talkers" vs. "doers"). Within a context where an individual has been consistently exposed to one or more of the risk factors mentioned earlier there are additional factors that appear to increase the risk of individuals moving from non-violent ideas into violent behaviors:[17]

The emotional "pull" to act in the face of injustice. For many, the desire to engage in violence is less about intellect and more about emotion. In this context, being intellectually convinced by particular details of an ideology is less important than seeing oneself as a defender of Muslims against perceived Western aggression. The two most common elements to the 'pull' are 1) the narrative of Muslims being under attack by Western countries (a.k.a. "America is at War with Islam" and "Islam vs. the West") and 2) the use of *takfiri* propaganda, particularly watching gory videos of Muslim oppression around the world in a group to generate a sense of moral outrage and spur individuals into action.

Thrill, excitement and "coolness." Some individuals may move toward violence for other reasons — it's simply "cool" and provides a sense of adventure. The "coolness" factor has a lot to do with how it's marketed to specific audiences. Things such as recruitment pitches to engage in violent training are often described as "adventures" and "activity trips" rather than the violent and potentially gruesome crime it will lead to. Meanwhile target audiences

1. UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGE

— youth and "thrill junkies" — often are enticed to join because it also offers a way to rebel against authority, similar to appeal of the gun and drug subculture for gang recruitment.[18]

Status and internal code of honor. Groups of men, particularly younger men who do not fit in socially, may disengage from the broader communities they live in to form their own networks and subcultures that provide them with an alternative means of achieving a sense of dignity and self-worth. Within this context, the path to gaining greater status is to be more defiant and violent. Leaders of violent cells were often individuals who were not the most charismatic, but the most battle-hardened and violent. In this sense, recruitment into violent extremist organizations such as al-Qaeda parallel findings from recruitment into street gangs such as the Bloods, Crips and MS-13.[19]

Peer pressure. This can be thought of as internal competition among extremists to achieve greater status. In a subculture where one's personal standing is defined by his/her defiance and willingness to engage in violent and criminal behavior, there is a strong individual incentive to move toward increasingly extreme positions and behaviors. Peer pressure is often expressed outwardly through heated debates between "doers" and "talkers" (i.e. those who have "the guts" to commit an act of violence versus those who don't).

The lack of alternatives. The movement toward violence can also be facilitated by a lack of alternative activities and/or sources of information that dissuade individuals from going down a ruinous path. This includes greater "religious literacy" that challenges extremist ideas and promoting productive forms of non-violent activism like protests and political/social awareness campaigns. Interestingly, one of the most consistent features of *takfiri* violent extremists is their lack of religious knowledge and lack of political activity before joining al-Qaeda.[20] (See Appendix C for a real-life example of how basic Islamic religious knowledge prevented an individual from being recruited into violent extremism.)

These internal group dynamics often result in observable warning signs of a possible move toward violence that are "useful indicators for local police agencies, community leaders and members, social workers, or other public servants involved in working to prevent [movement] to violence."[21] These include: [22]

- Watching gory *takfiri* propaganda videos, particularly in a group setting
- Clashes with existing mosque authorities (which often involves unwanted aggressive "morality policing" of other congregants [*hisbah*])[23]
- Debates between "doers" and "talkers"
- Deep engagement in literature explaining how to determine a *kafir* (non-believer) and what is permissible once you know and any criminal activity undertaken in this respect.

1. UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGE

To be clear, some of these signs, such as watching propaganda videos are distasteful, but Constitutionally protected activities. By itself, reading/watching extremist materials does not justify notifying law enforcement. However, for communities it cannot be ignored either — it could be a potential sign someone is going down a dangerous path.

Under these kinds of unclear circumstances, we feel that prevention and intervention by community leaders is a potential response. The second section of our toolkit addresses this, and it can help community leaders who are confronted with these situations distinguish between people who appear to be going down a path of violence versus those who are at-risk, but might be able to be steered toward a more productive direction in his/her life.

A DANGEROUS '"FORM OF PORN"': UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF WEB-BASED EXTREMISM

Some researchers note that violent and nonviolent extremists are exploiting the Internet for their own purposes. According to a report from the UK-based International Center for the Study of Radicalization and Political Violence (ICSR), there are three problematic aspects to the Internet, with respect to extremist indoctrination and recruitment for violence:[24]

- **Illustrate and reinforce ideological messages**. As a less-filtered means of communication, the Internet allows potential recruits to gain easy access to vivid imagery and texts that support an extremist worldview.

- **Join and integrate into formal organizations**. The anonymity of the Internet allows recruits a relatively low-risk means of joining formal extremist organizations. It also helps extremists, who might otherwise be isolated, network with each other.

- **Establish a supportive environment for extremist views**. Surrounded by other extremists, the Internet becomes an echo chamber for radical viewpoints and behaviors. They establish a virtual arena where such distasteful views and dangerous behaviors are normalized.
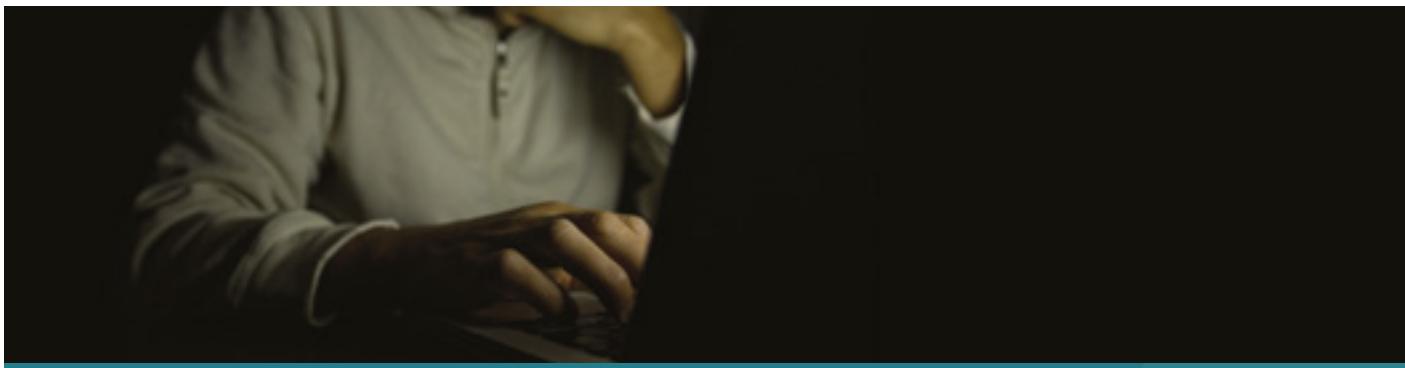
Though the Internet certainly has its problematic aspects, it also has its limitations.

According to the ICSR report:

"Self-radicalization and self-recruitment via the Internet with little or no relation to the outside world rarely happens and there is no reason to suppose that this will change in the near future."[25]

The reason for this conclusion is due to the importance of real-world relationships. Extremists see that the Internet does not "provide face-to-face human interaction nullify[ing] many of its advantages."[26]

Other research finds the number of consistent users tends to be small. According to one British study of the web traffic of a popular extremist site, "the vast majority of messages posted on the Mujahedon.net forums originated with a small core group of active users: 99 percent were passive or casual users."[27] Put differently, one expert we interviewed observed that, "some people consume jihadi videos as a form of porn" in which the consumption acts "as a barrier to [violent] action."[28]

While these findings may be somewhat reassuring, they do not negate the important role Internet-based propaganda and recruiting efforts have played. If nothing else, the Internet serves an important role of sustaining the ideology among people it has already won over but without having to resort to face-to-face meetings with other extremist.

Furthermore, like consuming pornography, particularly by young adult males, watching online *takfiri* videos isn't entirely harmless; evidence suggests that what kind of material is being watched and under what conditions it's being watched, matters significantly. Scientific studies on the impact porn has on college fraternity men's beliefs and violent behaviors toward women seem to parallel recent research on the role *takfiri* cyber-propaganda plays in moving young men from extreme thoughts into violence.

A 2011 U.S. study looked at the relationship between college fraternity men (a sub-demographic found to be more likely to commit a rape on campus and hold misogynistic views of women compared to other college men)[29] and their porn use. They found that "[fraternity] men who view pornography are significantly less likely to intervene as

a bystander [to prevent a rape], report an increased behavioral intent to rape and are more likely to believe rape myths."[30] The study found the effects were the most robust among those fraternity members who reported they watched rape and sadomasochistic porn.[31]

Meanwhile, a 2010 study on *takfiri* violence and extremism in Europe and Canada found that one of the warning signs of young men moving from extreme thoughts into violent action was watching videos of war footage with groups of other people. Graphic videos were noted by researchers to be particularly favored by extremists to push viewers into violent action: "The gorier [the footage] the better, often with beheadings."[32]

Similar to how college fraternities' use of porn reinforces a culture of sexual violence against women, for *takfiris*, "Creating a culture of violence, where it is acceptable to use violence as a means to social or personal advancement, is clearly important, and group viewing of jihadist videos can encourage this."[33]

1. UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGE

What Does this All Mean for Communities?

Our discussion thus far has shown that while ideology is important, there are many other reasons that are equally important, if not more so, on why people move from extreme ideas into taking violent action.

The most important, "big picture" take-away from these findings is that there are multiple opportunities for individuals to protect a friend, family member or brother/sister-in-Islam from going down a dangerous and destructive path.

Just because someone may be adopting problematic views or getting involved in troublesome behaviors does not mean things are hopeless or that it has end with someone getting arrested or killed. There is hope because alternatives exist. In the next half of this toolkit, we provide some ideas based on the wisdom and insights given to us from experienced imams, counselors and academic experts.

The evidence, discussed above, suggests that the hardcore "true believer" image promoted by *takfiris* isn't the full truth. The motivations for joining extreme groups and engaging in violent behaviors are vary from person to person. In many cases, they end up having less to do with certain ideas being intellectually convincing and more to do with certain problems going on in a person's life. In other cases, some may be mainly motivated by intellectual arguments (such as misquoting the Qur'an or Hadith), because the often the at-risk individual lacks a basic understanding of Islam.

Even if someone is involved in a hateful group or movement, this doesn't necessarily mean the person has his/her heart fully committed to what they're saying and doing. The same factors that may have driven someone to think and act one way can also make that same person later re-think what they're doing or planning to do. The person we may might think of as a "lost cause" may still have a chance for an exit out of their situation because s/he may be secretly questioning themselves and looking for a way out, but doesn't know which direction to take.

Furthermore, we don't have to wait until someone is "at the edge" in order to protect our loved ones and our communities from the perils of extremism and violence. There are things we can do better to guard ourselves against these dangers, including protecting our younger generations and revert/convert brothers-and sisters-in-Islam.

Nonetheless, despite our optimism, we need to remind and caution that there will still be some cases where individuals have gone too far down their path to allow for a successful community intervention. Unfortunately, there will be times where the only option is to remove someone from a community gathering and notify law enforcement. There may be times when it is necessary to eject someone and what recommended steps should be taken.

2. PIE: A RECIPE FOR ACTION

2. PIE: A RECIPE FOR ACTION

Overview

In this half of our toolkit, we discuss what steps you can take to combat extremism and deal with cases where an individual may be at risk of moving toward violence. Our approach can be broken down into three distinct potential options:

- **Prevention**
- **Intervention**
- **Ejection**

To remember these options, think of it as "PIE," like the dessert.

Below is a graph that summarizes PIE in action. To the left are the different responses — Prevention, Intervention, Ejection — that communities can take to address a person's movement toward violent activities. Beneath the graph is where a person may be located along a path toward or away from violence.

This graph also illustrates MPAC's two core beliefs that underpin its approach to community-based efforts at tackling violent extremism. First, in addition to involving many factors, a person's path to violence is gradual; it does not happen overnight. Second, a path

to violence can be slowed, stopped, reversed and/or prevented with proper community support.

Each of these specific responses will be explained further, including their pros and cons, as well as general recommendations for implementation. Furthermore, the discussions will not be limited to just mosques; they also include practical advice and tips for Muslim college student leaders. Finally, additional resources, including links to other organizations, are provided in several appendices at the end of the toolkit.

(COMMUNITY RESPONSES)

PREVENTION	INTERVENTION	EJECTION
MISGUIDED IDEAS	"AT THE EDGE"	VIOLENCE

(MOVEMENT TOWARD/AWAY FROM VIOLENCE)

PREVENTION

PREVENTION

Defining "Prevention"

In the context of dealing with extremism and violence, prevention is defined as dealing with the problem by "nipping it in the bud" through efforts that focus on developing communities or important parts of communities. Development is done through a series of programs, policies and procedures at local community institutions such as mosques and community centers. (For the purposes of this toolkit, we also include Muslim college/university campus clubs, as part of our definition of "community institutions.") In other words, prevention measures are proactive and don't wait for a problem to grow; they seek, as much as possible, to stop extremism and a pathway toward violence from arising in the first place.

The area of focus is broad. It seeks to tackle the larger environmental conditions (i.e. civil liberties, personal identity issues, foreign policy, local governance, discrimination, etc.) that push a minority of individuals toward extreme ideologies and an even smaller number of people toward illegal and violent actions.

Its Intent

The Prophet Muhammad once said, "deeds are only with intentions."[34] The action items we recommend ultimately need to be implemented in order to build healthy, safe and sustainable communities; this is also important for Muslims who are seeking to gain God's pleasure. They need to be taken irrespective of existing public concern — including within our own communities — about *takfiri* violent

extremism. For example, when we recommend to increase efforts toward greater interfaith understanding and harmony, it is because it is simply the right thing to do, as called for by our faith, not done for the purpose of fighting *takfiri* (or anti-Muslim) extremism.

That said, we don't downplay the likelihood that community development can have other positive side effects. They help reduce the factors that create a space for extremism and violence to exist. To the extent that these measures deal with the focus of this toolkit, their broad nature tackles extreme ideas and more broadly the appeal of outright violent and illegal behavior. Though someone may not be committing violent or illegal acts, it doesn't mean that extreme views can't cause problems for individuals and communities.

As one imam we interviewed pointed out, extremism for the individual runs the risk of "being spiritually and socially unsustainable."[35] Especially if underlying issues drive the person's extremism, they could cause someone to eventually burn out and completely leave Islam, as well as undermine their mental health.

There's also the community to think about. Unsustainable religious practices may also involve an individual struggling to maintain respectful social etiquette with other Muslims, especially when there are cases of differing religious opinions and practices. At best, this could make other congregants feel uncomfortable and turned off, or worse lead to direct confrontation. Either way, if not addressed, it can lead to *fitna* (conflict) within the community.

Recommended Actions for Mosques and Community Centers

The Community Context

Since 9/11, American Muslims have been ready and willing to tackle issues of extremism and violence in their communities. In MPAC's 25-plus years of experience in engaging American Muslims, we have consistently found the problem is more often a lack of awareness and capacity to effectively tackle these issues. Therefore, any section on recommendations for mosques and community centers needs to acknowledge the material realities they face.

Recent findings from the 2012 U.S. Mosque Survey Report illuminate the challenge in stark detail:[36]

- "**Mosques are under-staffed**. Only 44 percent of all imams are full-time and paid. Half of all mosques have no full-time staff. Program staff, such as youth directors or outreach directors, account for only 5 percent of all full-time staff." Elaborating upon these findings, the report also went on to note, "Mosques cannot continue to grow [by] depending on untrained volunteers. The professionalization of religious leadership is … a necessary step in the evolution of the American Mosque. Learning from … Christians and Jews in America, the professionalization of their clergy was an essential element in their development."[37]

- "**Mosques are under-funded**. While mosque attendance is higher than other American religious congregations, mosque budgets are less than half the budget of other congregations. The median income for mosques is $70,000, and the median income of all congregations is $150,000 …"

- "**Two-thirds (66 percent) of imams were born outside the United States**. Among full-time, paid imams, 85 percent were born outside America." Regarding this latter finding, the report went on to further note, "Mosques need imams who are trained in Islam, but who are also educated in the functions of an imam in the American [cultural and political] setting."[38]

These findings highlight a dire institutional gap within our communities that suggests, among other things, some mosque and other community leaders may be disconnected from certain segments of their congregations, including youth and converts.[39] This further suggests some leaders are likely to be unaware of or unable to constructively address contemporary issues affecting their communities such as drug/alcohol use, gangs, non-martial sexual activity, internet safety, etc.[40]

If this is the case in some of our communities, then local leaders are probably ill-equipped to also deal with the extra burden of *takfiri* extremism and violence. A disconnect between community institutions and congregants has its negative consequences.

PREVENTION

At best it harms the health and sustainability of Islam in America. At worst, it can allow predatory elements, such as *takfiris* (or others), a more permissive environment to operate and recruit. Although challenges exist, even the most disadvantaged communities can find workable solutions. The case of American Somali communities in the Twin Cities area of Minnesota is one model example. (See the case study on the right for more details.)

CASE STUDY: DOVE & AMERICAN SOMALIS IN MINNESOTA

Although many American Muslims face resource challenges to creating and implementing preventive measures against violence and extremism, these limitations are not impossible to overcome. In the Twin Cities area of Minnesota the local Somali community faces some of the toughest quality-of-life challenges in the country, including high unemployment rates, low household incomes, broken families, gangs and discrimination. In addition, community leaders have to contend with attempts by associates of the violent extremist organization, Al-Shabaab, to recruit youth.

Despite this situation, American Somalis of the Twin Cities area engaged in a partnership between local community advocates and academic researchers to identify a community-based approach to preventing violent extremism. Out of this partnership came a blueprint for action, Diminishing Opportunities for Violent Extremism (DOVE).[41]

The DOVE framework seeks to incorporate community voices into building capacity to counter the ideologies and environmental factors that facilitate entry into violent forms of extremism. Beyond identifying weaknesses and areas that require further institutional growth, which have largely characterized the study of American Somali in Minnesota, the DOVE model also identifies existing community strengths that in turn have helped identify community-based solutions to recruitment into violent extremism.

Creating and Sustaining Community-Relevant Programming

To address possible disconnects between community institutions and their congregants, we recommend creating and sustaining community-relevant programming. MPAC's experience engaging with communities, interviews with imams and youth leaders and findings from current research suggest at least three types of essential community-relevant programs.

Create a Safe Space

It is critical for mosques and community centers to develop "safe spaces" to constructively discuss taboo or sensitive issues. A safe space can be defined as a supportive environment where community members can comfortably and constructively discuss sensitive topics among peers, mentors and community leaders without the fear of shame, stigma or some other negative repercussion. Based on MPAC's experience, as well as findings from American Muslim researchers, important topics that frequently come up include pre-marital sex, sectarian differences, generational differences, intra-community racial tensions, domestic violence, inter-cultural marriage, religious vs. civic identity, discrimination and civil liberties.[42]

What Does a Safe Space Look Like?

It is important to define safe space for future discussions.[43] These rules can be adjusted as group facilitators and participants see fit. These rules also can apply to a college club or study circle of friends as they can to a mosque or community center.

- **Respect everyone in the group.** In addition to the words being said, this also includes the impression we give with our body language, words, actions and appropriate eye contact.
- **Everything said remains in the room**. All conversations must remain 100 percent confidential. Don't use this as an opportunity to gather information on people and then engage in backbiting
- **Feel free to pass**. Not everyone present should feel compelled to participate. People can also feel free to enter or leave the conversation whenever they want.
- **Active listening**. This isn't just about paying attention to what people say; it's thinking about and reflecting upon what the person said and how that can enrich the discussion (even if you don't agree).
- **Use "I" Statements**. This is about telling your story or your viewpoint, but without thinking that everyone agrees or feels the same way. For example, use phrases such as "When this happens, I feel …," rather than "You know, when this happens you feel…"
- **Affirm each other**. Add to each other's expressed viewpoint or experiences, even if you may disagree.
- **A "no judgment zone."** Part of affirming each other is also making sure not to put down someone else's views or experiences. Be open-minded. Your experiences and opinions, as well as those of the other participants, are valuable.
- **Five second rule**. Between each person speaking, there should be a 5-second wait period in order to

give people time to form their thoughts. It also helps ensure peoples' views were heard.

- **All questions are welcome**. However, not all questions will have answers.

Why Do Safe Spaces Matter?

In recent years, a number of grassroots organizations, largely developed by young American Muslims and converts, have emerged to provide a forum outside of a typical mosque/community center context to address their needs and concerns. These organizations run the gamut from being faith-based and focusing on increasing religious literacy to others that are more "secular" in their programming and targeted at specific ethnic communities. Others take a middle approach, offering a mix of explicitly religious and non-religious programming.

(For a list of these groups, see Appendix D. In addition you can directly contact MPAC's staff, listed on our website at www.mpac.org, and we can help you with ideas for putting on events and programs.)

In Boston, under the leadership of Imam Suhaib Webb and Executive Director Yusufi Vali, the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center offers an array of services including mental health counseling, legal assistance and programming geared toward converts, teenage and college youth and young professionals.[44] Other model institutions offering a similar range of services include the All Dulles Area Muslim Society (Washington, DC, region)[45] and the Orange County Islamic Foundation (Mission Viejo, CA).[46]

Specifically relating to the issue of extremism and violence, safe spaces and other programming in mosques and community centers will need to openly and constructively address "hot button" issues including foreign policy and concepts like *jihad*.

Of course, this is easier said than done. In the past, some local institutions seeking to protect themselves against intrusive government surveillance, recruitment attempts by violent *takfiris*, and public misinformation campaigns by anti-Muslim bigots, have responded by banning any discussion of politics in prayer sermons and other community programs. While understandable, this measure is not only ineffective but also counterproductive.

The academic experts, imams and former members of extremist movements we interviewed, all agreed that shutting down debates and discussions is the wrong answer. They unanimously pointed out that open debate and discussion, which cannot take place without safe spaces, is among the best preventive measures a community can take to protect itself against individuals contemplating extremism and violence.

One only has to look at the experiences in the U.K. where mosques and other grassroots institutions have repeatedly tried to censor themselves, only to see it backfire badly. Some Muslim organizations there have already acknowledged that a different course of action is needed.

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Citing the case of a local community member arrested for planning a violent attack, one British Muslim organization explains why banning talk of politics and other related issues is a bad idea:[47]

> *It is clear … that this young man had a burning desire to know about Islam and as opposed to nurturing his desire, so he could be productive towards humanity, the mosques didn't address the identity crisis this man was suffering and totally failed to empower him politically, combined with the fact that he seemed to be at odds with his elders;*
>
> *The result is that, as opposed to learning how to take part in the democratic system of this nation to remove those who oppress, he took his own route, which was dangerous and his passion for Islam was fuelled by extremists such as Al Muhajiroun. [sic.]*

There is already some evidence indicating similar efforts were attempted and failed in the U.S. For instance, in November 2009, five American Muslim college students left the Washington, DC, area and were arrested in Pakistan on charges of intending to a join a violent extremist organization.

In trying to figure out what made these individuals want to join such a group, press accounts noted that the youth director of the mosque, where three of the five students grew up (including the leader of group, Ramy Zamzam),

never discussed issues related to *jihad* (in this context, rules of warfare), or politics in general.[48] Similarly, there is some evidence to suggest that Jose Padilla, who was convicted in federal court of aiding terrorists, had a lack of proper religious literacy and healthy discussions on social and political issues in his early years as a convert to Islam and that may have contributed to his recruitment into al-Qaeda.[49]

If congregants, including youth and converts, don't have a space at the mosque or their local community center to comfortably discuss issues that matter to them, they will find somewhere else to go. That "other place" could be with a dangerous group of people — be they Internet predators, drug dealers or extremists — who will exploit individuals looking to be heard and given guidance.

What to Expect, At Least in the Beginning

Community leaders seeking to develop safe spaces at their local institutions should expect in advance that the process be dynamic and bumpy. Several religious leaders and ex-members of extremist movements who were interviewed for this toolkit noted that leaders have to address perceptions held by some, particularly among youth, that nothing is being done to change the problems of the *ummah* because leaders are seen as "sellouts" and "tools" of the government.[50]

A former follower of *takfiri* ideology during his youth put it a little differently, noting that "there's a sound bite culture among imams" which needs to be overcome through more substantive conversations with members of their congregations.[51] Addressing these perceptions may not be

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easy, but it is extremely important to do so. Deceased al-Qaeda propagandist Samir Khan is a stark example of why addressing these perceptions is critical. According to one news report looking at Khan's life, his distrust and criticism of local mosque leaders seemed to feed into his extreme worldview and gradual move into participating in a violent organization. As one local community member who talked with Khan recounted, "I thought he was a little overzealous. He kept asking questions about our local mosque, and he was critical — why don't they talk more about injustices going on around the world and stuff like that."[52]

SAFE SPACES ... IN CYBERSPACE?

In addition to creating safe spaces for discussions inside and outside of mosques and community centers, there have been a number of web-based initiatives to fulfill similar outreach needs. Here we briefly wish to highlight two examples.

The first is a video series produced by MPAC called, "Islam: Questions You Were Afraid to Ask." (mpac.org/speaktruth). This 17-part series of question-and-answer sessions featuring MPAC's Co-Founder and Senior Adviser, Dr. Maher Hathout, addresses a controversial topics that range from abortion and dating to homosexuality. While not a safe space in the strictest sense of the term, the series can be seen as a foundation for starting open conversations and dialogues on issues that are otherwise rarely discussed but often encountered in daily life.

The second example is **Imam Suhaib Webb's website** (suhaibwebb.com). Broad in terms of its outreach activities, SuhaibWebb.com aims to be "Your Virtual Mosque." Featuring commentary from a diverse perspectives, the website acts as a forum for lively discussion on social and political topics, and it also has sections focusing on religious knowledge and *fatawa* (religious edicts). Furthermore, there are regular columns by its WebbCounselors, who are trained therapists and social workers writing regular columns and responses to specific questions about mental health, marriage and divorce.

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1. 'Walking the Walk': Action-Oriented Civic and Political Training

A necessary extension of safe spaces is the developing action-oriented civic and political training. For many individuals, it is not enough to simply vent grievances; concrete solutions must be found and implemented in order to effect change in policies. In other words, grassroots leaders not only need to "talk the talk" but develop programs that can help their communities "walk the walk."

To be truly effective, such programs must go beyond encouraging community members to participate in an occasional protest or voting once every four years, if at all. Training is required to develop a set of knowledge and skills that will help a person become an informed and effective advocate. In 2010, MPAC developed a faith-based leadership program, called "I Am Change" (mpac.org/iamchange), for precisely this purpose. Designed around an interactive community workshop, it provides:

- Knowledge on how to promote civic engagement from an Islamic perspective with members of your community
- An understanding of how local, state and federal government works and your role in advocating at each level
- Practical skills for talking about the issues you care about with public officials and the media
- Energizing examples of Americans Muslim who are successfully working for change every single day, and making a difference

2. Increasing Parental Involvement and Supportive Adult Mentorship for Youth

The third category of programming involves increasing parental involvement and supportive adult mentorship for youth. This is particularly important for strong community development, as well as prevention of extremism and violent actions that may be contemplated by a tiny minority of our communities' next generation.

Happiness and health almost always starts at home. Unfortunately, many youth, of all backgrounds, often feel as if their parents are out of touch with them. This is even more the case for children of immigrant parents who were born or raised here in the U.S. and see themselves as culturally "American."

In other cases, there are some youth who have converted/reverted to Islam as teenagers, having come from broken homes in the inner city.[53] Sometimes, elements from both situations are present, as is the case for some communities, such as American Somalis living in the Twin Cities area.[54]

Regardless of the source of the problem, the result is a lack of constructive and consistent adult and parental guidance, which can contribute to youth being led astray by influences that glorify violence and criminality. Sadly, this is not confined to *takfiri*-inspired beliefs and behaviors.

Like other ethnic and religious communities, our youth are also prey to a broader culture of violence[55] that makes it "cool" or acceptable to consume drugs and alcohol,[56] get

involved in gang activities[57] or engage in other exploitative behaviors.[58] (Recall from P. 36 that embracing a mindset where violence is "cool" among a group of peers has moved some people from extreme thoughts directly into violence.)

Mosques and communities have an important role to play by providing a forum where parents and youth mentors can steer youth away from risky behaviors and environments. For cases where parents are physically present but not actively engaged in their child's life, mosques and community centers can put on programming to help them understand today's youth culture in order to be more active in their sons' and daughters' lives.

In cases where a teenager is dealing with a broken home, mentorship programs such as Big Brothers Big Sisters can be established. In Tennessee, local Muslim youth leaders and activists established a regional council called Muslim Youth Network of Tennessee (MYNT), which is a network of seven mosques and four college/university organizations.[59] Among the many other activities it hosts, MYNT has a monthly Islamic "Big Brother/Sister" program.[60]

In addition to creating a supportive environment for disengaged and vulnerable youth, efforts to encourage constructive parental engagement and non-parental mentorship should stress education as a key component of programming. In particular, we recommend media literacy education on how the media works and how to analyze messages and content in broadcast news, video games and the Internet. This will help raise awareness among parents and youth about the kind of messages — commercial,

social, sexual, political — that outlets and websites try to show in our homes every day.

Some Basic Principles to Discuss Propaganda (and Media Messages in General)

What should you do if someone comes to you to talk about a YouTube video of a preacher who urges Muslims to commit acts of violence against America? This section briefly provides some basic tips for how community leaders and college students can deconstruct propaganda and other media messages aimed at brainwashing people into supporting or committing acts of violence. For more information on creating conversations to deconstruct and understand media messages in general, resources such as this one (www.youthconnectionscoalition.org) that contains detailed discussion guides and examples to talk about.

With respect to deconstructing and de-bunking extremist material, such as online propaganda videos, experts we interviewed suggested that rather than telling curious individuals simply to not watch the material, (which may make them more curious) a better course of action is to watch and then discuss the material under mature and expert supervision, such as a religious scholar, parent, mentor or some other respected community member.

After watching the video, have a constructive conversation about what was seen in order debunk and dismantle the false advertising propaganda behind the content. Holding these kinds of discussions means that the person or people

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putting on the event need to have a strong grasp of the kinds of messages and manipulative tactics used to recruit people.

As noted earlier, research suggests that watching *takfiri* propaganda in unsupervised group settings can deepen a person's extremist views and possibly move him/her toward violence. However, according to two experts interviewed for our toolkit, the opposite is also true: Watching such content in a group setting, but with expert supervision, is the "most potent" way of de-constructing the myths and misleading narratives of *takfiri* extremists.[61]

The importance of having open conversations with youth about these kinds of everyday issues — and making sure youth mentors and parents are actively involved — cannot be emphasized enough. These challenges are neither new nor unique to American Muslims. Commenting on his research expertise on gang and neo-Nazi recruitment dynamics, Dr. Pete Simi, notes:[62]

> *"...one of the reasons why youth mentors are so important is that we gain a sense of who we are from others and when youth lack competent adult role models this creates instability in terms of identity (peers who are already extremely important become even more important; propaganda messages which could be discussed with an adult the young person trusts must be figured out by him/herself or with the help of less competent others)."*

In addition to having expert supervision (whenever possible), according to the Center for Media Literacy (CML), there are "Five Key Questions" and "Five Core Concepts" that should guide any serious discussion on media messages — whether or not that conversation takes place at home, in the mosque/community center, college campus or with a trusted circle of friends:[63]

CML's Five Key Questions (On Media Messages)

1. Who created this message?
2. What creative techniques are used to attract my attention?
3. How might different people understand this message differently?
4. What values, lifestyles and points of view are being represented in, or omitted from, this message?
5. Why is this message being sent?

CML's Five Core Concepts

1. All media messages are constructed.
2. Media messages are constructed using creative language with its own rules.
3. Different people experience the same message differently.
4. Media have embedded values and points of view.
5. Most messages are organized to gain profit and/or power.

Professional Management of Your Mosque/ Community Center

Despite the steep hurdles to overcome, there are things that can be done, even on a shoestring budget. One important step is ensuring professional management of the physical space inside and around mosques/community centers. A recent case study on American Somalis in the Twin Cities area of Minnesota (see the case study on P. 46), found that one of the biggest risk factors for

youth joining violent extremist groups was "the times when adolescent boys are not answerable to parents or other adults and are in spaces where they are out of their sight."[64]

Beyond parental concern for your children, there are many other valid safety reasons to ensure that centers of worship and community life are securely managed. They range from preventing hate crimes and vandalism to guarding against theft and armed robbery.[65]

Already aware of many of these challenges, and with specific regard to extremism and violence, MPAC released a set of guidelines on basic mosque management as part of its National Anti-Terrorism Campaign (NATC) in 2005. The idea was simple: One of the best ways communities can play their part to secure their institutions against any number of possible safety risks — including violent extremism — is to simply make sure community centers/mosques are run professionally, transparently and actively visible within their communities.

The 2005 Grassroots Campaign to Fight Terrorism guidelines are reproduced below:[e]

1. Mosques and Islamic centers should accurately maintain their financial records with specific attention to sources of income and expenditures with accurate, professional and transparent bookkeeping and financial statements easily available to its members.

2. All activities within mosques and Islamic centers should be authorized by legitimate, acknowledged leaders. Unauthorized, private group meetings and speeches should be prohibited.

3. Most of our mosques do not have permits to allow overnight lodging facilities. It is therefore important that strict regulations about the opening and closing of the mosque be maintained.

4. Traffic inside the mosque should be directed and managed. Designated people should be given the responsibility of providing specific services people need, such as information about prayer, classes, councils, cafeteria, etc.

5. During Fridays and other days when a large audience is expected, special attention should be paid to bags and other stored items, etc.

6. In case of guest speakers, it is prudent to know who the guest is and the content of the talk he or she is about to deliver.

7. Lectures should focus on harmony, emphasizing the fact that we are Muslims and Americans. We need to represent the great values of our religion and constructively engage our country in dialogues leading to improved life for all people. Irresponsible rhetoric should be avoided.

e - With some slight modifications made.

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8. Mosque leaders should build relationships with local public officials and law enforcement in order to have a presence and role in the affairs of the broader community. (NOTE: Building relationships with law enforcement agencies needs to be done with great care for many reasons, including protection of civil liberties, see P. 56-58 for tips on establishing and building relations with local law enforcement agencies.)

9. Special programs should be arranged to educate and train the community on how to spot criminal activities.

10. A spokesperson should be responsible for issuing statements and giving interviews that represent the authentic opinion of the legitimate authority of the institution.

11. Meetings and other programs should be held in cooperation with civil rights organizations for awareness and education.

12. It is highly recommended that the mosque participates in interfaith dialogue and civic alliances and activities.

Expand Your Community Institution's Network of Trusted Contacts

Another step mosques and community centers can take is to build up their list of contacts. Particularly in cases where local institutions lack capacity — money, personnel or knowledge of a particular issue or program — it is important to have diverse networks of trusted contacts that can be called on for partnership and assistance, especially in a time of crisis. This can be as easy as:

1. **Make a list** of important resources your institution is lacking.

2. **Gather information and reach out**, whether by attending events and gathering business cards or doing Google searches for resources and information. Once you have the information, make sure to reach out and get to know the people behind the resources. A one-time meeting won't be sufficient. Building sustained, long-term relationships is key.

3. **Create and maintain a filing system for all of your contacts.** If possible, it's best to store the information on a computer owned by and located within the institution, as well backed up another computer or disk that is securely stored but in an easily-remembered location.

It's important to point out that one's information database should also identify faith-based and faith-sensitive resources and services, including those provided by American Muslims. Knowing what resources are available to your community will be extremely important, not just for long-term prevention-type measures, but also in times of crisis, such as an intervention. (This will be further discussed in the section on intervention.)

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(Under Appendix D, we have gathered a list of resources to be used as a starting point for further research.)

One important set of contacts should the phone numbers and emails of key individuals in local and federal law enforcement agencies. It is not sufficient to simply dial 911 in emergency situations. Rabia Chaudry, a board member of the Maryland Chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and an expert in training law enforcement on Islamic religious practices, noted many communities' need to move away from being interested in only receiving "Know Your Rights" trainings. Based on her extensive experience of engaging both communities and law enforcement, she said she felt that an adversarial relationship between both sides harms everyone, especially communities.[66]

Indeed, Chaudry's concerns have significant merit because the strength of a community's relationship with its local law enforcement agency can often affect how it will react in a given situation. One law enforcement instructor we interviewed cited a U.S. Supreme Court case law for why strong police-community relations are extremely important: "The Supreme Court has long held that sources for 'tips' regarding crimes must bear sufficient 'indicia of reliability'... an issue that can reflect both 4th Amendment (search and seizure)... concerns."[67] In other words, "police will be asked [in a court of law] about sources of information, especially if anonymity is expected, and the foundation for an officer's trust of a source can be an important issue."[68] If a law enforcement agency has an adversarial and mistrusting relationship with their local community, any tips (especially anonymous

ones) they receive from it may be treated with extra caution and hesitation because they won't be certain of its reliability and ability to withstand scrutiny in court.

Proactively building relations with law enforcement agencies can help communities improve their security practices and expand their network of resources. As will be discussed later in toolkit, having trusted working relationships with law enforcement is important in crisis situations where a community leader may feel the need to engage in an intervention or ejection of someone from their community space.

Building Relationships with your Local Law Enforcement Agency

Creating and sustaining partnerships with local law enforcement agencies takes time and effort. For more details, we suggest downloading free copies of toolkits, such as this one (http://1.usa.gov/1hbbwym) provided by the Community Oriented Policing Services office of the U.S. Department of Justice. In the meanwhile, here are some quick and simple pointers for starting and sustaining a partnership with law enforcement.

There two important steps that need to be taken.

First, pick a person or group of people who will be directly responsible for communicating with law enforcement. A good candidate for managing relationships with law enforcement should be someone who has:[69]

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- Passion for solving community problems
- Commitment to serve the community's needs
- Vision for achieving results
- Knowledge and respect of the community
- Ability to keep the community focused on solving problems and managing the steps necessary to achieve the project's goals
- Communication with the community on a regular basis
- Ability to create additional opportunities for collaboration with partners

Second, directly reach out to your local law enforcement agency. In some places, the agency doing most of the everyday policing will be a town/city police department; in other cases it may be a county sheriff. To know which agency or agencies are responsible for public safety in your neighborhood, check out your city or county's official website.[70] From there you can find the webpages or separate website for your local law enforcement agency.

When making initial contact with an agency, it's best to seek out a more mid-level manager such as a lieutenant or commander rather than someone at the top, such as the police chief or sheriff. These individuals are almost always in charge of public safety for a specific geographic area or neighborhood.[71] As the relationship with your local law enforcement agency develops, you should eventually request meetings with higher-level officials, such as captains, deputy chiefs, deputy sheriffs and, eventually, chiefs/sheriffs. To identify who is immediately responsible for safety in your neighborhood/community, refer to your local agency's website. If the information is not immediately available

online, call their non-emergency telephone number and request further information.

When trying to connect with the right person or people, the information you receive should be able to answer the following questions:[72]

- Is there a police station near my neighborhood?
- If so, who is in charge?
- What is his/her name and rank?
- What is the [officer's] telephone number and address?

Once establishing contact, it's important to have professional and effective meetings with your law enforcement officials. To the best extent possible, one of the most important developments from a relationship between communities and local law enforcement agencies is to establish a common vision that can help guide further conversations. This common vision should be documented and address questions such as:[73]

- What perceptions do we (community members and this local law enforcement agency) have of each other?
- Where did these perceptions come from?
- Are some of these perceptions inaccurate or based on myths rather than facts?
- How do we approach solving community problems?
- What results/outcomes do we both want for our community?
- What's in the best interest of both of sides to achieve?
- What can we agree upon?
- What responsibility does each side have for solving community problems?

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Having a common vision is necessary, but insufficient by itself to have a productive relationship with your local law enforcement agency. Meetings also need to be run effectively, with agreement over the agenda, for a relationship to be sustained.

Some tips to facilitate and effectively participate in a meeting include:[74]

- Have some ground rules established before starting the meeting, including:
    o Being respectful toward all participants.
    o Allowing everyone to get a fair hearing.
    o Make sure that everyone has time to speak.
    o One person speaks at a time — don't interrupt. Speak for yourself, not others in the meeting.
    o If you are offended or upset, say so, and why.
    o Disagreement is fine, just don't make it personal.
    o Help the facilitator keep the meeting on track.
- At beginning of the meeting, ask all participants to say their name, where they are from, and why they decided to come today.
- At the end of the meeting, summarize all the points made and write out all action items.

If you don't feel comfortable facilitating an initial meeting or feel that a neutral third party is more appropriate, you can request assistance from the Community Relations Service (CRS) within the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice. Part of CRS' activities includes acting as a neutral arbiter and observer in meetings between communities and law enforcement.[75] (For more on CRS, it's contacts and office locations, see Appendix E.)

After each meeting, it's important to follow up in order to build trust. Relationships and trust are neither built overnight, nor from one meeting. Follow-up can be done through an official letter, but it is also good to make sure it is also backed up by personal contact. One-on-one contact between community and law enforcement representatives is extremely important because it is a sign of openness and provides an opportunity to address any further questions either side may have. Follow-up and trust is also built upon perceptions of dependability. For example, don't promise more than can be delivered — otherwise you may be seen as an unreliable partner.[76]

Finally, a word about civil liberties. Since 9/11, there's understandably been concern about unchecked intelligence gathering in American Muslim communities.[77] If communities feel uncomfortable meeting with law enforcement at their mosque or community center, community representatives may want to consider a neutral location to hold a meeting, such as a restaurant, coffee shop or private reserved meeting room at a town/county building such as a library or civic center.

For those who are willing to allow law enforcement officials, including federal agents, to visit their mosque/community center, we recommend establishing some clear ground rules in a firm, but friendly manner. In general, ground rules should take a middle path approach that is neither hostile toward your law enforcement guests, nor so open that confidential information is freely being volunteered.

Information such as congregation membership lists and other institutional knowledge should NOT be given to law

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enforcement, unless instructed by your legal counsel or if you are the recipient of a legal document, such as subpoena or warrant, which can demonstrate that the information sought is specifically tied to a criminal investigation.

Officials entering the premises of the mosque/community center should be asked, in advance, to notify management of their presence. They should also be asked, in advance, to provide the names of all official personnel attending the meeting and to have business cards ready to distribute. Finally, community officials should make it clear that any such visits to these premises will be for the purpose of outreach, not intelligence-gathering.[78]

Recommendations for Muslim Student Groups

Preventive measures are not limited to traditional mosques and community centers, but also include campus clubs and organizations that focus on spiritual growth and faith-based activism for Muslims, such as Muslim Students Associations (MSAs). Obviously no two clubs are alike. As one former MSA National official, interviewed for our toolkit, said local MSAs "are all over the map" when it comes to their size, level of activism and type of programming they put on.[79]

Create a Safe Space for Discussion and Activism

Similar to mosques, one of the most important steps for a Muslim student group to take is ensuring that it can provide a safe space (see above for more information) to have a healthy discussion on many issues, including sensitive topics. College is a time to develop oneself

spiritually, socially and intellectually. In this respect, student groups operate as a spiritual and social "third space" to grow — outside of the home and one's local mosque/community center.[80] However, such growth can only happen if people are allowed to engage each other's ideas freely — including on questions of faith, identity, etc.

Without a doubt not everyone will be interested discussing or grappling with these issues; some people are too busy with school while others may be apathetic. While not every Muslim college student will want to become a political or civic activist, it is important that opportunities are made available for those who are interested in activism, or at least interested talking about it and exploring it as an option.

(For those who want to learn more, MPAC offers an "I Am Change: Civic Engagement Program" to train people in political and civic activism. See mpac.org/iamchange to learn more.)

Some students report having been discouraged or demotivated from becoming more civically and politically engaged. In some cases the level of MSA activism is tied to the broader campus political culture. Places like Georgetown University and the University of California Berkeley have historically had very politically active campuses—including the Muslim student group. Other campuses are less-politically aware and so too are the Muslim student groups there.[81] Other cases involve parental discouragement, particularly for foreign students. This largely because the parents (and students) are shaped by events that are happening overseas and are concerned that activism abroad could have negative repercussions back home.

The MSA National interviewee noted that in her experience, as a president of her local MSA and as a former Chair of the MSA National's Political Action Task Force, American-born and raised Muslims tended to be more active than their overseas counterparts. However she also noted, consistent with other research, that some American Muslim students have also been weary to discuss political issues in their campus clubs due to concerns over surveillance.[82] Another MSA interviewee, a former leader in the Washington, DC area noted that there was hesitation to discuss political views several years ago when he was a student. During his time as a student activist, the apprehension many students felt was made worse by the media fanfare that surrounded the arrest of Ramy Zamzam and four other Muslim college students from the DC area.[83]

Both MSA interviewees felt that this hesitation to discuss hot button topics has become even more pronounced since the news broke out about the New York Police Department's widespread spying on Muslim students across the east coast.[84] Other former MSA and Muslim student activists from across the country have shared this concern.[85]

As one former Muslim college student points out, at best this fear of openly engaging in the academic marketplace of ideas could "prevent the next generation of Muslim students from engaging in a vibrant, meaningful and constructive part of their college lives."[86] Many students will also have to carry the burden of "retracing their every step, always looking over their shoulder and being distrustful and wary of those around them."[87]

At worst, this can feed into the very type of extremism and contemplation of violence that authorities and communities are concerned about. Jeanne Theoharis, a widely-noted civil rights historian and political activist who teaches at Hunter College in New York City bluntly stated why this is a problem:[88]

> *College is a place where you try ideas out. It's the first time you get to choose your classes, think for yourself. Part of that process has to be about trying out ideas, and kind of seeing how ideas work. If you don't have a comfortable place in class and with other students to say or try ideas out, say what might be considered "radical" things, to draw parallels comfortably, and to get inside of ideas, you've lost one of the most important aspects of colleges. That's devastating. Both in terms of Muslim students being able to think through things, but also devastating because the range of discussion in class is diminished. I also think it's going to tend towards the extremes, if you don't have a space to work this out. Most people end up not being very political.*
>
> **But I also think that it's also the landscape where extreme ideas grow, because there's not enough space to think about things together, to have a sounding board. If you don't take your political idea with you to school, they don't get refined and thoughtful enough. I think 18 year olds are very gutsy, but they're not always mature. So I would rather have them taking their**

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political ideas to school and try to articulate them and refine them so we can think about them all together.

Self-censorship due to fears of unwarranted government surveillance is ultimately harmful to all students, including Muslims. Concerns about surveillance MUST NOT deter students from having the most rewarding campus experience possible. In response, we suggest students empower themselves by knowing their free speech and academic freedom rights. This is done two ways:

- **Consult your campus student handbook**. Each university has its own set of rules in terms of how they expect students to conduct themselves on campus. These handbooks will often provide information on students' rights, including free speech and academic freedom.

- **Connect with organizations dedicated to defending free speech, privacy and civil liberties**. They offer a range of services helpful to students, including educational brochures and pamphlets, legal experts, and "Know Your Rights" events that raise awareness about the legal protections and resources students have at their disposal. (*A list of recommended organizations' and their contact information is located in Appendix E.*)

Get Training on Strong Management and Leadership

When discussing safe spaces on campus, we need to recognize that sometimes there are also internal issues that must be dealt with. Beyond safe spaces, we recommend Muslim student leaders have strong management and leadership training. How MSAs are managed and what skills their leaders have will invariably impact how well they can make their club a comfortable and inclusive space for different Muslims.

Our MSA National interviewee noted that leadership in some student groups "have a tendency to be cliquey." This is in reference to a situation where those who are in the "clique" are often the individuals who founded or revived that particular student group and tend to shape the club's programming to their specific needs, at the expense of other Muslims who wish to be actively engaged.[89]

Strong leadership and management skills are also important for handling crisis situations that may arise. In the aftermath of the arrests of five DC-area students in late 2009, MPAC received requests from some local MSA leaders to help them obtain training on how to address media requests for comments. In addition to the training that MPAC offers on media interactions and civic/political activism, MSA National has its COMPASS training that helps local campus chapters with leadership training and management skills.

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AFFIRMING MUSLIM UNITY IN DIVERSITY

In other cases, this exclusivity goes beyond particular cliques and sometimes involves outright sectarian animosity. Although uncomfortable to discuss, this issue needs to be raised and dealt with forthrightly to ensure our Muslim student groups are as inclusive as possible. While we are unaware of sectarianism currently affecting local Muslim student groups, we do know that it has affected student campuses in the past[90]—an unfortunate reflection of political events that have taken place in other parts of the world.

It is a clear form of *fitna* (conflict) that is against Islamic values and drains our communities of the talent and energies needed to train the next generation of leaders across our nation's campuses. Even in places where there is no prior history of sectarian tension, *we believe it is necessary that campus clubs adopt an explicit "No Sectarianism" policy as part of their club's bylaws and make sure it is fully enforced.*

Creating a Climate of Trust and Communication within Your Community/Club

Before concluding our section on Prevention, one of the key purposes of the recommendations we have offered so far is to create an atmosphere where people can comfortably discuss sensitive issues so that if a crisis occurs, people know they have an appropriate place or group of people they can turn to. This is key to growing and sustaining any healthy and vibrant community that can address a list of issues and situations, such as mental health crises, combating domestic violence, preventing gang recruitment, stopping sexual abuse, etc.

We add violent extremism to that list.

With respect to that latter issue, there have been times when friends, family members and other community members in retrospect knew someone who went down a path of violence and noticed that s/he raised some "red flags" that caused suspicion along the way. However, people failed to report their concerns either because they did not know whom they could turn to or did not want to stigmatize the person they were concerned for.

This is understandable, but it is also preventable. For years, schools across America have had to deal with a similar situation in order to prevent school shootings like Columbine or Virginia Tech. Experts have noted that a lack of trust and an environment of silence may actually encourage troubled people to go down a path of violence because they will be less likely to get help, such as mental

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health counseling. Those with the ability to provide help are also less likely to be aware of those who may need it.[91]

As a result schools across the nation have responded with a firm, but caring stance against silence among students by working hard to raise awareness among youth and faculty and foster an environment of trust that encourages communication. Successful trust-building in this context has emphasized the following points:[92]

- *Violence prevention is everyone's responsibility.* [NOTE: This is about raising awareness and encouraging families and neighbors to contribute to school and community safety, not about blaming an entire community for the actions of a few.]
- *The school has a process in place [to assess threats of violence]*
- *Knowing how the process works and who is involved*
- *All information will be handled discreetly*
- *The purpose is to protect both the potential victim(s) and perpetrator(s)*

Substitute the word "school" (or "campus") for "mosque", "community center", or "Muslim college club" and the same principles apply.

Community leaders seeking to foster a climate of trust and communication must emphasize and reinforce these principles. They can do so a number of ways, such as sending out emails on their congregational listservs, talk about the importance of communication in Friday sermons, and stress to parents and youth peers the confidential and discreet way information about a concern is handled.

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Defining Intervention

In this context, intervention is dealing with the problem of extremism and violence by helping someone who is "at the edge" of going down a path of violence, or moving dangerously close to it. Compared to prevention, the area of focus for intervention is specific, focusing on a particular identified *individual*, rather than addressing community-wide conditions.

Intervention measures are both proactive and reactive. They are proactive insofar as they seek to stop a person's movement toward violence by using alternative means to arrest. However, interventions are reactive in the sense that they only spring into action after a person has begun to develop and express troubling worldviews and has been specifically identified by community members as at-risk for engaging in violence or other criminal activity.

At the beginning of this publication, we defined two terms that are particularly relevant for intervention measures: **de-radicalization** and **disengagement**. To quickly recap the definition of each term:

- *De-radicalization* – De-radicalization, which we prefer to call "anti-ideology," seeks to facilitate an individual's intellectual exit from ideological extremism (*and possibly violent extremism*) primarily through changes in their existing intellectual views of violence, religion, and/or politics.

- *Disengagement* – Refers to *a series of efforts seeking to facilitate* an individual's movement away from committing acts of violence. Unlike anti-/counter-ideology, which mostly focuses on a person's ideas, disengagement focuses on an individual's illegal and violent behaviors and the factors that facilitate their movement toward violence.

For the purposes of immediate intervention, our toolkit emphasizes *disengagement* rather than de-radicalization. There are two reasons for this.

Public Safety

Human life is sacred, so sacred that the Holy Qur'an compares saving the life of one person to saving all of humanity and the loss of one innocent life as tragic as the destruction of all of humanity.[93] Words and ideas don't kill, no matter how extreme they may be; however, violence-supporting words and ideas *put into action* can be very destructive.[f] Therefore, irrespective of the finer points of an individual's worldview, there needs to be a clear understanding and commitment to not engage in violence no matter what his/her views are on religious, politics, personal life, etc.

This is not to suggest that discussing a person's views won't be important in engaging an at-risk individual. As we will discuss shortly, our interviews with practitioners who have dealt with cases of at-risk individuals show that deeper intellectual engagement is very important. However, by itself, arguing over the specific details of a person's ideology is insufficient.

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f - This is not to suggest there are unlimited Free Speech rights in America. There are a few, but very important exceptions to this Constitutional liberty, such as incitement to violence and scaring people into a violent stampede. For a practical overview of the Right to Free Speech (and its limitations), see: "Know Your Rights: Free Speech and the Right to Protest," American Civil Liberties Union – Texas, October 3, 2011, accessed August 18, 2013, aclutx.org/documents/righttoprotestpamphlet.pdf

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The Scientific Evidence

To be very clear, there is little evidence to show that *de-radicalization* programs (which primarily focus on a person's ideas, rather than their behaviors) are effective. Dr. John Horgan, one of the world's leading researchers and evaluators of so-called de-radicalization programs, points out that these initiatives lack solid evidence to prove they work:[94]

> *Terrorist deradicalization. What an intriguing idea for a quick fix if ever there was one. Yet never in the history of counter-terrorism has any short-term solution ultimately proven to be more than a naïve pipedream. That is not to suggest that what is commonly called "deradicalization programs" would see themselves as representing a quick fix. But the allure surrounding these creative approaches to counterterrorism has been so powerful that a seeming failure to deliver on the implicit (and vague) promise of "revers[ing] radicalism" has apparently led to a loss of popularity. That may not be a bad thing, but a critical question lingers around whether or not these programs are effective.*

Instead, our toolkit is pointing communities toward "what works" rather than "what's fashionable."[95]

In addition to interviews we conducted with imams and ex-members of extremist movements, the information and advice we offer in this part of the toolkit largely draws from scientific and peer-reviewed research that examines and seeks to prevent *targeted violence*, such as rampage and school shootings (like Aurora, Colorado or Columbine High School and Virginia Tech).

Our purpose is not to draw moral equivalences or raise larger political questions about terrorism and other forms of violence. Rather, our concern is about the safety and security of all Americans.

We draw on this body of research because that's the direction where evidence is leading us, at least so far. Recent studies have shown strong similarities, in terms of pathway directions toward violence among suicide terrorists, assassins, and rampage, workplace, and school shooters.[96] These studies' findings are consistent with the conclusions and recommendations taken from *Predicting Violent Behavior*, a 28-person Department of Defense (DoD) task force report produced in August 2012 as a scientific evidence-based response to the 2009 Fort Hood attack. The DoD report's findings were based on a review of the relevant research literature, as well as from 54 presentations given by 58 subject matter experts over an eight-month period from April 2011 to November 2011.[97]

Therefore we closely examine, and modify where appropriate, those intervention mechanisms and processes that have already been proven effective at preventing 120 attempted acts of targeted violence at schools within the past decade.[98]

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Why Conduct an Intervention?

Saving All of Humanity

First and foremost, it has the possibility of saving lives—including both the person at risk of engaging in violence and those people who are the potential targets of that violence. To quote the Holy Qur'an, *"...if any one slew a person - unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land - it would be as if he slew the whole people: and if any one saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole people"* (5:32).[99] Even if the intervention fails, assuming law enforcement is also notified of the situation, there is a "safety net" in place to preserve public safety.

Sparing Families Grief and Pain

Second, assuming the intervention is "successful" (i.e. making a clearly stated and demonstrated commitment to avoid violence and other criminality), it avoids having the person arrested (or killed), facing the likely possibility of being convicted (an 87% chance),[100] and imprisoned for a long time (on average, 25 years).[101] All of this does not take into account the potential pain, embarrassment, and humiliation family, friends, and loved ones are spared.

Reducing the Risk of Pretexts for Hate Crimes to Occur

A successful intervention, which includes notifying law enforcement, also prevents a potential problem from arising without the negative media-fueled public fanfare that is associated with an arrest or attack. This particular

benefit cannot be emphasized enough. In one particularly dramatic example, two days after the arrest of Portland-based suspect Mohamed Osman Mohamud—which involved his own father calling law enforcement on him—an anti-Muslim extremist firebombed the local mosque where Mohamud had occasionally prayed.[102]

This is not to suggest that somehow a mosque is always going to be vulnerable to hate crime violence due to negative attention after an arrest (or attack), but these kinds of events and recent research does suggest it is reasonable to assume that negative publicity directed at a community or institution does raise the risk of a backlash.[103] A recent study by the University of Maryland revealed a strong statistical relationship between terrorist attacks believed to be religiously motivated and anti-minority hate crimes, including attacks against Arab and Muslim institutions. Specifically, *a minority institution or house of worship was significantly more likely to be hit with a hate crime within the first four weeks after a terrorist attack was attempted—especially if the attack is merely believed to be perpetrated by a "religious" actor (i.e. Muslim).*[104]

Understanding the Ethical Responsibilities Behind an Intervention

According to one Muslim religious leader we interviewed,[105] an imam who considers an intervention for a troubled individual must understand he has two competing sets of ethical responsibilities. The first is the obligation to the larger society in which he and his congregation reside. This has to do with Islam's message as

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a universal faith that seeks to improve the condition of *all* people, not just one's particular congregation.

The second is an obligation to provide proper pastoral care, satisfying a specific individual's needs within a congregation.

In situations that involve the safety and sanctity of human life, one's ethical obligations to protect the physical safety of all people within the larger society come before that of the specific individual.[106] He went so far as to declare that one's obligation to specific individuals within the congregation can't be truly satisfied, Islamically speaking, unless the safety of the broader society is ensured first. [107]

Although these comments above were directed at imams, the ethical obligations are equally applicable to others who play a leadership role in their respective communities, including Muslim student leaders. (NOTE: Just because the ethics are the same among various leadership roles, it does not mean that each person in their respective roles should respond to a crisis the same way. Later in this section, we provide tips that are specific and unique to Muslim college students, as opposed to imams and other community leaders.)

Beyond the spiritual pastoral context there is a clinical responsibility to help prevent individual community members from doing harm to others and him/herself. This particular point was strongly emphasized by another imam, Yassir Fazaga, who is also formally trained and certified as a mental health counselor in California.[108] The nature of professional and volunteer religious work—such as imams or faith-based youth and social workers hired by a house of worship—tend to involve special relationships and counseling activities similar to mental health therapists.[109] As a result, we believe these extra responsibilities should be treated in the same ethical fashion as other mental health work—a "duty to warn" and "duty to protect" third parties (which includes notifying law enforcement)—if they have reason to believe one of their congregants poses a violent threat to him/herself or others.[110]

Finally, another religious leader we interviewed, Yasir Qadhi, Dean of Academics at the Al-Maghrib Institute, referenced more traditional religious frameworks, noting that all Muslims living in a particular country "are in a legally binding contract" and must satisfy the legal requirements of the land, so long as they do not directly convene one's right to practice their faith. Therefore, the Muslim community needs to do its part to ensure it collectively abides by that contract, including upholding public safety.[111]
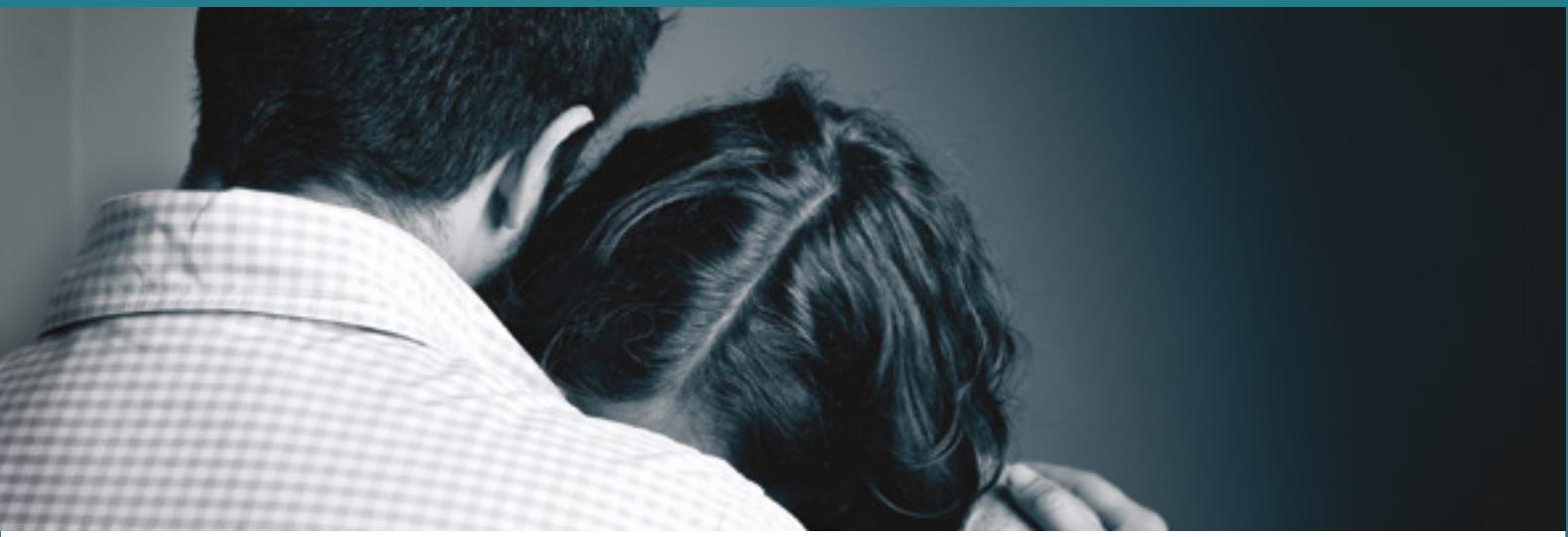
Necessary Preparations for an Intervention

Given the ethical obligations and various risks involved in an intervention, efforts cannot be done haphazardly. Advance preparation is needed to have the best chance of success. We recommend that steps be proactively taken as soon as possible, rather than once a crisis starts.

Acquire Legal Counsel Beforehand

For leaders who wish to be directly involved in an intervention, it is important to acquire legal counsel beforehand. As noted earlier, there are many legal risks involved in an intervention that could potentially put oneself or others in harms way. Therefore, it is important that community leaders contact a lawyer and, if possible, develop a relationship with that person beforehand so that less time will be spent on relationship-building and more time can be spent working with the at-risk individual.

MPAC recommends that community leaders consider engaging an individual only if they have first consulted expert legal advice and if leaders feel comfortable enough with the situation. Otherwise, we do not recommend engaging in an intervention.

WHY LEGAL PREPARATION MATTERS: THE CASE OF FORMER NYC IMAM AHMAD AFZALI

In September 2009, an Afghan-born legal resident named Najibullah Zazi was arrested in the Denver, CO area after being under federal and New York City Police Department (NYPD) surveillance for suspicion of seeking to bomb the NYC subway system. Zazi and two other associates later pled guilty to the charges.

Prior to his arrest, Ahmad Wais Afzali, a Queens-based Imam, had been asked by the NYPD, in a voluntary capacity, to talk to Zazi and get some information from him to further determine whether or not he posed a threat to New York. Prior to the NYPD request to reach out to Zazi, Afzali had been a community liaison to the police for several years, motivated by a desire to protect the country against another 9/11-style attack.

Although Imam Afzali got involved in the situation to keep the city safe and keep Zazi out of trouble (the Imam was not made fully aware of what was taking place), he soon found himself in trouble. Along with Zazi and his other associates, Imam Afzali was also

arrested—initially accused by the FBI of tipping off Zazi about being under surveillance.

Although the Imam was never formally charged with obstructing justice (the penalty for tipping off a suspected criminal, like Zazi)—information from various press outlets such as the *Associated Press*[112] (citing the FBI's 9-page criminal complaint),[113] *Wall Street Journal*,[114] and *Newsweek*[115] actually suggest Zazi was already tipped off that he was under surveillance after being screened at a roadway checkpoint specifically set up for him. Imam Afzali was charged with—and pled guilty to—lying to federal law enforcement officials. According a *New York Times* story about his arrest and guilty plea,[116]

> *The issue, it turned out, was not that Mr. Afzali had tipped off the targets of an investigation, but that he had repeatedly lied about the conversations during his interviews with the F.B.I., denying he had told the men about the law enforcement investigation.*
>
> *Mr. Afzali talked and talked to investigators, believing that he could explain away their interest in him. "I got scared for myself," he said. "I was hungry, thirsty, tired and scared."*

There is no evidence, based on publicly available sources, to indicate that Imam Afzali had ever sought any legal advice or counsel throughout this entire ordeal—from the time of his initial interaction with Zazi to his later interview with FBI officials.

The example of Imam Ahmad Wais Afzali is not meant to scare away community leaders from

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considering the option of intervention with troubled individuals. Ultimately Afzali had valid reasons for trying to be helpful to all parties—even if he wasn't fully aware of the gravity of the situation. The overwhelming weight of evidence, displayed in an open court, proved beyond a reasonable doubt that Zazi and his associates sought to kill hundreds of innocent men, women, and children.[117]

Nonetheless, Afzali's case serves to demonstrate that interventions cannot be done without careful preparation. Had he sought proper legal advice and counsel from the very beginning, the Imam may have been able to at least avoid the troubles he faced.

Furthermore, to the extent that a particular situation may allow for it, it is also good to have multiple witnesses present for confidential discussions with law enforcement. A veteran FBI counterterrorism agent we interviewed, had this personal advice to offer about community-law enforcement interactions in general:[118]

> *Personally, I would not mind if an attorney was present to provide legal counsel to a community leader sharing information with me. At minimum and drawing on past experiences, attorney or no, I would suggest that two or more community members and law enforcement officials be present for such meetings, to ensure there are multiple witnesses to what was discussed.*

Develop a Crisis Inquiry Team[119]

(This advice is not applicable to college organizations. See "Advice Specifically for Muslim Student Organizations" on P. 76.) Ideally, your mosque/community center should have a team developed by this point. *If you have to build your team from scratch and "cold call" potential resources during a crisis you and your community are already at a significant disadvantage.*

Core Membership

An effective Crisis Inquiry Team should be composed of individuals from many backgrounds within the community. At minimum, core membership should include:[120]

- Mosque/community center administrator(s)
- A religious leader, who can authoritatively provide scriptural guidance
- A religiously/culturally-sensitive social worker
- A religiously/cultural-sensitive mental health counselor
- A lawyer who is formally certified to offer legal counsel in your state and has a very strong knowledge of the various legal issues that impact an intervention. (For more on possible legal issues surrounding interventions, see "Legal Liabilities" on P. 90-91.)

We do NOT advocate that a crisis team be composed solely or mostly of imams or community leaders who are experts in one area but lack proficiency in other critical subject matter areas. Doing so can significantly raise the risk of coming to inaccurate and possibly

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dangerous conclusions about an individual. *In Appendix D, we offer a list of different faith-based and faith-sensitive social service organizations that your community can look at as a starting point for further research and assistance.*

In addition, we recommend considering two other people as part of your core team:

A law enforcement official. William Modzeleski, one of the nation's top experts on preventing targeted violence, notes that law enforcement personnel do not have to comprise part of a team's core inquiry team, pointing out that their presence "would be good, but not essential."[121] He noted that including a law enforcement official into your team should be done with great care, noting that, "if you're not careful, the presence of a law enforcement officer on the inquiry side may over-criminalize something."[122] However he also noted that a law enforcement official, if given the appropriate training, could help other team members identify whether or not certain behaviors or actions taken by the person of concern are actually illegal.[123]

It is important to stress, that team members and others should NOT be asking a law enforcement team member to determine whether a person's political or religious views are "correct". Furthermore we feel it is inappropriate, counterproductive, and un-Constitutional to have a law enforcement officer conduct an intervention (if one is needed), especially in cases where religious and political ideological guidance are determined to be an important factor in fueling a person's path to violence. The officer's role should be focused only on helping other team members determine whether or not a person is committing a crime and enforcing the law, when necessary.

In addition to helping provide better analysis, having a law enforcement official on your team may also enhance the credibility of your team's assessment among other law enforcement officers and agents. Beyond his/her expert role on the team, the law enforcement team member might also be able to act as a go-between for the team and other law enforcement officials/agencies who have a duty to investigate possible crimes.

Officers and agencies that know a properly trained law enforcement professional is part of your team may be more likely to respect and trust the decisions your team makes and the conclusions it comes to.

This is important, because it could mean the difference between a person getting counseling and getting arrested.

Nonetheless, some caution is warranted. The actions of law enforcement officials, outside of the inquiry team, are often highly contingent upon the situation at hand. As one veteran FBI counterterrorism agent explained to us, "[it is] important to acknowledge here that there is a certain 'point of no return,' meaning that if someone... has already 'crossed the line,' intervention or no, there may be nothing to stop a corresponding law enforcement action/prosecution."[124]

Modzeleski observed that the role a law enforcement official may or may not play in a crisis inquiry team will be dependent upon the community's relationship with its local police/sheriff's agency.[125] If team members decide

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to include a law enforcement member, we highly recommend it be someone who is both properly trained, as well as respected by local community leaders.

(If communities are uncomfortable with having a law enforcement official on their Crisis Inquiry Team, your team's lawyer, assuming s/he is properly versed in the laws that impact an intervention, could fulfill the role of helping other team members know whether or not certain behaviors and actions of a person of concern are illegal.)[126]

Irrespective of whether a lawyer or a law enforcement officer is part of your core team, there needs to be a trusted and established relationship with your local police/sheriff department already in place. In a crisis situation, the last thing communities or law enforcement need/want is to waste time overcoming miscommunication or mistrust. For more information on building relations with law enforcement, see P. 56-58.

Communications Manager

Your communications manager is someone who will be in charge of information being disseminated between the inquiry team and outsiders. S/he will be the central point of contact for the inquiry team. (The communications manager and the law enforcement team member, if one exists, can share responsibility for communications with law enforcement agencies.) His/her role in this capacity would be to ensure a very well-managed and controlled dissemination of information that appropriately balances out the competing needs of keeping relevant parties "in the loop" without

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unnecessarily giving away too much information that could harm the inquiry and intervention processes.

It is highly recommended that information only be disseminated in consultation with the expert advice of the other team members. The communications manager should NOT decide on his/her own to notify outside third parties (i.e. media, family, friends, other community members, etc.) especially in a situation that may require the involvement public safety and security. **Any and all information gathered and discussed should be treated as confidential unless team protocols and advice dictate otherwise**.

Beyond the Core Team – Bringing on Others "As Needed"

Beyond your core team, experts like Modzeleski also suggest being open to bringing on "as-needed" people whose role(s) serve a very limited and specific function. For instance, if the person of concern happens to be a high school student, the core team may want to pull in one or two teachers who may know the student fairly well.[127] We would add that team members should be open to the possibility of inviting anyone who is a role model-type figure and commands the respect of the particular person of concern.

This person may play an important role in convincing the person of concern to enter into intervention assistance and stick with it. Our own research, based on a review of prior studies, interviews with ex-extremists and respected imams found that building trust and having the respect of the person of concern were important to raising the chances of success in an intervention. (For more

information, see "*What an Intervention Can Look Like—Some Basic Principles*".)

Building Team Cohesion and Formalizing Relationships – Team Training, Exercises, Regular Meetings and Documents

Crisis inquiry teams are not guaranteed to work simply because the right kinds of people with the proper resources are gathered in one place. In order to increase the probability of a team's effectiveness, it should also meet at regularly planned intervals, whether or not crisis is occurring. For instance, teams that deal with similar situations in other contexts, like mass-casualty attacks on college campuses, meet at regular intervals. How often teams decide to meet is ultimately up to their discretion, however what's important is that the meetings are consistent and not too far apart in time.

In addition to meeting regularly, team members should routinely practice "tabletop"-style exercises that simulate the kinds of crises the team is designed to address. Tabletop exercises are *small group discussions that walk through a scenario based on real events and help to identify the particular actions members of the team would take before, during, and after a crisis situation*. The exercises will act as an opportunity for individuals to learn how their other teammates would react to certain situations and pieces of information. It will also be an opportunity to identify and work out any "kinks" that may arise in advance, rather than during an actual crisis.

The outreach division of the Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security,

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in partnership with the National Counterterrorism Center, offers tabletop exercise training on crisis intervention scenarios that are free of charge and conducted at the request of communities. Similarly, MPAC has developed its own independent tabletop exercise training material and will offer it as a service to communities. (Both sets of curriculum are independent of each other, but both happen to be suitable complements to the material presented in this toolkit.)

Beyond building team cohesion and effectiveness, if possible a long-term goal of a Crisis Inquiry Team should be to formalize the relationships your community has built with other private and public agencies. We suggest formalizing relationships through written documents such as a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which is more structured than an informal "handshake agreement", but not as restricting as a contract.

For reasons of confidentiality, and because MOUs are often tailored to each community's local situation, we believe it would be an ill-advised decision to provide a template that would be openly available to the public. As a starting point, we suggest engaging your local town or county school board to see what MOUs they have created to prevent school shooter situations like Columbine, CO or Virginia Tech. (Local school boards may call these "Threat Assessment Team" MOUs. Despite the title, these processes are not as scary as they sound. See P. 75 for more information.)

ADDRESSING A LACK OF RESOURCES

Although crisis inquiry teams are not meant to be very expensive, many mosques and community centers run on a tight budget with few resources to spare. This situation is understandably difficult, but not impossible to overcome. This is another reason why developing your community institution's list of resources will be important.

The D.O.V.E. framework discussed earlier in this toolkit (see P. 44) was the result of a joint partnership between local American Somali community advocates/leaders and local civic society and government organizations.

Furthermore the burden of finding and spending resources can be shared among more than one institution, if they are willing to do so. For instance, rather than developing a Crisis Inquiry Team at each mosque/community center in a particular area, each organization can be asked to pool together time, money, personnel, and other resources needed to form a regional *shura*-level task force. That task force can then collectively, in a united community voice, engage their local government and civil society partners to develop a coordinated and properly-resourced crisis inquiry team.

What to Do When a Crisis Occurs

Advice Specifically for Muslim College Student Organizations

Specifically for *Muslim college students*, your main task is to build relations with the following individuals/campus institutions and reach out to them in the event of something suspicious, disruptive, or if an immediate threat:

- Campus chaplain (if applicable)
- Club faculty advisor
- Student counseling services
- The campus threat assessment team (see below for more information)

For a list of suspicious/threatening communications or behaviors to report, contact your campus counseling or public safety offices. Often they will have information, such as this (umd.edu/emergencypreparedness/guides/behavior.cfm) on trouble signs that may indicate a move toward violence. (We also suggest reviewing some of the other trouble signs listed in this toolkit described on P. 34-36 in the section "What are the Common Risk Factors for Moving Toward Violence?")
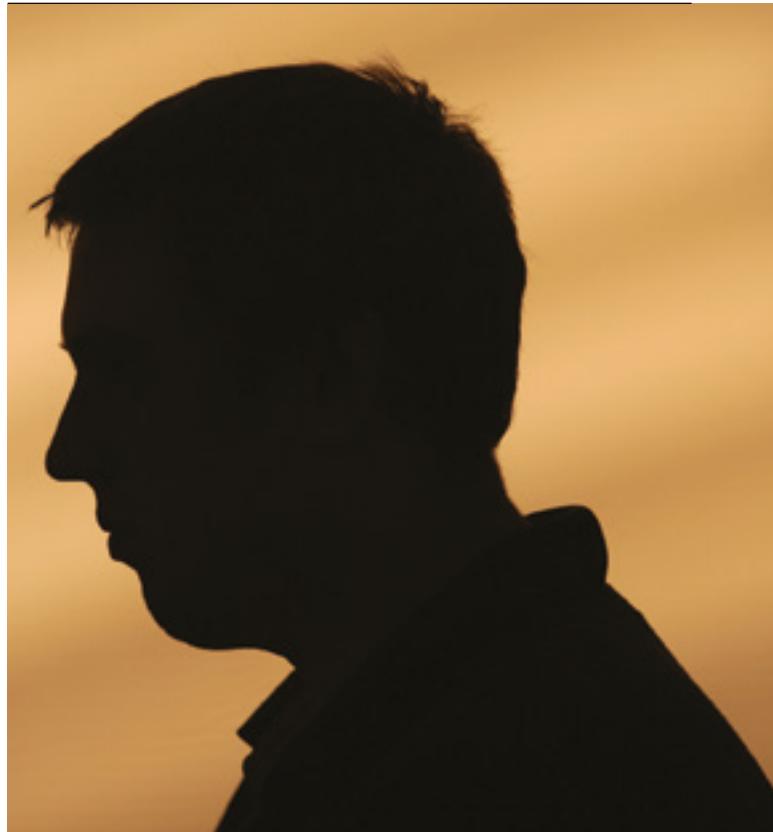
WHAT IS A "CAMPUS THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM"?
AND WHY ENGAGE THEM?

The Campus Threat Assessment Team is a resource that's actually a lot less scary and intimidating than it sounds. Although they have been around for many years, it wasn't until after the 2007 Virginia Tech mass shooting that these teams were drastically expanded to college campuses around the country. Their purpose is to detect and prevent acts of violence from happening on campuses and surrounding communities.

The teams are "multidisciplinary" in nature, and include members of public safety, student life, faculty members, human resources, legal counsel, mental health professionals, etc.

In some ways, they're similar to the idea of crisis inquiry teams we've talked about so far, except more specific to the needs of your particular college/university campus.

The diverse membership of these groups is indicative of a comprehensive attempt to de-escalate a person's potential movement toward violence. In this approach, law enforcement arrests are typically used as a last option, with team members often opting to use alternative approaches such as counseling (if applicable), to defuse and resolve a potentially dangerous situation.

In an interview with Dr. Gary Margolis, one of the nation's top experts on college campus safety, he highlighted the importance of context and cultural appropriateness when analyzing particular cases of concern. In situations that may involve American Muslims, he noted that campus threat assessment teams would likely be open to outside help, particularly if specific religious or cultural needs will impact the analysis and responses to the situation. As he noted, "It might well be that someone is invited into that conversation… who has a background in the context in which we need to make the assessment."[128]

Rather than waiting for a potential problem to arise, we strongly encourage Muslim student groups to proactively engage their student counseling services and point of contact for the campus threat assessment team to show them credible resources on Islamic religious practices. This should include pointing them toward the campus Muslim chaplain (if applicable) and/or the academic advisor/ sponsor for the student organization (if appropriate). *If you do not feel comfortable or are unable to connect with a campus chaplain or academic advisor, you can also refer to the list of resources in the back of this toolkit that specialize in faith-based mental counseling, law enforcement training, and crisis management.* (See Appendix D for more information.)

If a campus threat assessment team has to analyze a case that involves a Muslim student, but they lack proper awareness of Islamic religious practices and concepts, they may misdiagnose the situation, leading to negative consequences for the individual and campus safety. That's one more reason why it's important to engage these groups before any crisis presents itself.

The guidance that follows is not meant for college students and organizations, but for mosques and community centers. **Once you have contacted the appropriate individuals, let them handle the matter and stay out of things, unless advised by them.**

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Convene Your Crisis Inquiry Team & Determine if the Person Poses an Immediate Threat

When notified of a suspicious behavior or a threatening-sounding statement, obviously the first thing to do is convene your crisis inquiry team. Once the team is convened they need to make a preliminary judgment, based on the facts and circumstances at hand, to determine if the person's behaviors or statements indicate a serious and immediate threat.[129] Threats can be examined and rated according to at least three different risk levels: "Low", "Medium", and "High".

High-risk threats typically, "pose an imminent and serious danger to others."[130] Their characteristics include:[131]

- *Words that are direct, specific, and plausible.* This identifies a specific act of violence against a specific target and describes in a straightforward, clear, and plausible manner how that act will be carried out. Specific and plausible details include, "the identity of the [target(s)]; the reason for making the threat; the means, weapon, and method by which it is to be carried out; the date, time, and place where the threatened act will occur; and concrete information about plans or preparations that have already been made."[132]

- *Suggests concrete steps have been taken.* For instance, the person has obtained, built, and/or practiced with weapons such guns or explosives.

An example of a high-risk threat that needs to be immediately and directly reported to law enforcement authorities would be, "I'm going to conduct a 'martyrdom operation' against the *kuffar* (non-believers) at the upcoming rally with some bombs I made so that this country will pay for its criminal foreign policies against the *ummah*!"

High-risk threats should be reported IMMEDIATELY *to law enforcement authorities*. If not a high-risk threat, the crisis inquiry team can and should immediately begin gathering other facts to determine what is going on and how to best remedy the situation.[133]

If Not an Immediate Threat, Start Gathering Facts

In situations where the reported threat does not readily appear to be "high risk", the crisis inquiry team should begin to immediately gather relevant facts and circumstances surrounding the person of concern and any incidents that triggered the concern.

For instance, this could be a situation where a person stands up in the middle of a *khutba* (Friday sermon) and condemns the preacher as a *kafir*. Depending on the situation, although this may not immediately justify calling law enforcement due to the lack of an explicit threat, it would warrant the attention of mosque officials to begin an inquiry to determine if the person poses a serious threat of violence. *For a discussion of Boston bomber Tamerlan Tsarnaev's disruptions during Friday sermons, see* P. 88, 94-95.

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From there, community leaders can make a better determination as to whether or not they need to contact law enforcement, opt for a community-based intervention, or dismiss the issue altogether.

The information you and your team gather should cover five areas:[134]

1. ***What drew attention to the person in the first place?*** Where there any behaviors and/or communications reported and by whom? What was the situation? Did anyone else witness the behaviors/communications? What was the context in which the behaviors/communications took place?

2. ***Basic information on the person of concern.*** There are three types of basic information your team should gather.

   a. *Identifiers*, such as:
      • Name
      • Physical description
      • Date of birth
      • If possible, any official identification

   b. *Background information*, which includes:
      • Residence
      • Family/home situation
      • Academic performance [if relevant]
      • Social networks [i.e. who s/he "hangs out" with]
      • History of relationships and any possible conflicts within them
      • History of harassing or being harassed

      • History of violence toward self or others
      • History of being a victim of violence or bullying
      • Known attitudes toward violence [this can include support for *takfiri* ideology]
      • Criminal behavior [history of theft, assault, property damage, domestic violence, etc.]
      • Mental health/substance abuse history
      • Access to and use of weapons
      • History of grievances and grudges

   c. *Current life information*, including:
      • Present stability of living and home situations
      • Nature and quality of current relationships and personal support
      • Recent losses or losses of status [shame, humiliation, recent breakup or loss of significant relationship]
      • Current grievances or grudges
      • Perceptions of being treated unfairly
      • Known difficulty coping with a stressful event
      • Any "downward" progression in social, academic, behavioral, or psychological functioning
      • Recent hopelessness, desperation, and/or despair such as suicidal thoughts, gestures, actions, or attempts
      • Pending crises or changes in circumstances

3. ***Information on "attack-related behaviors".*** These are actions, observable to an outsider, which may strongly suggest a person is preparing to commit an act of violence. Such behaviors include:

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- Ideas or plans about harming self or attacking an event/location or people at an event/location
- Communication or writings that suggest an unusual interest in committing an act of violence
- Comments that express or imply the student is considering mounting an attack
- Recent weapons-seeking behavior, especially if such behavior is linked to interests in an attack
- Indications that the person condones or is considering violence to solve a problem
- Performs rehearsals of attacks

4. ***Motives to directly carry out an attack.***
   - Revenge for a perceived injury or grievance
   - Yearning for attention, recognition, or notoriety
   - A wish to solve a problem seen as unbearable
   - A desire to die or be killed
   - [For additional motives that are unique to violent extremism, see the section "What are the Common Risk Factors for Moving Toward Violence?"]

5. ***Target Selection.*** Has the person in question identified a potential target or set of targets to attack? In many cases, individuals going down a path of deliberate targeted violence (including those motivated by an ideology) often identify people, places or events they wish to attack and let those around them know about their intentions.[135]

When gathering information, your team will want to gather information from various sources. They include teachers, friends, family, co-workers, people who observed or witnessed questionable behavior/communications, and having a neutral, non-confrontational discussion with the person in question.[136]

(This last part is especially important because you don't want to push away the individual and make him/her resistant to participate in an intervention, if one is needed.)

Who your team decides to interview and in what order of progression will largely depend on the situation. For instance, if there were multiple people who witnessed a person make an extreme and violent outburst, it may be best to interview those witnesses first, then his/her close friends and family, and finally the person who made the outburst. However, this may not always be the case. Ultimately this will be up to your team's collective discretion based on their technical expertise, as well as their understanding and relationship with the community.

Record Management and Confidentiality

Throughout the process every step that team members take to gather information and address the situation should be recorded in writing. This will help keep track of the information and assist team members in making the best analysis possible.

At the same time, given the sensitive nature of the facts being collected, it is imperative that whatever is being collected should be treated with the utmost confidentiality. The process in which facts are gathered should be done as discreetly as possible. Discretion is extremely important so as to neither jeopardize the integrity of the information gathering process (which might impact public safety), nor bring unwanted attention to the situation, especially if it turns out to not be a crisis.

For a sample template of Crisis Inquiry Team checklist and record-keeping documents, see Appendix H.

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Analyze Your Information – 11 Key Questions to Answer

Analyze the information gathered to better assess the situation. The information should be evaluated based on the answers to "11 key questions".[137]

1. *What are the person's motive(s) and goals?*
2. *Have there been any communications or statements that suggest ideas or intent to carry out an act of violence?*
3. *Has the person shown an inappropriate interest in any of the following?*
   a. Previous attacks or attackers
   b. Weapons [including any weapon s/he may have recently obtained or built]
   c. Incidents of mass violence [shooting sprees, mass murders, bombings, etc.]
4. *Has the person engaged in any attack-related behaviors?* As a quick review, some of these behaviors may include:
   a. Developing an attack idea or plan. [The more detailed the plan, the more this suggests the person is committed to engaging in violence.]
   b. Making efforts to obtain or practice with weapons
   c. Check out possible sites and areas for attack
   d. Rehearsing attacks and/or ambushes
5. *Does the person have the capacity to carry out an act of targeted violence?* [This not only includes access to weaponry, but also technical know-how and physical capability to perpetrate an attack of violence.]
6. *Is the subject experiencing hopelessness, desperation and/or despair?*
7. *Does the subject have a trusting relationship with at least one respected and responsible figure?*[138] [i.e. Is this a person who is someone s/he can confide in?]
8. *Does the person see violence as an acceptable, desirable, or "the only way" to resolve his/her problems/grievances?*
9. *Is the person's conversation and "story" consistent with his/her actions?* [Does the information gathered from other sources confirm or dispute what the person is saying?]
10. *Are other people concerned about the person's potential for violence?*
    a. Are these people concerned s/he might take action based on violent ideas/plans?
    b. Are they concerned about a specific target or set of targets?
    c. Have friends, family, acquaintances witnessed any recent changes or escalations in mood and behavior? [For instance, has s/he been making changes in his/her lifestyle based on a particular understanding of *al-wala wa'l-bara* that leads him/her to reject anything that is supposedly "*kufr*"?][139]
11. *What circumstances might affect the likelihood of an attack?*

Weighing the Results of Your Team's Findings

A careful, objective, and well-thought examination of the responses to these 11 questions based on the information gathered will help your Crisis Inquiry Team determine if the situation poses a concrete threat of violence. If your team concludes:[140]

- There is a enough reliable information to answer the 11 questions AND
- The evidence is convincing enough that the person does not pose a threat of violence...

...then the team can reasonably conclude their inquiry without having to notify law enforcement. It is also important for us to stress that all the information gathered, in context, must be weighed carefully. One or two pieces of information should not be taken out of context to affirm or dismiss a possible threat. Doing so significantly raises the risk of coming to an inaccurate conclusion.

Concluding an inquiry does not mean there's nothing to worry about—it just means an immediate law enforcement response is not required at that point in time.

However the inquiry could reveal underlying issues and problems, which if not adequately and immediately addressed could lead to problems later on. If this is the case, then your team should consider developing an intervention plan to provide the necessary assistance to the person in question.

In some cases, based on the information already gathered, an intervention can and must be handled directly by community leaders, especially in cases where political ideology and religious misguidance play the primary role. The next section, *What an Intervention Can Look Like—Some Basic Principles*, provides some advice based on the insights of experienced individuals, for how to provide help in this regard.

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In cases where other factors such as mental health or social services may play an important role in a person's movement toward violence, communities may not have the capacity to address these needs and therefore assistance from outside partners may be needed. (For more information see the information box on the next page, "Passing the Baton to Others When Needed.")

Returning to the issue of your team's assessment, if on the other hand they conclude:[141]

- There isn't enough reliable information to be reasonably sure the person doesn't pose a threat, OR
- The person appears to be on a path to violence…

…then the team needs to immediately notify law enforcement officials and let them take over with an investigation.[142] *Under these circumstances, the information gathered from the inquiry should be shared with law enforcement so they can do their jobs as quickly and efficiently as possible.*

If circumstances require it (such as evidence strongly pointing to the likelihood of violence against your community), for safety purposes, the person of concern may also need to be temporarily prohibited (*ejection*) from entering the premises of your institution. At least until s/he has been determined by authorities to no longer pose a threat of violence. However, this decision needs to be balanced out with a desire to keep community institutions as open and welcoming to as many people as possible.[143]

PASSING THE BATON TO OTHERS WHEN NEEDED

The lack of evidence of a threat doesn't negate the possibility or existence of other legitimate concerns from arising. Sometimes an inquiry may show that the person has other problems putting them at risk to "snap" later on.

As we described in the first section of this publication, more often than not, there are many factors that may motivate a person to embark on a path toward violence. An appropriate response will require a carefully planned and sustained intervention involving various kinds of assistance and/or counseling.[144]

For instance, if an inquiry reveals that a person is driven primarily by an extreme interpretation of Islam or grievances over foreign policy, s/he may be required to take religious classes and/or receive one-on-one guidance from a respected community figure, such as an imam or some other leader like a youth guidance counselor.

However if the inquiry reveals that the person also has anger management issues or significant family problems, assistance from a trained social worker or mental health professional may also be required.

Yet, community institutions may not always have the direct capacity to address a person's specific need(s). To use the example of mental health assistance, a 2012 study in the Journal of Muslim Mental Health found 45% of the imams it surveyed had received any formal training in a counseling and mental health-related subject.[145]

Community leaders should take the lead on an actual intervention only if they have the relevant capacity and skills required to address that particular individual's needs. Otherwise they should refer the person to the appropriate services and assistance.

For instance, if an inquiry discovers that a person's disturbing behaviors are largely driven by some sort of personal crisis and stress, but a community institution is unable to directly offer professional mental health counseling, then they should to refer the person to their local department of mental health.

Having a developed and trusted list of contacts ready will be extremely important in case your community needs to hand off care of an individual to someone with greater capacity and expertise.

Furthermore, leaders that play a pastoral care role in their communities, such as imams, should receive basic training on mental health and counseling if they haven't done so yet. The Clergy Outreach and Professional Outreach (COPE) framework developed by CUNY Professor Glen Milstein is one excellent resource for imams and other Muslim pastoral leaders.[146] (See Appendix D for more information.)

Community members should immediately report any disturbing communications or behaviors that are:

1. Immediately deemed a "high-risk" threat.
A person makes a specific threat, identifies a specific act against a specific target and describes it in a straightforward, clear, and plausible manner how that act will be carried out. The threat must come from someone who appears to have taken concrete steps toward carrying out an attack such as obtaining, building, and/or practicing with weapons.

An example of a reportable "high-risk" threat would be someone saying:

> *"I'm going to conduct a 'martyrdom operation' against the kuffar (non-believers) at the upcoming rally with some bombs I made so that this country will pay for its criminal foreign policies against the ummah!"*

2. The findings of your Team's research indicate a threat.
After doing research and assessing the information collected based on the "11 Key Questions", if your team concludes that the person of concern who made threatening statements or suspicious behaviors either:
  o   Is on a path toward violence, OR
  o   Finds there isn't enough reliable information to be reasonably sure the person of concern doesn't pose a threat…
…then law enforcement should be immediately notified about the person and his/her behaviors or threats.

3. How the person responds to intervention assistance.
Follow-up after an initial intervention is extremely important because if the person is non-compliant with measures to reduce his/her risk of turning to violence, it is probably an indicator of his/her enduring commitment to harm others—making it necessary to notify law enforcement.

What an Intervention Can Look Like— Some Basic Principles

Assuming your community has the specific capacities and capabilities required to address a person's particular needs, this section provides basic principles on what a community-based intervention might look like. No two interventions will be alike—the specifics of engagement are often dependent upon the mindset and contexts of the person being engaged, including what role, if any, s/he plays in a violent extremist organization or movement.[147]

Therefore, we offer a broad framework based on four basic principles we extracted from a review of the research literature on preventing targeted violence, in addition to a series of interviews we conducted with imams, community activists, and ex-members of extremist groups and movements, all of whom have decades of experience living in and engaging with Muslim communities in the United States. Furthermore, we interviewed a former Neo-Nazi skinhead, a prominent national-level anti-racist activist, and one of the nation's top experts on Neo-Nazi and gang recruitment. We then compared the information we gathered with what they had to say in order to uncover further lessons that may be learned and applied to dealing with *takfiri* extremism.[148]

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1. Listen

The first thing our interviewees recommended was to listen in a non-judgmental fashion and give the person an opportunity to express him/herself in an appropriate venue and comfortable environment. In a context where many Muslims often do not feel they have safe spaces to talk about issues they care about, allowing a person to open up and express him/herself is important to building trust and respect with the individual. This may be the first time that a person feels like s/he has had an opportunity to openly talk about issues s/he cares about to someone in a position of leadership.[149]

Our respondents who have dealt with Neo-Nazi extremism in various ways echoed this insight. Former Skinhead figure Bryon Widner vividly recalled his first conversation with Daryle Jenkins, a prominent anti-racist activist (also interviewed). He noted how the open and non-judgmental conversation with Jenkins paved the way for him to eventually leave the violent racist scene altogether. "He never outed me", Widner recalled.[150] Neo-Nazi and gang expert Pete Simi similarly noted, "I've talked with former neo-Nazis and former members of Crips, Bloods, etc. who say how important it is to have someone outside of the gang who is willing to talk in a non-judgmental fashion as opposed to making them feel like community pariahs."[151]

2. Understand the Person's References and Sources

There is clearly an ideological and pseudo-religious dimension to individuals' movements toward *takfiri* extremism and violence. Therefore, it is important to know both beforehand for general knowledge and as part of the learning process specific to that particular individual, what his/her sources of information are (religious, political, social, etc.) and how those sources are likely to be used.

Knowing what sources are out there and how they are being read by and marketed to individuals is important to building trust and to address the person's issues or grievances. Yasir Qadhi, a prominent American Muslim scholar, noted that the people who did the most damage to the *takfiri* movement were individuals who engaged with individuals in those social and religious circles, but have been severely critical of *takfiris'* indiscriminate violence.[152]

This is not to suggest that only former *takfiris* can successfully perform interventions—although this may increase the likelihood of successful disengagement from violence.[153] It does mean, at minimum, community leaders need to understand the intellectual and social contexts the person is coming from in order to build trust. Having the person's trust is one of the most important factors that will determine the success of an intervention.[154] As one leader put it, "You can't use Sufi frames and references to address a Salafi."[155]

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In addition to interviewing various community members, we spoke to academic researchers and a Muslim former FBI agent with extensive experience studying and investigating Al-Qaeda and other violent *takfiris* to get an understanding of:

- How Islamic scripture is used and abused
- Which personalities—modern and classical writers—are most frequently cited
- What are common sources of *takfiri* information, like websites and publications
- Which religious concepts are abused to recruit and indoctrinate people into extremism and violence

(For more information, see Appendices F and G.)

Sometimes the frames of reference and sources of information may not necessarily be religious or ideological in nature. Recall earlier in our toolkit that gang and gun-culture flashiness also seemed to be present in some young men's decisions to move toward violence. Although Daryle Jenkins is African-American, he skillfully used his shared love of punk rock music with former Neo-Nazi skinhead Bryon Widner to establish a dialogue, build trust, and eventually help him leave his racist activities.[156]

3. Provide the Person Comfort

Giving the person comfort does not mean condoning violent actions, although it does involve acknowledging that s/he has legitimate grievances and feelings. This was a point not only acknowledged by all of the imams we interviewed, but was echoed by the academic experts on *takfirism* we talked to.[157] This is largely about breaking down emotional barriers to having a more thoughtful and nuanced discussion. As one religious leader passionately noted, "Sometimes you have to go to the heart first before you go to the brain."[158]

As part of the process of trust-building, community leaders and the individual need to establish a set of shared goals and objectives in order to go about discussing the means by which those goals and objectives are achieved.

For example, a community leader and an individual of concern can hypothetically start their series of conversations off on a foundation of agreement that it is important to "end the injustices against the Palestinians" or "change U.S. foreign policy toward Afghanistan". Once this basic level of agreement is established, the question and focus of the discussion then shifts to *how* those goals are accomplished: Is violence against your American neighbors or running away to fight in a foreign country the right answer? Is this even something supported by Islam? Why are you considering violence as the solution?
Building rapport and credibility is important to this kind of conversation because often this affects the likelihood of successfully keeping a person away from engaging in violence. Recalling his successes in helping prevent youth violence and motivating extremists to exit from racism,

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activist Daryle Jenkins noted that when reaching out to someone, "you have to [show you] care about them."[159]

In contrast, a more unfortunate case is Samir Khan. As noted earlier, repeated attempts by family members and local mosque leaders to intervene and keep Khan disengaged from violence failed. Our review of Khan's case, based on media reports as well an interview with a person close to him, suggests that part of the reason why interventions failed was because he had little respect for most people who tried to engage him.

One interviewee, a former follower of *takfiri* ideology himself, who regularly talked with Khan online, strongly emphasized this point.[160] In fact while family and community members in the real world were engaging Khan, the interviewee was having his own conversations with him in the cyber world. Although the interviewee described his own discussions as a back and forth process, he felt he was beginning to make progress in getting Khan to reconsider his views—at least enough to keep him disengaged from resorting to violence.[161] The interviewee largely attributes his inroads with Khan to the fact that he had credibility as someone who was extremely vocal about articulating concerns over foreign policy and not shying away from questions related to concepts such as *jihad* and how they may or may not apply in current situations.[162]

4. Give Alternatives and Consistently Follow Up

Over the course of one or more conversations, one may learn that there are other factors that are driving or significantly contributing to the person's thinking and gravitation toward violence. Sometimes this may be mostly about politics or religion; in other cases not. In some instances, the person may be dealing with underlying identity issues due to troubles at home or experiencing some form of discrimination. In other cases, extremism may be driven by a desire to look "cool" among a group of ideologically like-minded friends and peers.

Whatever the factor or factors, once the problem is identified and the person has made an initial commitment to not resort to violence, relevant alternatives need to be provided. For instance, if the main issue is a lack of exposure to other religious or political viewpoints, then either enrolling him/her in a class on civics education or religious studies may be one solution. If the issue is largely family driven, then if feasible, it may be necessary to reach out to the parents or legal guardians, build a relationship with them and discuss how to resolve the disconnect with their child.[163]

However, it is not enough to simply provide alternatives or have one sit-down conversation. Consistent follow-up is extremely important. As our earlier discussion in the first section of this toolkit suggests, the movement into extremism and drift into violence doesn't happen overnight. Likewise, research has found that a person's firm movement away from violence isn't a one-time deal, either; it is often a gradual process that may take months or years.[164]

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Borrowing from research on other forms of targeted violence, one of the most prominent indicators of a person's dedication, or lack thereof, to harming others is "his or her interest and willingness to participate in interventions to reduce or mitigate risk."[165] How often and how well a person sticks to the assistance and guidance of intervention personnel will provide an insight into whether or not s/he continues to pose a threat of violence and whether or not law enforcement attention will be required at a later point. *If the person is non-compliant with intervention assistance, we suggest notifying law enforcement.*

Therefore, as part of following up, members of your inquiry team and other relevant actors, such as external non-team service providers, should draw up a formal plan to evaluate the person's progress and level of risk s/he poses. The plan should be routinely monitored to ensure nothing is being overlooked. Any progress and problems should be documented in writing and confidentially stored with your Crisis Inquiry Team. Close and consistent monitoring may uncover other factors moving a person on a path toward violence that may not have been initially apparent. It may even reveal the influence and involvement of other people.

Our review of the best available evidence suggests that the movement into violence isn't something that happens alone—it tends to involve other people, even if only one person decides to carry out an attack. (Experts on violent extremism point out that behind cases of so-called "lone wolf" attacks[g] is "a pack mentality.")[166] If that turns out to be the case extra caution is needed, both to ensure a greater likelihood of intervention success and to protect against any possible legal liabilities. (On legal issues, see: "Avoiding Legal Liabilities" on P. 89).

4a. Why Follow-Up and Consistency Matter: Two Examples

Two examples of the dangers of failing to follow-up and maintain consistency are worth briefly mentioning. First is the example of Boston bomber Tamerlan Tsarnaev, who interrupted religious services on two separate occasions before the attack. After Tsarnaev had disrupted Friday prayer services for the second time, mosque authorities reportedly had an intervention-like discussion with him to stop his public outbursts. According to an official press statement by the mosque, "...a few volunteer leaders of the mosque sat down with the older suspect and gave him a clear choice: Either he stops interrupting sermons and remains silent or he would not be welcomed."[167]

It's unclear what was specifically talked about in the discussion beyond Tsarnaev's outbursts. Information in the official mosque statement, as well as media interviews with local community leaders,[168] indicate that officials were aware of his pattern of behavior, talked with him about it once, gave him a warning and left it at that. He was neither ejected from the mosque by administrators (and brought to the attention of law enforcement), nor is there any information that suggests they attempted to have a follow-up conversation to get to know him to see if there were deeper issues that might require further community help, such as religious or mental health counseling. The second example is Samir Khan. Earlier we mentioned that one of our interviewees, a former *takfiri* sympathizer who knew Khan through online chats, had been engaged in a series of conversations with Khan and had made some modest progress in getting him to reconsider his views on

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g - A reference to violent extremists who seek to carry out an attack with what appears to be little to no influence or direction from other extremists.

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violence. Unfortunately, we know our interviewee failed because Khan's story ends not with a promise to stay away from violence; instead his life violently concludes with a drone strike that took his life in Yemen.

With sadness, the interviewee noted that he stopped talking to Khan just as he began to see signs of what he felt to be progress because he was busy with law school. Eventually he lost touch altogether with Khan for a few years. The next time he heard about Khan was when media reports noted that he had traveled to Yemen to join Al-Qaeda. Faced with countless thoughts of "what-if", the interviewee regretted not staying in touch with Khan and pondered what the future might be had he stayed in communication.[169]

Other Factors to Consider

Beyond the ethical responsibilities, material preparations and effort required to give an intervention the greatest chance of success, there are a few other things that need to be kept in mind.

Avoiding Legal Liabilities

There are potential legal liabilities community leaders must be aware of before undertaking any possible intervention with someone contemplating violence. The movement from ideas into violence often relies on group dynamics. As a cautionary rule of thumb, community leaders should assume that they may be dealing with more than one person. Even if an intervention only directly involves one individual, this doesn't mean no one else is influencing

the person to move toward violence. Two of the biggest factors that move some people from extreme thoughts into outright violence are peer pressure and status seeking—which imply there are multiple people influencing an individual's decision to commit an act of aggression.

This assumption holds a number of legal ramifications (which underscores why legal preparations are so important). In 2010, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a series of laws relating to "material support for terrorism" in a pair of cases brought before the court. Among the provisions that were upheld under the decision were prohibitions against "advice" and "training" to terrorist organizations. *These two provisions have been interpreted to include non-governmental organizations attempting to teach conflict-resolution skills to actors involved in regional conflicts.*[170] Under certain circumstances, if proper precautions are not taken, interventions with at-risk individuals could be potentially construed as being in violation of these material support laws.

For those community leaders who are formally trained as clinicians or other mental health professionals, there are additional legal medical obligations to remember, particularly if counseling assistance is provided. This is specifically referring to "Duty to Warn/Duty to Protect" laws (also called "*Tarasoff* laws", named after the California Supreme Court cases they're based on). These laws vary state by state.[171] On P. 92 is a color-coded map from the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), which provides an overview of the legal obligations, or lack thereof, in all fifty U.S. states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

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Given the constantly changing nature of *Tarasoff* laws, we strongly advise the reader to regularly check with the NCSL website (ncsl.org/issues-research/health/mental-health-professionals-duty-to-warn.aspx), as well as professional associations such as the American Psychological Association to have the most up-to-date information.

In other cases, if a community leader is observed by law enforcement to be communicating with someone who turns out to be suspected of criminal activity, that community leader may run the risk of also becoming the subject of an investigation. This concern is particularly relevant in light of the fact that many successful disengagement efforts involve building rapport with at-risk individuals, through discussions and messaging that is similar in content (at least initially) to those they are seeking to dissuade from a path of violence.[172] In other words, because many of the same political grievances and religious views may appear to be shared by intervener and the at-risk individual, an uninformed outside observer, like a law enforcement official may not be able to distinguish between a "Good Samaritan" and a troubled person.

Finally, there are cases where community members might be asked by law enforcement to be interviewed in the course of a criminal investigation regarding a particular individual. The example of the formerly New York City-based Imam, Ahmad Awais Afzali, who appears to have attempted an informal intervention with convicted criminal Najibullah Zazi, is worth pointing out. (See: "Why Legal Preparation Matters: the Case of Former NYC Imam Ahmad Afzali", on P. 68-69 for more information.)

Potential Damage to Reputation and Associated Harms

Beyond one's ethical obligations and legal risks, there are other factors to consider, namely, questions of public perception and its impacts on one's community. Protecting the reputation of one's institution is extremely important for community members to feel safe and comfortable.

Understandably, some leaders and congregants may wish to handle these kinds of matters internally and not make the community "look bad." However, interventions are not guaranteed to work every time. Should community leaders attempt an intervention, but fail to prevent a person's movement toward violence and not notify law enforcement this creates a number of harms, including those that have already been discussed. In addition, it puts the community further in harm's way.

At best, such a scenario will no doubt make one's particular community (and other American Muslims) look bad in the public spotlight. At its worst, this could endanger other congregants. Public backlash under such a scenario could fuel hate crime attacks against property and people. Most likely, this will also lead to further investigations and possible surveillance of other community leadership and congregants in the near term in order for law enforcement to determine whether there are other possible threats they need to be aware of.

Understandably, some leaders may also be hesitant to notify law enforcement because it could potentially scare or otherwise push away the very individuals they seek to

LAWS FOR A "DUTY TO WARN/PROTECT"

An overview of the legal obligations, or lack thereof,
in all fifty U.S. states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

RI
CT
NJ
DE
MD
DC

PR

HI

● ARIZONA, DELAWARE AND ILLINOIS HAVE DIFFERENT DUTIES FOR DIFFERENT PROFESSIONS.

● DUTY TO PROTECT/WARN - MANDATORY   ● NO DUTY TO PROTECT/WARN

● DUTY TO PROTECT/WARN - PERMISSIVE   ● OTHER
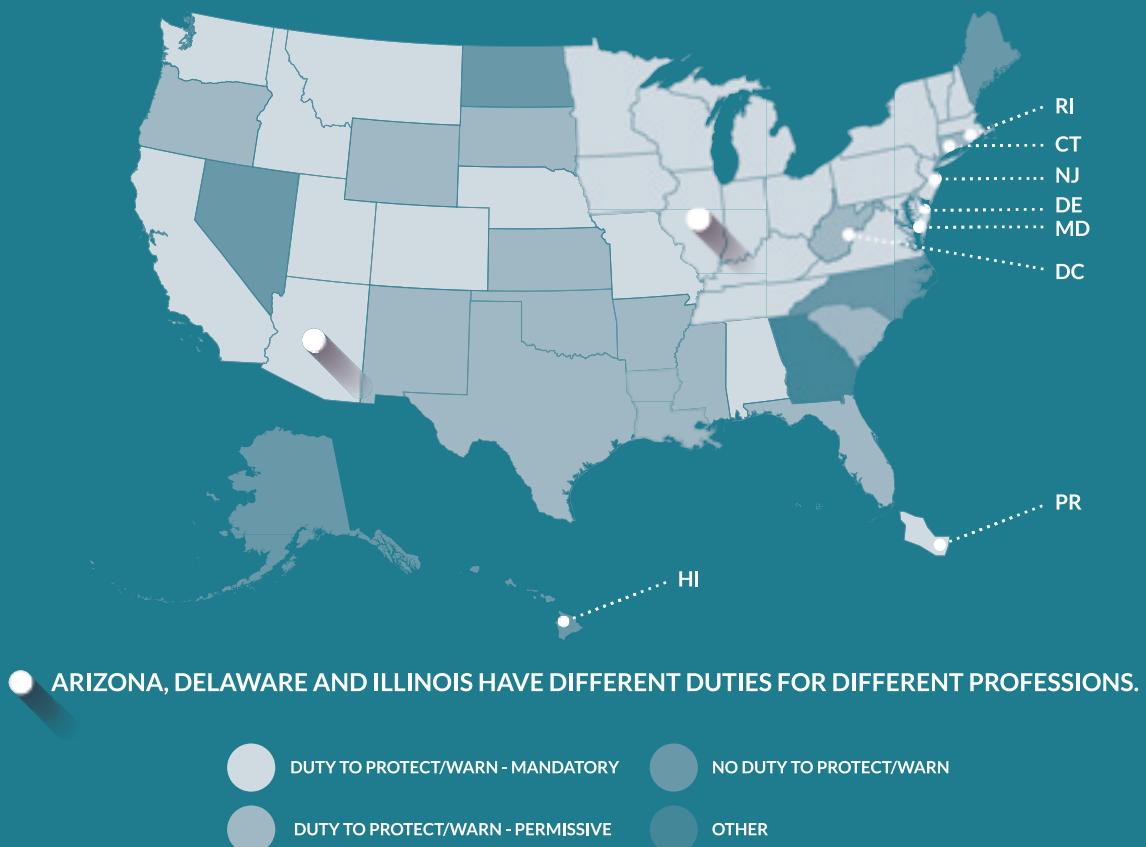
Taken from the National Conference of State Legislatures website
http://bit.ly/100WND1

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engage. No doubt this is a very real possibility and was a point raised by at least one of our interviewees.[173] Ultimately regardless of what we say, communities will end up doing what they think is best. MPAC can only provide what we feel to be the best advice possible based on the best research— which includes the insights of multiple experts, community activists, and respected imams.

Nonetheless, given the ethical responsibilities, the potential legal liabilities and possible risks to public safety due to a failed intervention, the decision to notify or not notify law enforcement must be weighed carefully.

Understanding the Risks and Consequences of Failure…

Finally we wish to again remind our readers that interventions may not always work. In some cases, the person of concern may have hardened their mind and heart, making it impossible to dissuade him/her from choosing a path of violence. Deceased Al-Qaeda propagandist Samir Khan is a good example.

According to media reports, friends, family members, and religious leaders had tried to counsel and dissuade Khan from his extremism for several years. On at least three separate occasions while living in North Carolina, his family and local community members had tried to conduct intervention sessions, only to fail.[h]

In other cases, interventions may also run the risk of being counterproductive. Earlier we mentioned that seeking status and "coolness" were often important factors that move individuals from extreme ideas into outright violence.

In some cases, depending on the situation, being the focus of an intervention could actually deepen a person's path toward violence because it will be seen as "cool" or give the person more respect in the eyes of his/her extremist peers.[174]

What this discussion serves to highlight is not just the importance of the *message*, but also the importance of the *messenger* in order for an intervention to have the greatest likelihood of success.

h - We wish to point out that in Khan's particular case, law enforcement officials were already aware of his activities for several years. We only cite his example to clearly raise awareness about the limitations of community interventions.

EJECTION

Defining What Ejection Is and Isn't

If Prevention or Intervention measures are not appropriate or feasible, then communities have a third and final option: *Ejection*. It is important for us to be very clear about what ejection is and isn't. From a community perspective, **ejection is a reactive and last-resort option**. It should only be exercised if an intervention has failed or is likely to fail because the person has already demonstrated a committed move toward violence.

Ejection should NOT be considered a primary means of dealing with a troubled individual who does not appear to be "at the edge" of moving from ideas into a path toward violence. For instance, someone who may have extreme views, but is not disruptive, threatening or otherwise appearing to engage in any criminal activity, should not be ejected from the mosque. Intervention measures such as counseling, education, and any other sort of relevant assistance are probably more productive paths to take.

While ejection involves physically removing someone from a common space such as a mosque, community center, or Muslim student organization, it isn't limited to just that. In the context of a potential threat related to violent extremism, if you have to *eject* someone from your community space, YOU MUST ALSO CONTACT LAW ENFORCEMENT.

Learning from Two Examples

First is Rezwan Ferdaus, who had allegedly attempted to blow up the U.S. Capitol building with explosives attached to a remote-controlled airplane. Prior to his arrest, Ferdaus "was previously asked to leave every mosque in the city of Boston, according to a leader [interviewed by local media] at the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center."[175] In addition to the extremist views Ferdaus had openly espoused, community leaders were concerned about his harassing, intimidating, and disruptive behavior toward fellow congregants and visitors at one local mosque.[176] However, there was no publicly available information indicating that community members had notified law enforcement authorities of Ferdaus' removal from the Center.

The second example, also in Boston, took place more recently in April 2013 when brothers Tamerlan and Dzokhar Tsarnaev carried out their infamous bombings against the city's annual marathon run. In the months prior to the attack, Tamerlan had on at least two separate occasions been disruptive during Friday prayer services at his local mosque. In both cases, he broke normal Islamic etiquette by interrupting and shouting out in the middle of Friday sermons, which in one case included denouncing the speaker as a *kafir*,[177] because in addition to having possible mental health issues,[178] he reportedly disagreed on a religious and ideological basis with what was being preached.[179]

EJECTION

During the second incident, he was so disruptive that he was temporarily kicked out of the mosque by fellow attendees. According to a statement by mosque officials, in reaction to Tamerlan's outburst, "People of the congregation, in turn, shouted back at the older suspect, 'Leave now!' Due to the congregation's disapproval, he left the sermon."[180] Despite the fact that mosque officials remembered that Tsarnaev and already interrupted services at least once before[181] and had warned him to stop his disruptions[182] there is no evidence mosque leaders had contacted law enforcement authorities.[183]

Some have argued that Tamerlan's two outbursts were not enough to warrant notifying law enforcement authorities since he made no *explicit* threat of violence.[184]

At minimum, Tamerlan's outbursts were more than enough cause for concern to warrant intervention from community leaders to help provide counseling and other assistance. The inquiry process of an intervention might have revealed other red flags that would generate greater concern (leading to possible law enforcement involvement anyway) such as his family and personal history of strife, violence, criminal behavior, and possible mental illness.[185]

Whether or not Tamerlan's outbursts merited law enforcement attention is itself a highly debatable matter. We believe there are at least three reasons why his actions may have warranted notifying the authorities.

First, simply being disruptive is more than enough to warrant ejection from mosque grounds and notifying authorities. As one law enforcement expert we talked to noted, "It would well be within the [mosque administration's] role to tell the person to leave, and if needed, to call the police to forcibly eject the person."[186] However, the expert cautioned that "the police role there, [is] to enforce laws regarding trespass, but the content of the issue—while pertinent—is not for the police to decide upon."[187]

Second, one of the warning signs of the movement from extreme ideas into violence is "clash[ing] with existing mosque authorities". His multiple outbursts during Friday sermons, based on strong ideological reasons would appear to reasonably fit a description of clashes with mosque authorities.

Third, Tamerlan's use of *takfir*, and the way he engaged in *takfir*, potentially raises alarms. It's one thing if Tamerlan was attempting to have an intellectual discussion or calm debate about the boundaries of what it means to be a "Muslim". It's entirely another thing when *takfir*—a practice that been used by Al-Qaeda and others to justify the killing of Muslims[188]—is being used to angrily condemn a person. That a person is being angrily condemned as a *kafir* by being interrupted in the middle of his Friday sermon, an act generally considered to be sinful and extremely rude, is even more concerning.

AN EXAMPLE OF EJECTION IN ACTION:
TAMPA BAY MUSLIMS REJECTING TAKFIRISM

In January 2012, the FBI arrested Sami Osmakac after receiving tips from the local Tampa Bay-area Muslim community about Osmakac's violent rhetoric and threatening behavior. Prior to his arrest, Tampa Bay mosques and community centers ejected Osmakac from their premises multiple times and banned him from other community venues.[189]

Local media reporters who interviewed Tampa-area community leaders, noted Osmakac had come to the attention of regional mosques and community centers for a series of troubling behaviors. According to one community leader, Osmakac was ejected from several mosques due to *behaviors* that, in addition to his extremist views, included:

- "disruptive behaviors"
- "intimidating other worshippers"
- "getting into arguments with people"[190]

Furthermore, Osmakac condemned mosque and community leaders for engaging in the democratic political process and labeled him a *kafir*.[191] What's also important to point out is that not only did community leaders kick Osmakac out of their community centers and mosques, but they then immediately notified law enforcement. (In fact, local leaders claim community members had alerted the FBI of Osmakac's activities almost two years before he was finally arrested.)

EJECTION

Pros and Cons to Ejection

If leaders decide to eject someone from your community space and notify law enforcement, it is important to understand and carefully weigh the pros and cons.

Pros

One important benefit to ejection is that it immediately removes the disruptive and potentially dangerous presence from the community. In all three cases mentioned above, ejection removed people who were harassing congregants and speakers and in at least two of the three cases, it also pushed out what appears to be openly threatening behavior.

Provided that law enforcement is notified of a person's expulsion from a community space, another benefit of ejection is that it warns law enforcement of a potential threat to public safety, which also poses a threat to American Muslim communities. The Tampa Bay Muslim community's handling of the situation with Sami Osmakac, who threatened both Muslims and Americans of other faiths, is a strong example of the benefits of an ejection.

Cons

At the same time, there are also drawbacks to ejecting someone from community spaces. First, it effectively cuts off the possibility of engagement with the individual. It may not always be necessary to eject someone—there may be situations where intervention can succeed. However, if someone is cut off from engagement with alternative resources and points of view, this may deepen their commitment to ideological extremism and unintentionally move a person further along a path toward violence. In other words, *it eliminates, or nearly so, the possibility of dissuading the troubled person from getting involved in illegal violent activities*.

Furthermore, as you will recall, one of the factors that pushes people from extreme ideas into violent behavior is the "emotional pull" of acting in the face of injustice. Also recall that some of our interviewees noted that leaders may be seen as "sellouts" by certain segments within communities. The anger that a person may feel from being ejected from a community space by distrusted/disliked leaders may further his/her advance toward violence.

In other cases, being expelled from community spaces might be seen as a perverse "badge of honor," especially if the person has a group of peers supporting his/her ideological extremism and disruptive behavior. As noted earlier in the first half of this toolkit, the movement from extreme, but lawful ideas, into outright criminal violence is often fueled by the desire to gain status among one's peers by being as defiant and confrontational toward perceived authority and establishment figures.

Finally, as the Boston bombings shows, if troublemaking individuals are ejected (or even warned with ejection), but law enforcement is not notified, this could lead to tragic consequences for public safety.
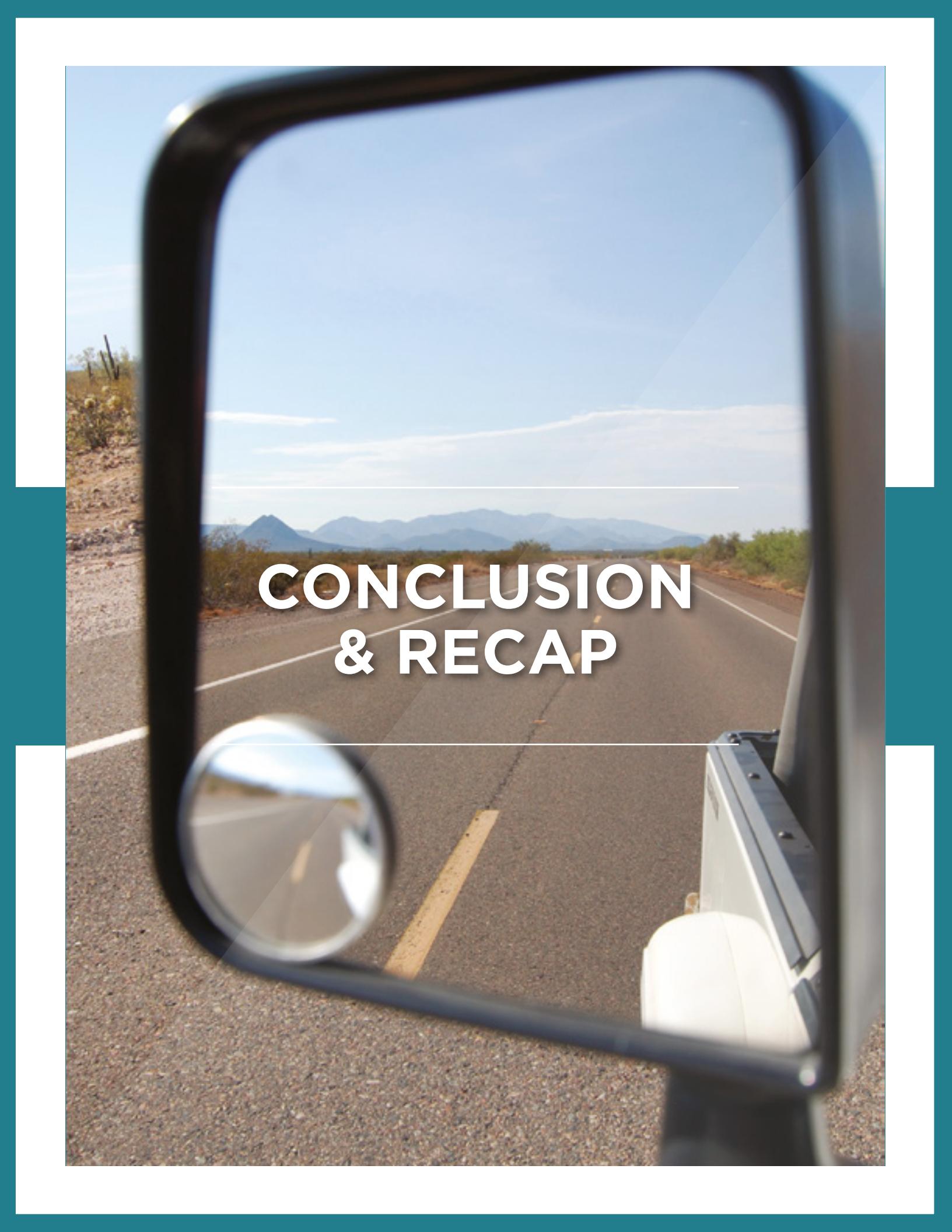
CONCLUSION & RECAP

CONCLUSION & RECAP OF KEY POINTS

This toolkit sought to accomplish two goals: First was to help our community understand the complicated challenges that violence and extremism pose to our communities, the factors and motivations that drive some people to adopt misguided ideas and head down a path of violence are as varied as they are complex; Second was to provide communities with a guide to deal with tricky situations that may arise in one's community through our *Prevention, Intervention, or Ejection* (PIE) method of action.

We hope you find our toolkit to be useful to your community. We conclude by providing a quick recap of some of the most important steps you can take using the PIE method, to help safeguard your community against extremist ideologies and violence.

Prevention

This is about nipping the problem in the bud before it becomes a larger issue. Some recommended steps for mosques and community centers include:

1. **Creating community-oriented programs such as:**

   a. *Safe Spaces* to discuss sensitive or taboo subjects in a comfortable and non-judgmental atmosphere. This should include discussions about religious and civic identities, concerns over national and foreign policies, sectarianism, etc.

   b. *Action-Oriented Civic and Political Training* to empower communities to stand up for their rights and promote the public interest (*maslaha*) for all

people.

   c. *Increasing Parental Involvement and Supportive Adult Mentorship for Youth* because happiness and health often start at home. Strong families and youth role models are an important factor that protects our communities' next generation from getting sucked into dangerous paths like gangs, drug/alcohol use, or violent extremism.

   i. *Media Literacy*. One of the outcomes of increased parental and role model mentorship is to have critical conversations about everyday media messages that glorify sexual promiscuity, drug/alcohol use, and violence. These conversations should be guided by knowledgeable authoritative adult figures and should include critical discussions on extremist propaganda.

2. **Professional Management of Your Mosque/ Community Center.**

   Having a better sense of who is using the physical spaces and resources in and around the mosque/ community center can go a long way toward ensuring it is not being abused for nefarious purposes. It also helps with general community safety by dissuading hostile outsiders from committing hate crimes.

CONCLUSION & RECAP OF KEY POINTS

3. **Expand Your Community Institution's Network of Trusted Contacts**.

    Many, if not most, mosques/community centers operate with limited resources to spare. Communities may often need the help of others to take care of important social service functions. That help can only happen if they reach out and build relationships with neighboring organizations and institutions, Muslim and non-Muslim, which share a common vision. These contacts should include getting to know and building strong working relations with your local law enforcement agency.

There are also steps that Muslim college student organizations can take.

- **Create a Safe Space for Discussion and Activism**. College is a time to discover and test out new ideas. Campus clubs should take advantage of this opportunity by providing a forum where ideas and ideologies can be safely debated and discussed. For those who want it, training and activism opportunities should be made available to provide students to exercise their interests in civic and political engagement.

- **Get Training on Strong Management and Leadership.** Your organization is only as strong as the leaders it has. Some leaders are born, but many more are taught—which is why it is important that Executive Boards make sure they receive the proper training to improve their leadership and program management skills.

Finally, both mosques/community centers and Muslim college student clubs should work to create a culture of trust and communication.

For years, schools across America have had to deal with a similar situation in order to prevent school shootings like Columbine or Virginia Tech. Experts have noted that a lack of trust and an environment of silence may actually encourage troubled people to go down a path of violence because they will be less likely to get help, such as mental health counseling. Those with the ability to provide help are also less likely to be aware of those who may need it.[193]

As a result schools have responded with a firm, but caring stance against silence among students by working hard to raise awareness among their students and faculty and foster an environment of trust that encourages communication. Successful trust-building in this context has emphasized the following points:[194]

- *Violence prevention is everyone's responsibility* [NOTE: This is about raising awareness and encouraging families and neighbors to contribute to school and community safety, not about blaming an entire community for the actions of a few.]
- *The school has a process in place to assess threats of violence*
- *Knowing how the process works and who is involved*
- *All information will be handled discreetly*
- *The purpose is to protect both the potential victim(s) and perpetrator(s)*

CONCLUSION & RECAP OF KEY POINTS

Substitute the word "school" (or "campus") for "mosque", "community center", or "Muslim college club" and the same principles apply.

Community leaders seeking to foster a climate of trust and communication must emphasize and reinforce these principles. They can do so in a number of ways, such as sending out emails on their congregational listservs, talk about the importance of communication in Friday sermons, and stress to parents and youth peers the confidential and discreet way information about a concern is handled.

Intervention

If you and members of your community find someone who is going down a misguided and possibly violent path, an intervention may be needed. For an intervention, here are some recommended steps:

- **Develop a Crisis Inquiry Team.** Your team should be composed of a "core" group of individuals whose skills and contributions include mosque administration, authoritative religious leadership (such as an imam), social work, mental health expertise, and legal counsel. A team should also have an information manager who acts a central point of contact for outsiders, and if possible a trusted and respected law enforcement officer who can help determine if any crimes are being committed.

- **For college students, engage your "campus threat assessment team".** This is as simple as contacting your student counselor services center and asking to set up a meeting with its administrators and the threat assessment team. Doing so will help provide them with the right kind of religious and cultural competency skills they need in the possible event they are faced with a mental health or public safety situation involving a Muslim student.

During a crisis situation, college students should contact their campus threat assessment team and let them handle matters from there, unless they specifically ask otherwise.

For community centers and mosques:

Assemble your Crisis Inquiry Team and determine if the person poses an imminent threat of violence. If the threatening communication or behavior identifies a specific act against a specific target and describes it in a straightforward, clear, and plausible manner, then you need to notify law enforcement authorities immediately.

If not an imminent threat of violence, start gathering facts immediately. For a checklist summary of the information gathering process, see Appendix H, *Sample Templates for Crisis Inquiry Record-Keeping Documents and Checklist of Steps Taken*, in the back of this toolkit.

a. *If your team concludes that the person of concern who made threatening statements or suspicious behaviors either*:
   o Is on a path toward violence, OR
   o Finds there isn't enough reliable information to

be reasonably sure the person of concern doesn't pose a threat...

...then you should notify law enforcement and let them handle matters from there.

b. However, if your team concludes:
   - o There is a enough reliable information to answer the "11 Key Questions" assessment tool AND
   - o The evidence is convincing enough that the person does not pose a threat of violence...

... your team can conclude their inquiry. However, depending on the results, they may consider developing an intervention plan to provide the person with further assistance and counseling.

In situations where communities may not have the capacity to address a person's needs, such as mental health or social services, assistance from outside partners may be needed.

However, in cases where ideology and religious misguidance are a major factor in a person's movement toward violence, communities can and must take the lead role. Our research, taken from interviews with individuals with experience in addressing extremist ideologies and helping people exit from violent groups, offers four basic principles:

1. Listen
2. Understand the Person's References and Sources
3. Provide the Person Comfort
4. Give Alternatives and Consistently Follow Up

Follow-up after an initial intervention is extremely important because if the person is non-compliant toward measures to reduce his/her risk of turning to violence, it is probably an indicator of his/her enduring commitment to harm others—making it necessary to notify law enforcement.

Keep in mind that interventions are not an easy process and require careful consideration of both the benefits, as well as the drawbacks. While not necessarily resource-intensive, interventions are time-consuming and will require advance preparation.

Ejection

If Prevention or Intervention measures are not appropriate or feasible, then communities have a third and final option: *Ejection*. **Ejection is a reactive and last-resort option**. It should only be exercised if an intervention has failed or is likely to fail because the person has already demonstrated a committed move toward violence.

While ejection involves physically removing someone from a common space such as a mosque, community center, or Muslim student organization, it isn't limited to just that. In the context of a potential threat related to violent extremism, if you have to *eject* someone from your community space, YOU MUST ALSO CONTACT LAW ENFORCEMENT.

APPENDICES

A: Criteria For Selecting Research On Extremism And Violence

After 9/11, there was increased interest among researchers to investigate why a few people adopted extreme views and fewer became terrorists. As one expert noted, "In the flood of research that followed the 9/11 attacks, radicalization quickly became the latest holy grail of national security research."[195] However, not all research is created equal: some studies are more empirically supported than others.

One of the biggest challenges this body of literature has had is being able to better understand why some people decided to become violent extremists, while most others did not. In particular, much of this research failed to distinguish between lawful non-violent individuals who may espouse extreme views, and individuals who explicitly engaged in criminal and violent activities.[196] This difference is what some researchers and practitioners refer to as the difference between "talkers" and "doers."

Identifying the latter from the former is important, especially in the United States where policing and intelligence activities are constrained—at least in theory—by privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties protections that, for the most part, treats "talking" (free speech and expression) differently from "doing" (illegal *behavior*) under the law. Understanding the difference between both types of extremism can also help security agencies better identify and assess real threats rather than spend limited resources on false leads.[197]

However, flawed research—such as the 2006 FBI analysis "From Conversion to Jihad"[198] and the 2007 NYPD report "The Homegrown Threat in the West"[199]—have created unreliable profiles of potential terrorists and appear to be used to justify broad-brushed surveillance policies aimed at entire communities rather than specific criminals.[200] These flawed studies are believed to have set the basis for flawed security policies, such as the NYPD and FBI's "ethnic mapping" projects that surveil entire ethnic/racial/religious communities rather than engage in precise evidence-based investigations of individuals' suspected criminal activities.[201]

Taking inspiration and insights from a cutting-edge school of thought within Criminology called "Evidence-Based Policing,"[202] as well as other empirically-informed research on extremist violence,[203] this toolkit developed five criteria to guide our selection of "radicalization" research.

1. **Conceptual**. Instead of a rigid linear approach, is the study offering a dynamic explanation of involvement in terrorism?
2. **Transparency**. Are the research methods explained fully? Does the study at least explicitly state where it derived its data?
3. **Potential conflicts of interest**. Are their monetary or political issues directly tied to policy that merits an open explanation and consideration? If so, are they disclosed in the publication?
4. **Control groups**. Does the study attempt to scientifically isolate factors that distinguish non-violent and lawful extremists from criminal violent extremists ("talkers" vs. "doers")?
5. **Data**. Does the study engage in systematic primary data collection for its analysis?

Although not all research on extremism and violence referenced in the toolkit met all five criteria, we selected studies that at least fully meet three of these benchmarks—studies with "moderate" level of rigor (relative to the current state of research on extremism and involvement in ideologically-motivated violence).

B: Choosing Terms Carefully—"Takfirism" Vs. "Jihadism"

There has been an ongoing debate over the use of proper terminology in strategic communications and other public messaging to define the violent threat emanating from Al-Qaeda and ideologically similar groups.

Some have argued that terms such as "Islamic extremism," "violent Islamist terrorism," or "violent jihadists" are necessary because, as one proponent put it, "the first rule in war is to know your enemy so you can defeat it."[204] Opponents of religiously-laden terminology, such as MPAC's President, Salam Al-Marayati, on the other hand, argue "avoiding religious terminology in America's efforts to counter violent extremism denies al Qaeda and its affiliates the religious legitimacy they severely lack and so desperately seek."[205]

At the heart of the issue is a fundamental tension between an accurate description of the adversary and ensuring such terminology does not alienate communities crucial to winning in the marketplace of ideas against violent extremists. This tension is as relevant to U.S. government agencies as it is to Muslim community leaders who are the primary intended audience of this toolkit. **We settle on the term** *takfirism* for two reasons:

1. **It accurately describes the pseudo-religious ideology of its followers**. In other words, it neither denies violent extremists' use and abuse of Islamic teachings, nor does the term *takfir* convey any positive religious terminology. In fact, *takfir*, defined as the act of one Muslim declaring another to be a non-Muslim, is extremely negative. (More details are given below.)

2. **It highlights one of the key features distinguishing this ideology from the overwhelming majority of Muslims that America is not fighting against**.[206] The very followers of this ideology are very clearly bothered by the use of the term being applied to themselves. From no less than the words of the now-deceased editor of Al-Qaeda's English-language magazine, *Inspire*, Samir Khan states with frustration:[207]

   I remember those days when I would research works from Islamic scholars, thinkers, community activists and the likes, whom would give their two cents on why terrorism (i.e. jihad) is flawed. They would in unison touch on issues such as hijacking, kidnapping, 'suicide' bombings, killing of non-combatants and such in order to prove that al Qaeda's jihad against America is defective from a theologically based standpoint. **Some would go as far as to say that al Qaeda are not even Muslims; and then lambast them as takfīri's!** [sic] **All of this bothered me as a Muslim living in America.**

Furthermore, the term is consistent with the findings from a 2007 DHS document, *Terminology to Define the Terrorists: Recommendations From American Muslims*, which as the title suggests, was produced with input from American Muslim religious scholars, academic experts, and civic leaders. As the document notes:[208]

   According to the experts we consulted, one such [useful] *term is "takfirism," which refers to the practice of declaring a Muslim a kafir or nonbeliever, and then proclaiming that their lives can be forfeited. Al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups employ takfir to name as apostates all Muslims who reject their ideology, arguing that this makes their blood violable.*

C: Islam vs. the Takfiris—Lessons from a Debate

The following dialogue is based on a wiretap recording used in a 2005 Spanish terrorism trial. The conversation is between two individuals: Rabei Osman, an extremist convicted of plotting a terrorist attack in Italy and "Mahmoud," Rabei's then-roommate living in Italy. The heated discussion is important because it provides a real-life example of the terrorists' shaky relationship to Islam and how even the most basic knowledge of Islam can help counter justifications for violence. Below is an excerpt from the conversation: [i]

[Rabei:] You have another view of things.
[Mahmoud:] No. When I lived in another country, before arriving here, I saw that the Americans had done this and that. Then, when I arrived here, I found that everything was different.
[Rabei:] You watch other television news broadcasts, you have to know that it is all propaganda.
[Mahmoud:] There are those who say we are wrong, and then there are others who say we are right.
[Rabei:] However, you must know they are enemies of God.
[Mahmoud] Listen to me, there is only one God. Frankly, I do not care if someone is Jewish, Orthdox, or Catholic; everyone is free to pray to the God he chooses, and it is neither up to me nor you to judge. We don't know what God wanted to do, nevertheless there is only one God, because all prayers are addressed to God.
[Rabei:] (These disbelievers) end up in hell: it is not I who says so, but the book of God.
[Mahmoud:] I only know one thing: praying to God. The important thing is for you to know God, to pray, and to not behave badly, and to not do things that are not right. All the rest is superficial, and it does not matter whether you are Jewish, Arab [i.e. Muslim], or Orthodox.
[Rabei:] Why are you on the Jews' side? Do you like it when they kill our brothers?
[Mahmoud:] That is not how the issue stands; I am sorry you fail to understand me. It is because everyone claims he is right[…] I do not want to side with anyone[…] I do not mean to sound disrespectful, but I[…] absolutely do not agree with your ideas.
[Rabei:] In my opinion, you do not see the blood that flows over the land of the world.
[Mahmoud:] And it flows over both parts, and not only in one.
[Rabei:] And what about the children who are dying?
[Mahmoud:] I can only tell one thing. In all the attacks that have been carried out, there is always the hand of an Arab [extremist]. I hope that nothing dangerous happens[…] because otherwise things will go ill for us, and we[…] will be the ones to pay for them (terrorists). I am very worried, because we all came here to work, and thanks to this country our fellow countrymen have managed to create something.
[Rabei:] They are asses, disbelievers, they exploit you, and after you have been here you have nothing, neither your honor nor dignity.
[Mahmoud:] I told you, everyone has his own ideas. God knows my faith, and you need not come and judge me.
[Rabei:] We do not agree, so it is best that you and I not speak.

Al-Qaeda expert Marc Sageman reflects on Rabei's failed attempt to use Islam in this conversation, observing, "He tries to bring religion into the conversation, but Mahmoud will have none of it. *Mahmoud is the one who uses religious elaborations to refute Rabei's ideas. One gets the impression Rabei cannot compete with his roommate on this ground and quickly returns to the political.*"[209]

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i - Taken from: Sageman, Leaderless Jihad, P. 77-78. The original has been slightly condensed and slightly edited to provide context to the reader.

D: Resource List For Your Community[j]

Social Services from an Islamic Faith-Based Perspective:
NOTE: These links also contain a variety of information, including resources on secular mental health resources.

MuslimMentalHealth.com – *Clinical Directory* www.muslimmentalhealth.com/index.php?option=com_sobi2&Itemid=39.
MentalHealth4Muslims.com – *Directory* mentalhealth4muslims.com/mental-health-directory/#&panel1-2.
Potomac Muslim Counseling Links (Washington, D.C. Area; includes national resources) http://www.muslimcounselors.org/PMCL/Links.html.
American Muslim Health Professionals – *Muslim Mental Health Resource Guide* http://amhp.us/MHGuide.pdf.
Journal of Muslim Mental Health (academic peer-reviewed journal). journalofmuslimmentalhealth.org.
Islamic Social Services Association – *Resources* http://www.issausa.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=49&Itemid=58.
Institute for Social Policy and Understanding – *Center for Global Health* (scholarly research and findings) http://www.ispu.org/portal/39/CGH.aspx.
WellMuslims.org – *Islamic Social Services in the United States* (drug and alcohol addiction resource center) http://wellmuslims.org/resourcesmen/social-services.
Muslim Chaplain Services of Virginia – (ex-offender services) muslim-chaplains.org
SuhaibWebb.com – (includes many articles written by certified counselors and directly addresses many social and political issues) http://www.suhaibwebb.com/aboutus/.
MuslimMatters.org – (directly addresses many social and political issues, often through commentary and analysis from *Salafi* perspective) http://muslimmatters.org/about/authors/.
Inner-City Muslim Action Network (IMAN) – (Chicago-based; involved in youth programming, anti-gang initiatives, and ex-offender services). http://www.imancentral.org/.

Chaplains (for hospitals, universities, and prisons)

Muslim Chaplains' Association. A non-profit dedicated to promoting "the professional development of Muslims who provide spiritual care and counsel as chaplains and/or religious counselors in Muslim communities and in public and private institutions in the United States." associationofmuslimchaplains.com

Anti-Domestic Violence Resources

Peaceful Families Project (Washington, D.C. Area; focuses on domestic violence awareness and prevention). peacefulfamilies.org
Project Sakinah (New Mexico-based; focuses on domestic violence awareness and prevention) projectsakinah.org
Muslimat Al-Nisaa (Baltimore, M.D. and Washington, D.C.-based; provides culturally sensitive health, education and social services to Muslim community women and children). http://mnisaa.org/about

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j - The listing of these resources and links in this publication neither constitutes an endorsement of these websites, nor the information they contain. Furthermore, this is NOT intended to be a complete list of resources, but a starting point for further research by local communities.

Organizations Geared Toward "Safe Space" and Development Programming for Youth and Converts

MakeSpace (Washington, D.C. Area). http://www.imakespace.com/
Ta'leef Collective (San Francisco Bay Area). http://www.taleefcollective.org/
Yaro Collective (Washington, D.C. Area). http://www.yarocollective.com/.
Ka Joog (Minnesota-based; primarily focused on Somali youth). http://www.kajoog.org/
Inner-City Muslim Action Network (Chicago-based; involved in youth programming, anti-gang initiatives, and ex-offender services). http://www.imancentral.org/

Islamic Religious Literacy Organizations

American Learning Institute for Muslims. http://www.alimprogram.org/
Al-Madina Institute. http://almadinainstitute.org/
Al-Maghrib Institute. http://almaghrib.org/

Faith-Based and Faith-Inspired Anti-Gang/Urban Violence Resources

Inner-City Muslim Action Network (Chicago-based; involved in youth programming, anti-gang initiatives, and ex-offender services). http://www.imancentral.org/
Safe Streets (Baltimore-based program, several Muslim staff involved). http://www.baltimorehealth.org/safestreets.html
Cure Violence (Chicago-based program, several Muslim staff). http://cureviolence.org/

Media Literacy

New Mexico Media Literacy Project – *Introduction to Media Literacy*. http://medialiteracyproject.org/sites/default/files/resources/Intro_to_Media_Literacy.pdf.
Center for Media Literacy – *Reading Room: Media Literacy in the Home*. http://www.medialit.org/reading-room/media-literacy-home.

Mental Health Training for Imams and Other Muslim Pastoral Leaders

Clergy Outreach and Professional Engagement (COPE). Designed by CUNY Psychology Professor Glen Milstein in 1998, COPE is a multidisciplinary, multi-faith, and research-focused, program that facilitates reciprocal collaboration between clinicians and community clergy, regardless of their religious traditions. An overview of the program can be found here (http://bit.ly/19RaS8v). The faculty page of Dr. Milstein can be found here (http://www.ccny.cuny.edu/profiles/glen-milstein.cfm).

E: Resources For Building Relationships With Law Enforcement

Mediation Services

Community Relations Service – An office within the U.S. Department of Justice created under the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Among the many services it provides, its mandate includes acting as an impartial mediator to improve "lines of communication between parties experiencing tension or conflict, including Federal, State, and local officials, community leaders and residents." http://www.justice.gov/crs/map.htm.

Community Relations Service -- Regional Offices

New England Regional Office (Region I) *(ME, VT, NH, MA, CT, RI)*
408 Atlantic Avenue, Ste. 222, Boston, MA 02110
617-424-5715

Northeast Regional Office (Region II) *(NY, NJ, VI, PR)*
26 Federal Plaza, Ste. 36-118, New York, NY 10278
212-264-0700

Mid-Atlantic Regional Office (Region III) *(DC, DE, MD, PA, VA, WV)*
200 2nd & Chestnut St, Ste. 208
Philadelphia, PA 19106
(215) 597-2344

Southeast Regional Office (Region IV) *(AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN)*
61 Forsyth Street, SW, Suite 7B65
Atlanta, GA 30303
404-331-6883

Midwest Regional Office (Region V) *(IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI)*
230 South Dearborn St, Rm 2130, Chicago, IL 60604
(312) 353-4391

Southwest Regional Office (Region VI) *(AR, LA, NM, OK, TX)*
1999 Bryan Street, Ste. 2050, Dallas, TX 75201
214-655-8175

Central Regional Office (Region VII) *(IA, KS, MO, NE)*
601 E. 12th St, Ste. 0802, Kansas City, MO 64106
(816) 426-7434

Rocky Mountain Regional Office (Region VIII) *(CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY)*
1244 Speer Blvd., Ste. 650, Denver, CO 80204-3584
303-844-2973

Western Regional Office (Region IX) *(AZ, CA, GU, HI, NV)*
888 South Figueroa St, Suite 2010
Los Angeles, CA 90017
213-894-2941

Northwest Regional Office (Region X) *(AK, ID, OR, WA)*
915 Second Avenue, Suite 1808, Seattle, WA 98174
206-220-6700

Community Relations Service -- Field Offices
51 SW First Ave, Suite 624, Miami, FL 33130
305-536-5206

211 W. Fort St, Ste. 1404, *Detroit, MI* 48226
313-226-4010

515 Rusk Avenue, Suite 12605, *Houston, TX* 77002
713-718-4861

90 Seventh St, Ste. 3-330 , *San Francisco, CA* 94103
415-744-6565

Publications

- *The Collaboration Toolkit for Community Organizations: Effective Strategies to Partner with Law Enforcement.* A practical manual designed for community leaders seeking to develop effective partnerships with their local law enforcement agency. ojp.usdoj.gov/fbnp/pdfs/Collaboration_Toolkit.pdf.

- *Partnering with American Muslim Communities to Fight Crime.* Written by two former MPAC staffers, this article summarizes the findings taken from interviewing community members around the country on what they saw as "best practices" for building successful partnerships with local law enforcement agencies. cops.usdoj.gov/html/dispatch/11-2011/partnering-with-american-muslims.asp.

Organizations

- **The SafeNation Collaborative.** Conducts cultural awareness training and basic instruction on Islam to law enforcement officers. safenationcollaborative.com

Combating Hate Crimes and Enhancing Community Safety

- **Muslim American Homeland Security Congress –** *Security Tips for Places of Worship.* MAHSC is a Los Angeles-based multi-member organization that includes MPAC, several local mosques, the Greater L.A. chapter of CAIR and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. mpac.org/programs/government-relations/security-tips-for-places-of-worship.php

- **Muslim Public Affairs Council –** *Hate Crime Resources*
  - *"What is a Hate Crime/Incident?"* www.mpac.org/programs/hate-crime-prevention/what-is-a-hate-crime.php
  - *MPAC webpage to report a hate crime* www.mpac.org/take-action/report-a-hate-crime.php
  - *MPAC webpage with template hate crime form for local police* www.mpac.org/assets/docs/MPAC-hate-crime-report-form.pdf

- **How to Assess the Safety and Security of Your Place of Worship** *–Tina Lewis Rowe.* http://bit.ly/1brS8eN

- **Anti-Defamation League** *– Hate Crime Resources*
  - *State-by-State Comparison of Hate Crimes Laws.* www.adl.org/assets/pdf/combating-hate/ADL-hate-crime-state-laws-clickable-chart.pdf
  - *Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2010* (Latest major change to national hate crimes protections and law enforcement data collection) www.adl.org/assets/pdf/combating-hate/What-you-need-to-know-about-HCPA.pdf

F: Common Religious References to Justify And Sustain Takfiri Ideology

Qur'an

In 2012, a group of researchers from Arizona State University (ASU) conducted a lengthy study of *takfiri* websites to see how its supporters abuse the Qur'an to justify their wanton violence and extremist beliefs. Their study is based on an analysis of over 2,000 texts, which happen to originate mostly from the Middle East and North Africa and date from 1980 to 2011.

Below is a list of the 14 most-cited verses by *takfiri* extremists. This list is important not only for what it contains, but what it also does not contain.

As you will notice in the table below, the so-called "Verses of the Sword" (9:5 and 9:29)—verses that when taken out of context, suggest aggressive warfare against people of different religions—are almost completely absent from this list. These particular verses have been controversial because a very tiny minority of medieval *Qur'an* commentators claimed these two verses overrode the 110-plus other verses emphasizing self-defense, peace, mercy and forgiveness. The existence of these verses and obscure opinions has also been used by fringe Muslim and anti-Muslim voices to claim that Islam is an inherently violent and aggressive religion.

Despite the controversy and attention generated by these verses and opinions, the ASU study's authors identified only three examples of 9:5 being used among 2,000 texts over a 31-year period. The study did not mention 9:29 being used at all during the same time period.

None of this is to suggest that arguments about the "Verses of the Sword" should not be prepared for, but it does indicate that the reality of extremists' use of the *Qur'an* may be different from our perceptions of that reality.

Table Summary of Most Cited Qur'anic Verses by Takfiri Extremists

English text[k]	Arabic text
12:21: God has full power and control over His affairs, but most among mankind know not. (Partial verse)	وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِى ٱشۡتَرَىٰهُ مِن مِّصۡرَ لِٱمۡرَأَتِهِۦٓ أَكۡرِمِى مَثۡوَىٰهُ عَسَىٰٓ أَن يَنفَعَنَآ أَوۡ نَتَّخِذَهُۥ وَلَدٗاۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ مَكَّنَّا لِيُوسُفَ فِى ٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَلِنُعَلِّمَهُۥ مِن تَأۡوِيلِ ٱلۡأَحَادِيثِۚ وَٱللَّهُ غَالِبٌ عَلَىٰٓ أَمۡرِهِۦ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكۡثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعۡلَمُونَ ۝
9:14: Fight them and God will punish them by your hands, cover them with shame, help you (to victory) over them, heal the breasts of believers.	قَٰتِلُوهُمۡ يُعَذِّبۡهُمُ ٱللَّهُ بِأَيۡدِيكُمۡ وَيُخۡزِهِمۡ وَيَنصُرۡكُمۡ عَلَيۡهِمۡ وَيَشۡفِ صُدُورَ قَوۡمٖ مُّؤۡمِنِينَ ۝
5:51: Take not the Jews and Christians for your trusted guardians; they are but trusted guardians to each other. And he amongst you that turns to them (for aid) is one of them. Verily God does not guide unjust people.	۞يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا ٱلۡيَهُودَ وَٱلنَّصَٰرَىٰٓ أَوۡلِيَآءَۘ بَعۡضُهُمۡ أَوۡلِيَآءُ بَعۡضٖۚ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّهُم مِّنكُمۡ فَإِنَّهُۥ مِنۡهُمۡۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَهۡدِى ٱلۡقَوۡمَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ۝
63:8: Honor belongs to God and His Messenger and to the believers; but the hypocrites know not.	يَقُولُونَ لَئِن رَّجَعۡنَآ إِلَى ٱلۡمَدِينَةِ لَيُخۡرِجَنَّ ٱلۡأَعَزُّ مِنۡهَا ٱلۡأَذَلَّۚ وَلِلَّهِ ٱلۡعِزَّةُ وَلِرَسُولِهِۦ وَلِلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱلۡمُنَٰفِقِينَ لَا يَعۡلَمُونَ ۝
8:17: It is not ye who slew them; it was God: When thou threw (dust), it was not thy act, but God's, in order that He might test the believers with a gracious trial from Himself.	فَلَمۡ تَقۡتُلُوهُمۡ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ قَتَلَهُمۡۚ وَمَا رَمَيۡتَ إِذۡ رَمَيۡتَ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ رَمَىٰۚ وَلِيُبۡلِىَ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ مِنۡهُ بَلَآءً حَسَنًاۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ۝
4:75: And why should you not fight in the cause of God and [the cause] of those who, being weak, are ill-treated (and oppressed)? Men, women, and children, whose cry is: 'Our Lord! Rescue us from this town, whose people are oppressors; and raise for us from Thee one who will protect.'	وَمَا لَكُمۡ لَا تُقَٰتِلُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱلۡمُسۡتَضۡعَفِينَ مِنَ ٱلرِّجَالِ وَٱلنِّسَآءِ وَٱلۡوِلۡدَٰنِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَآ أَخۡرِجۡنَا مِنۡ هَٰذِهِ ٱلۡقَرۡيَةِ ٱلظَّالِمِ أَهۡلُهَا وَٱجۡعَل لَّنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ وَلِيّٗا وَٱجۡعَل لَّنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ نَصِيرًا ۝

Table Summary of Most Cited Qur'anic Verses by Takfiri Extremists

English text	Arabic text
4:104: Slacken not in following up the enemy; if you are suffering hardships, they are suffering similar hardships; but you have hope from God, while they have none.	وَلَا تَهِنُوا فِي ابْتِغَاءِ الْقَوْمِ إِن تَكُونُوا تَأْلَمُونَ فَإِنَّهُمْ يَأْلَمُونَ كَمَا تَأْلَمُونَ وَتَرْجُونَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَرْجُونَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٠٤﴾
8:39: And fight them on until there is no more discord and religion (or the way) is for God (alone).	وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّىٰ لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ كُلُّهُ لِلَّهِ فَإِنِ انتَهَوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٣٩﴾
22:39: To those (people) against whom war is made, permission is given (to fight) because they are wronged; and verily God is Most Powerful for their aid.	أُذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقَاتَلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ظُلِمُوا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ نَصْرِهِمْ لَقَدِيرٌ ﴿٣٩﴾
3:139: So lose not heart, nor fall into despair: for you must gain mastery if you are true in faith.	وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَنتُمُ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٣٩﴾
2:11: When it is said to them [the hypocrites]: 'Do not make mischief on the earth;" they say: "Why, we only want to make peace!"	وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُصْلِحُونَ ﴿١١﴾
4:76: Those who believe fight in the cause of God, and those who reject faith fight in the cause of evil: so fight against the associates of Satan: feeble indeed is the cunning of Satan.	الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ الطَّاغُوتِ فَقَاتِلُوا أَوْلِيَاءَ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّ كَيْدَ الشَّيْطَانِ كَانَ ضَعِيفًا ﴿٧٦﴾
22:40: Those who have been expelled from their homes in defiance of justice, for no cause except that they say; 'Our Lord is God.' . . . God will certainly aid those who aid His cause.	الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِن دِيَارِهِم بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ إِلَّا أَن يَقُولُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ اللَّهِ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُم بِبَعْضٍ لَّهُدِّمَتْ صَوَامِعُ وَبِيَعٌ وَصَلَوَاتٌ وَمَسَاجِدُ يُذْكَرُ فِيهَا اسْمُ اللَّهِ كَثِيرًا وَلَيَنصُرَنَّ اللَّهُ مَن يَنصُرُهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٤٠﴾
47:7: O you who believe! If you aid (the cause of) God, He will aid you, and plant your feet firmly.	يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن تَنصُرُوا اللَّهَ يَنصُرْكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ ﴿٧﴾

Hadith

Unlike the *Qur'an*, to the best of our knowledge, there has been no systematic study of how extremists exploit *hadith* (narrated sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him) for their ideological purposes. Nonetheless we have compiled the following narrations based on 1) their use in well-known extremist texts, 2) direct relevance to the topic (i.e. hadith on wartime fighting), and 3) recommendations from subject matter experts.[210]

The following is a list of *hadith* cited in Osama Bin Laden's 1996 statement, "Declaration of War against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places":[l]

- Around twelve thousands will emerge from Aden/Abian helping -the cause of- Allah and His messenger, they are the best, in the time, between me and them. **(Ahmad)**

- Expel the polytheists out of the Arab Peninsula **(Al-Bukhari)**

- If I survive, Allah willing, I'll expel the Jews and the Christians out of the Arab Peninsula. **(Saheeh Aljame' As-Sagheer of Al-Albani)**

- I promise war against those who take my friends as their enemy. **(Al-Bukhari)**

- In the day of judgment a man comes holding another and complaining of being slain by him. Allah, blessed be His Names, asks, *"Why did you slay him?"* The accused replies, *"I did so that all exaltation may be Yours.* Allah, blessed be His Names, says, *"All exaltation is indeed mine!"* Another man comes holding a fourth with a similar complaint. Allah, blessed be His Names, asks, *"Why did you kill him?"* The accused replies, *"I did so that exaltation may be for Mr. X!"* Allah, blessed be His Names, says, *"Exaltation is mine, not for Mr. X, carry all the slain man's sins (and proceed to the Hell fire)!"* **(unknown source)**
    - (In another wording of **An-Nasa'i**): "The accused says*: for strengthening the rule or kingdom of Mr. X"*

- Abdul-Rahman Ibn Awf -may Allah be pleased with him- said: *I was at Badr where I noticed two youths, one to my right and the other to my left. One of them asked me quietly (so not to be heard by the other): 'O uncle, point out Aba-Jahl to me.' ' What do you want him for?' , said Abdul Rahman. The boy answered: 'I have been informed that he - Aba-Jahl - abused the Messenger of Allah, I swear by Allah, who have my soul in His hand, that if I see Aba-Jahl I'll not let my shadow depart his shadow till one of us is dead.' 'I was astonished,' said Abdul Rahman; then the other youth said the same thing as the first one. Subsequently I saw Aba-Jahl among the people; I said to the boys 'do you see? This is the man you are asking me about.' The two youths hit Aba-Jahl with their swords till he was dead.*

    Bin Laden's commentary on this hadith was: *Allah is the greatest, Praise be to Him: Two youths of young age but with great perseverance, enthusiasm, courage and pride for the religion of Allah's, each one of them asking about the most important act of killing that should be induced on the enemy. That is the killing of the pharaoh*

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l - All hadith cited have been rendered in italic format. Beyond that, the English translation has been kept in its original form—including any grammar, spelling, or translation issues—from the source it was taken from. See: "Bin Laden's Fatwa," PBS, August 23, 1996, accessed July 24, 2013, http://www. pbs.org/newshour/updates/military/july-dec96/fatwa_1996.html

of this Ummah - Aba Jahl - the leader of the unbelievers (Mushrikeen) *at the battle of Badr. The role of Abdul Rahman Ibn Awf, may Allah be pleased with him, was to direct the two youths toward Aba-Jahl. That was the perseverance and the enthusiasm of the youths of that time and that was the perseverance and the enthusiasm of their fathers. It is this role that is now required from the people who have the expertise and knowledge in fighting the enemy. They should guide their brothers and sons in this matter; once that has been done, then our youths will repeat what their forefathers had said before*: *'I swear by Allah if I see him I'll not let my shadow to depart from his shadow till one of us is dead'.* **(unknown source)**

- And the story of Abdur-Rahman Ibn Awf about Ummayyah Ibn Khalaf shows the extent of Bilal's (may Allah be pleased with him) persistence in killing the head of the Kufr: *"the head of Kufr is Ummayyah Ibn Khalaf.... I shall live not if he survives,"* said Bilal. **(unknown source)**

- *"O boy, I teach a few words; guard (guard the cause of, keep the commandments of) Allah, then He guards you, guard (the cause of) Allah, then He will be with you; if you ask (for your need) ask Allah, if you seek assistance, seek Allah's; and know definitely that if the Whole World gathered to (bestow) profit on you they will not profit you except with what was determined for you by Allah, and if they gathered to harm you they will not harm you except with what has been determined for you by Allah; Pen lifted, papers dried, it is fixed nothing in these truths can be changed."* **(Saheeh Aljame' As-Sagheer of Al-Albani)**

- His messenger (Allah's Blessings and Salutations may be on him) said: *"for those who strive in His cause Allah prepared hundred degrees (levels) in paradise; in-between two degrees as the in-between heaven and earth".* **(Saheeh Aljame' As-Sagheer of Al-Albani)**

- He (Allah's Blessings and Salutations may be on him) also said: *"the best of the martyrs are those who do NOT turn their faces away from the battle till they are killed. They are in the high level of Jannah (paradise). Their Lord laughs to them (in pleasure) and when your Lord laughs to a slave of His, He will not hold him to an account".* **(Ahmad)**
  - And: *"a martyr will not feel the pain of death except like how you feel when you are pinched".* **(Saheeh Aljame' As-Sagheer of Al-Albani)**

- He also said: *"A martyr's a martyr privileges are guaranteed by Allah; forgiveness with the first gush of his blood, he will be shown his seat in paradise, he will be decorated with the jewels of belief (Imaan), married off to the beautiful ones, protected from the test in the grave, assured security in the day of judgement, crowned with the crown of dignity, a ruby of which is better than this whole world (Duniah) and its' entire content, wedded to seventy two of the pure* Houries *(beautiful ones of Paradise) and his intercession on the behalf of seventy of his relatives will be accepted".* **(Ahmad and At-Tirmithi)**

In addition, experts on violent *takfiris* such as Ali Soufan, a former FBI agent who investigated Al-Qaeda (and also happens to be an American Muslim) notes that hadith talking about a prophecy in which armies will emerge from Khorasan[m] and carrying "black banners" before the Day of Judgment, has been cited often by violent *takfiris* he encountered.

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m - A historic region in present-day Afghanistan and Central Asia.

For instance, some evidence has emerged that suggests Boston bombing suspect Tamerlan Tsarnaev had a YouTube channel, which among other things, contained links to extremist materials, including a flashy video dedicated to the Khorasan prophecy.[211]

Religious Opinions

There are a variety of *takfiris* who propagate their messages of extremism on the Internet, but some are more influential than others. According to a 2006 study of Arabic-language online texts by the Combating Terrorism Center (CTC) at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, a few *takfiri* ideologues and authors stood out as being particularly influential at shaping doctrine and indoctrination:[212]

Classical-Era Jurists:

- Ibn Taymiyyah
- Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzi

Ibn Taymiyyah was seen as particularly influential by the study's authors due to his writings against the invading Mongol rulers. As the study notes:[213]

> *Fatwas by this 13/14th cent. AD jurist are by far the most popular texts for modern Jihadis, particularly his writings about the invading Mongols. These texts are important to the modern Jihadi movement because 1) Ibn Taymiyya is the most respected scholar among Salafis, 2) he crafted very good arguments to justify fighting a jihad against the foreign invaders, and 3) he argued that Mongol rulers who converted to Islam were not really Muslims. The last two arguments resonate well today with the global Jihadi agenda.*

Modern Writers/Thinkers:

- **Sayyid Qutb** – An Egyptian Muslim political theorist whose writings are believed to have influenced the ideologies and actions of various non-violent and violent Islamist movements around the world.
- **Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi** – Imprisoned by Jordanian authorities (as of the publication of this toolkit), he is believed to be the most influential living *takfiri* intellectual who is best known for being the main ideological influence over the notorious (and deceased) Iraq-based terrorist, Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi.
- **Osama Bin Laden** – Arguably the most famous figure of the transnational *takfiri* (aka "jihadi") movement, he was one of the founders and top leader of the Al-Qaeda terrorist network, which was responsible for the 9/11 attacks, among other violent incidents.
- ʿ**Abdullah ʿAzzam** – Often dubbed the "Godfather of Global Jihad," he was an influential militant and theorist who fought in the anti-Soviet insurgency during the 1980s. During this time he worked closed with Osama Bin Laden before mysteriously dying in 1989 from a car bomb.

The CTC study also found that many of the modern writers' texts were published in response to criticism of *takfiris'* actions. They found that these writers' responses sought to address five recurring criticisms of the *takfiri* movement:[214]

1. *Declaring other Muslims apostates* (takfir)
2. *Attacking other Muslims*
3. *Attacking women, children, and the elderly*
4. *Attacking the sources of a nation's wealth, such as tourism and the oil industry*
5. *Creating political and social chaos*

It went on to observe that these writers felt the most damaging criticisms came from three categories of people: 1) "Influential religious leaders,"", 2) "Former Jihadis" [*takfiris*], and 3) "Prominent current Jihadis."[215]

In addition to the Khorasan prophecy *hadiths* and the use of *takfir* upon Muslims, one of the other key ideological features of the *takfiri* movement is its discussion of *jihad*. There are two key facets to common *takfiri* interpretation of *jihad*. First is seeing *jihad*, which is assumed in this twisted worldview to mean violence (not necessarily spiritual). Second this violence-centric understanding of *jihad* is considered to be an obligatory individual duty (*fard 'ayn*) for all Muslim men. Writing the English-language Al-Qaeda publication, *Inspire Magazine*, deceased propagandist Samir Khan stated:[216]

> *The central issue is that* jihad *is individually obligatory (*fard 'ayn*) on all Muslims from East to West until all of our lands are freed. The issue of jihad being* fard 'ayn *is the fulcrum of the modern* jihad. *The world is witnessing the rise of* jihadis *because of the very fact that Muslims are becoming more aware of the central issue, and thus their obligation towards God.*

In addition to the Arabic-language texts written by the above-mentioned authors, the writings and speeches of the now-deceased English-language Al-Qaeda propagandist Anwar Al-Awlaki also appear to have influence on portions of the *takfiri* movement. A recent study by MPAC found that out of the 36 violent plots directed at the United States between November 2008 and July 2012, 18 of those plots (50 percent) involved individuals who watched/read Awlaki's materials.[217] Much of his ideological writings can be found on an archival copy of his personal blog,[218] as well as in various articles in the English-language Al-Qaeda publication, *Inspire Magazine*.[219]

G: Primary Source Material on *Takfiri* Ideology

There are many resources available on the Internet for people to read more about *takfiri* propaganda and recruitment tactics. Below we provide a select list of primary source material and trusted sites where individuals who are interested in doing further research can learn more to figure out ways of de-bunking extremist ideas.

Academic Websites

- **www.jihadology.net**. Jihadology is the personal website of Aaron Y. Zelin, an expert in studying violent and non-violent Islamist movements, including *takfiri* splinter groups, around the world. (Mr. Zelin has a Master's degree in Arabic and Islamic Studies from Brandeis University.)

- **The Haverford Global Terrorism Research Project's *Al-Qaeda Statements Index* (AQSI).** Sponsored by Haverford College, the Project's AQSI contains hundreds of statements from *takfiri* leaders around the globe. Graduate and undergraduate students maintain the Project, including the AQSI. It is considered to be one of the most comprehensive and widely-used resources for *takfiri* ideological material on the Internet. Link: http://bit.ly/15Z97Su.

Must-Read Documents

- **Editions of *Inspire* Magazine**. It would be an overstatement to say that this online English-language *takfiri* magazine is directly responsible for recruiting people into Al-Qaeda. However it has played an undeniably important role in attempting to spread *takfiri* ideology among English-speakers on the Internet. Many violent extremists who committed or attempted to commit attacks in the United States were readers of *Inspire*. Before they were killed in a drone strike, Samir Khan and Anwar Al-Awlaki frequently wrote articles and columns for that magazine. Safe-to-download editions of *Inspire* can be found at: http://bit.ly/12mtX1P.

- **Osama Bin Ladin's 1996 Statement, "Declaration of War against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places."** Sometimes inaccurately referred to as the "1996 Fatwa", this older text is an important read for those looking for an introduction into *takfiri* ideology. It provides a classic example of propaganda narratives produced by violent extremists to legitimate violence against civilians and recruit people into *takfiri* organizations. An English translation of text can be found at: http://to.pbs.org/12AQPsN.

- ***A Course in the Art of Recruitment*.** Written under the pen name of Abu Amr Al-Qaidi, this English language document has been characterized as "Al-Qaida's dumbed-down recruitment manual."[220] An academic study describes the document differently, noting, "[it] prescribes a highly structured recruitment process with multiple stages and clear, simple metrics to assess a recruit's progress—

essentially, the bureaucratization of decentralized jihadist recruitment."[221] Among other things, the manual emphasizes five concepts as part of the indoctrination and recruitment process:[222]

1. *Adherence to the book (Qur'an) and the sunna.*
2. *The religious duty of jihad and the necessity to be prepared.*
3. *The acceptability of takfiriyya.*
4. *Democracy is a religion and participation in elections is unacceptable.*
5. *The concept of al-wala' wa'l-bara' (loyalty and disavowal).*

The entire document can be read online at: http://bit.ly/19ylDse. Understandably not all community leaders may be comfortable reading an Al-Qaeda recruitment manual online. If that's the case, an academic summary and analysis of the document can be found here: http://bit.ly/GLPuaB. Another good summary, with a slightly humorous angle, can be read here: http://slate.me/GFLDeC.

English-Language Websites to Watch

- **Forums.islamicawakening.com.** The forums section of this website was consistently mentioned by the imams, academic experts, and ex-extremists we interviewed as a hotspot for online *takfiri* propaganda outreach.[223] Although the site is not *takfiri*, per se, (its posts suggest a mostly Salafi and Deobandi audience, along with other types of Muslims) it does attract a number of extremists and many heated debates end up taking place in its forums, particularly on its popular "Politics, Jihad and Current Affairs" topic thread. It is also a good place to observe online attempts by *takfiris* to try to win over other Muslims to their ideology.

- **Comment posts on MuslimMatters.org**. MuslimMatters is an American Muslim website that posts original content on a wide variety of social, political, and religious issues, largely from a Salafi perspective. The website's comment posts are a valuable resource for community members, because they are a good place to observe how mainstream Muslim, particularly mainstream Salafi writers interact, respond, and counter posts from commenters that occasionally espouse *takfiri* views.

- **66 Top *Takfiri* Twitter accounts.** In recent years, Twitter has begun to displace website chat forums as the preferred online method of disseminating *takfiri* propaganda.[224] Unlike traditional search engine use and online chat forums, using twitter helps someone fast track him/herself become immersed in extremist ideology and virtually link up with people engaged in violence. As one expert explains, "*Twitter lets users skip right past that stage to find the sources that are most relevant and most deeply engaged in the ideology…It also creates quick paths to meet and interact with terrorists and foreign fighters who are already actively engaged in violence.*"[225] A recent academic analysis, based on content postings in *takfiri* chat forums, identified "66 Important Jihadis on Twitter". (The two-part series can be read here (http://bit.ly/10JpLsc) and here (http://bit.ly/14YjB9A).

H: Sample Templates for Crisis Inquiry Record-Keeping Documents and Checklist of Steps Taken

Note: The templates in this section are merely *suggested*. Communities should feel free to modify these templates as they see fit.

Sample Template Form for Crisis Inquiry Team Interview and Assessment Records

Date(s): _____

Name of Person(s) of Interest: _____

_____

Reported Threat(s)/Concerning Behavior(s): _____

_____

Name(s) of Witnesses and/or Reporting Parties: _____

_____

Warning Signs: _____

_____

_____

Risk Factors: _____

_____

_____

Potential Stabilizing Influences/Protective Factors: _____

_____

_____

Potential Triggering Events: _____

_____

_____

Suggested Checklist Template for Crisis Inquiry Team Process

☐ **1. CONVENE AND ASSESS**: *Convene your Crisis Inquiry Team -- 1) Mosque/Community Center administrator 2) Religious leader (such as an imam) 3) Social worker 4) Mental health counselor 5) Lawyer 6) Law enforcement officer 7) Communication manager 8) Anyone else on an "as-needed" basis.*

☐ **2. PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT**: *Does the suspicious or threatening behavior strongly suggest violence is imminent or very likely to occur within a short period of time?* Document all steps taken. Strict confidentiality about student information should be kept among team members and appropriate District staff.

☐ **3. GATHER INFORMATION**: *In assessing the validity of a potential threat/suspicion behavior, review the warning signs and all background information of the person in question and interview friends, family, and other witnesses.* (USE CAREFUL JUDGEMENT WHEN DECIDING WHO TO INTERVIEW AND AT WHAT POINT IN THE PROCESS.) Categories of information to gather include:
- The facts and circumstances surrounding what statements/behaviors drew attention to the person of concern in the first place.
- Basic information on the person of concern, such as:
    i. **Identifiers** (name, physical description, and date of birth).
    ii. **Background information** (i.e. residence, family/home situation, who s/he hangs out with, history of violence toward self or others, access to weapons or acquired weapons, mental health history, etc).
    iii. **Current life information** (stability of home situation, recent losses or feeling shame/ humiliation, current grievances/grudges, recent thoughts of hopelessness/desperation/ despair, etc)
- *Attack-related behaviors*. Does s/he have ideas or plans about harming him/herself, attacking a location, or people at an event/location? Has s/he made communications or writings that suggest the person has an unusual interest in committing an act of violence? Has the person sought or acquired weapons, especially if linked to an idea for an attack? Has the person performed rehearsals of an attack?
- *Information on motives to carry out an attack*. For instance, does the person seek revenge for an injury/ grievance, want attention, want to die, or be killed?
- *Target selection*. Has the person in question identified a potential target or set of targets to attack? In many cases, individuals going down a path of deliberate targeted violence (including those motivated by an ideology) often identify people, places or events they wish to attack and let those around them know about their intentions.

☐ **4. ASSESS INFORMATION & DETERMINE THE LEVEL OF RISK**. How well does the information gathered from Part C answer the "11 Key Questions"? What level of violence risk does the person pose?

☐ **5. MAKE A TEAM RECOMMENDATION**. (NO ONE PERSON SHOULD MAKE THE DECISION ALONE WITHOUT THE INPUT OF THE OTHER TEAM MEMBERS.)
- Implement an intervention plan and reconvene the team when necessary?
- Eject individual from community institution and notify law enforcement?

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90. For instance, see: Neil MacFarquhar, "Iraq's Shadow Widens Sunni-Shiite Split in U.S.," New York Times, February 4, 2007, accessed August 4, 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2007/02/04/us/04muslim.html.

91. Robert A. Fein, Bryan Vossekuil, William S. Pollack, Randy Borum, William Modzeleski, and Marisa Reddy, Threat Assessment in Schools: A Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and to Creating Safe School Climates. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education, July 2004), http://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/threatassessmentguide.pdf, 13.

92. "Threat Assessment: Predicting and Preventing School Violence," National Association of School Psychologists, (2002), http://www.nasponline.org/resources/factsheets/threatassess_fs.aspx.

93. Citing, The Holy Qur'an, Chapter 5, Verse 32. For an overview of various English translates on the passage in question, see: "Verse (5:32) – English Translation," The Quranic Arabic Corpus, Language Research Group (University of Leeds), no date, accessed August 4, 2013, http://corpus.quran.com/translation.jsp?chapter=5&verse=32.

94. John Horgan, "Fully Operational? The Ongoing Challenges of Terrorist Risk Reduction Programs," E-International Relations, July 29, 2013, accessed August 4, 2013, http://www.e-ir.info/2013/07/29/fully-operational-the-ongoing-challenges-of-terrorist-risk-reduction-programs/. Also see: John Horgan and Mary Beth Altier, "The Future of Terrorist De-Radicalization Programs," Georgetown Journal of International Affairs, Summer/Fall 2012: 83-90. Available at: http://www.academia.edu/3882144/The_Future_of_Terrorist_De-Radicalization_Programs.

95. For instance, see: Jason Burke, "Fighting Terrorism: Do 'deradicalisation' Camps Really Work?," The Guardian, June 9, 2013, accessed August 4, 2013, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jun/09/terrorism-do-deradicalisation-camps-work. Quote academic research Peter Neumann, saying, " 'Around 2009 to 2010, this was very fashionable. It really looked like the answer. Now it is looking like a bit of a fad.'"

96. Adam Lankford, "A Comparative Analysis of Suicide Terrorists and Rampage, Workplace, and School Shooters in the United States From 1990 to 2010," Homicide Studies, Vol. 17, (3), August 2013: 255-274. DOI: 10.1177/1088767912462033. Jessica Stern, "The Suicidal Tendencies of Suicide Bombers," Foreign Affairs, August 28, 2013, accessed October 6, 2013, http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/139883/jessica-stern/the-suicidal-tendencies-of-suicide-bombers. Clark McCauley, Sophia Mosalenko, and Benjamin Van Son, "Characteristics of

Lone-Wolf Violent Offenders: a Comparison of Assassins and School Attackers," Perspectives on Terrorism, 7, (1), 2013, http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/240/html. Clark McCauley, "Discussion Point: Is Aaron Alexis Part of a Larger Phenomenon of Lone-Actor Grievance-Based Violence?" National Consortium for Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, September 24, 2013, accessed October 16, 2013, http://www.start.umd.edu/start/announcements/announcement.asp?id=584. Finally, in an interview email for this publication, Dr. Pete Simi, professor of Criminology at the University of Omaha and one of the nation's top experts on Far-Right extremism and gang violence, noted: "In terms of prevention, we have to spend more time thinking about why extremism is attractive to some but not others who are similarly situated - - when we do this we should also ask by way of comparison whether there are fundamental differences between jihadist violence and other types of ideologically-motivated violence such as neo-Nazism and more importantly how is ideologically-motivated violence different from non-ideologically motivated violence (my sense is that there is far less difference than we sometimes think) - - After the Boston bombing Philip Mudd had some interesting comments comparing the Columbine shooters to the Boston bombers - - I think he is definitely on to something there - - so, if this is true then this has tremendous implications in terms of prevention and intervention - - namely, we can rely on best practices of addressing youth violence more broadly as opposed to needing something specifically designed for the ideological component of extremism". See: Simi Interview. Although at the individual level there is a strong body of evidence to suggest that suicide terrorists may have mental illnesses similar to perpetrators of other forms of targeted violence, this does not suggest that political grievances do not play any simultaneous role in motivating individual attackers to carry out acts of violence. Different actors exercising different roles within the same terrorist organization may have different mental tendencies (and therefore different primary motivations for their actions). As one study notes, "Although terrorist leaders commonly claim that all members of their organization would be honored to and eager to blow themselves up for the cause, past research has shown that this appears to be propaganda, not fact…" The same study goes on to note, "…regular terrorists and organizers often admit that they would not intentionally kill themselves, even for the cause. Many reject the possibility, making statements such as 'I am incapable of doing it,' 'I simply am not interested,' 'I cannot see myself dead,' and 'This is no way to die,'". (emphasis added) What this potentially means is that leaders and those exercising different operational roles, such as handlers, may be more primarily motivated by the politics of "the cause", whereas the actual attackers themselves may be motivated by the cause, but also be motivated by underlying psychological issues that drive them to attack their targets by killing themselves rather than trying to escape and "live to fight another day". Meanwhile, McCauley, Mosalenko and Van Son's comparative study notes the co-existence of mental health issues and political grievances as motivating factors in the dataset of attackers they analyzed. See: Adam Lankford, "Mass Shooters in the USA, 1966-2010: Differences Between Attackers Who Live and Die," Justice Quarterly, (2013): 3, 4. McCauley, Mosalenko, and Van Son, "Characteristics of Lone-Wolf Violent Offenders: a Comparison of Assassins and School Attackers".

97.   Also see: Predicting Violent Behavior. (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense – Defense Science Board, August 2012). http://www.acq.osd.mil/dsb/reports/PredictingViolentBehavior.pdf.

98.   For instance, school and university based "threat assessment" intervention teams have prevented at least 120 potential incidents of violence in the past decade see: "The Path to Violence," Public Broadcasting System, February 20, 2013. http://to.pbs.org/1akjx47.

99.   Using Yusuf Ali translation. See: "Verse (5:32) – English Translation," The Quranic Arabic Corpus, Language Research Group (University of Leeds), no date, accessed August 4, 2013, http://corpus.quran.com/translation.jsp?chapter=5&verse=32.

100.   Daniel Michaelson-Horowitz, "9/11 at 10: Inside the Terrorist Trial Report Card," American Criminal Law Review,

September 24, 2011, accessed August 7, 2013, http://www.americancriminallawreview.com/Drupal/blogs/blog-entry/911-10-inside-terrorist-trial-report-card-09-24-2011.

101. This is specifically in reference to individuals who are charged and convicted of violent terrorism and national security-related offenses. Center on Law and Security, "Terrorist Trial Report Card: September 11, 2001-September 11, 2011," New York University School of Law, (September 2011), accessed August 7, 2013, http://www.lawandsecurity.org/Portals/0/Documents/TTRC%20Ten%20Year%20Issue.pdf, 8.

102. Maxine Bernstein, "Man Accused of Hate Crime in Corvallis Mosque Arson," The Oregonian, August 25, 2011, August 7, 2013, http://www.oregonlive.com/pacific-northwest-news/index.ssf/2011/08/man_accused_of_hate_crime_in_corvallis_mosque_arson.html.

103. For instance, see: Hansdeep Singh and Simran Jeet Singh, "The Rise of Hate Crimes Can Be Tied Directly to Hateful Speech," The Daily Beast, September 6, 2012, accessed August 7, 2013, http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2012/09/06/the-rise-of-hate-crimes-can-be-tied-directly-to-hateful-speech.html.

104. Victor Asal, Kathleen Deloughery, and R. Karl Rethemeyer, "Analysis of Factors Related to Hate Crime and Terrorism," National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, (December 2012), www.start.umd.edu/start/publications/START_AnalysisofFactorsR-elatedtoHateCrimeandTerrorism.pdf

105. Anonymous Imam #1.

106. Ibid.

107. Ibid.

108. Fazaga interview.

109. Mark Herman, "The Liability of Clergy for the Acts of Their Congregants," Georgetown Law Journal, 98, (1), 2009: 153-184.

110. Ibid. On the other hand, Imam Fazaga went so far as to declare that, "even if there is suspicion of violence, you must report it to the authorities." (emphasis added) Fazaga Interview.

111. Telephone interview, Dr. Yasir Qadhi, Dean of Academic Affairs for the Al-Maghrib Institute, July 19, 2013.

112. Eileen Sullivan, "FBI to Senators: Terror Case Wasn't Damaged," The Seattle Times, September 30, 2009, http://seattletimes.com/html/politics/2009974946_apusnycterrorcongress.html, noting, "government court documents also suggest that the NYPD and FBI might have tipped off Zazi even before the imam's call by towing and searching a rental car Zazi was using on his September trip to New York City." (emphasis added) For the text of the government document mentioned, see the next endnote.

113. Garrett Gumbinner, "Criminal Complaint United States v. Najibullah Zazi." United States Department of Justice, (September 19, 2009). Available at: http://www.9news.com/pdfs/N.Zazi.pdf, P. 5, noting, "The defendant ZAZI told Individual A [Imam Afzali] that his rental car had been stolen and that he feared he was being 'watched.'"

114. Sean Gardiner, "Police Let Terrorist Slip Through," The Wall Street Journal, April 26, 2010, accessed August 4, 2013, http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703441404575205954118455716.html

115. Christopher Dickey, "Ray Kelly's NYPD Battles with the FBI," The Daily Beast, June 11, 2012, http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2012/06/10/ray-kelly-s-nypd-battles-with-the-fbi.html.

116. Ibid.

117. For instance, see: Tony Aiello, "Subway Terror Trial: Zazi Testifies Against Alleged Associate, Breaks Down on Stand," CBSNewYork, April 19, 2012, accessed September 24, 2013, http://newyork.cbslocal.com/2012/04/19/subway-terror-trial-zazi-testifies-against-alleged-associate-breaks-down-on-stand/; John Miller, "Najibullah Zazi, Confessed

Ring-Leader In NYC Subway Terror Plot, Testifies," CBSNewYork, April 17, 2012, accessed September 24, 2013, http://newyork.cbslocal.com/2012/04/17/accused-ring-leader-in-nyc-subway-terror-plot-expected-to-testify/; Sean Hennessey, "Prosecutors: NYC Subway Terror Suspect Considered Times Square, Grand Central, Other Targets," CBSNewYork, April 16, 2012, accessed September 24, 2013, http://newyork.cbslocal.com/2012/04/16/federal-trial-begins-for-alleged-nyc-terror-suspect-adis-medunjanin/; The Associated Press, "Admitted Subway Plotter Testifies at City Terror Trial," WNYC, April 17, 2012, accessed September 24, 2013, http://www.wnyc.org/story/199866-blog-admitted-subway-plotter-testifies-nyc-trial/; Carrie Johnson and Spencer Hsu, "Najibullah Zazi Pleads Guilty in New York Subway Bomb Plot," Washington Post, February 23, 2010, accessed September 24, 2013, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/02/22/AR2010022201916.html; A.G. Sulzberger, "Guilty Plea Made in Plot to Bomb New York Subway," New York Times, February 22, 2010, accessed September 24, 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/23/nyregion/23terror.html?_r=0; Julian Cummings, "Najibullah Zazi Pleads Guilty in New York Terrorism Plot," CNN, February 23, 2010, accessed September 24, 2013, http://www.cnn.com/2010/CRIME/02/22/najibullah.zazi.plea/index.html;

118. Email Communication, FBI Counterterrorism Special Supervisory Agent, November 5, 2013. Name withheld at request. Interviewee also noted that was not involved in the Zazi investigation and that his remarks are solely his personal views and do not represent the official position of the Federal Bureau of Investigation or the United States government at-large.

119. We refer to this as a crisis inquiry team, as opposed to a "threat assessment team" because the latter term, in our view, a view also shared by William Modzeleski, a nationally-recognized threat assessment expert, "has the potential of turning a lot of people off." Telephone Interview, William Modzeleski, former Associate Assistant Deputy Secretary at the U.S. Department of Education and Senior Consultant for SIGMA Threat Management Associates, October 7, 2013.

120. With modifications made, based on contextual relevance. See: Shane R. Jimerson, Stephen E. Brock, Jennifer L. Greif, and Katherine C. Cowan, "Threat Assessment at School: A Primer for Educators," National Association of School Psychologists, (2004), http://www.nasponline.org/resources/crisis_safety/threatassess.pdf, P. S9-50.

121. Modzeleski interview.

122. Ibid.

123. Ibid.

124. FBI Counterterrorism Agent email communication.

125. Ibid.

126. Thanks to an anonymous former FBI intelligence analyst for pointing this out to the author.

127. Ibid.

128. Telephone Interview, Dr. Gary Margolis, former Chief of Police at the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College and Managing Partner and Co-Founder of Margolis Healy & Associates, LLC, October 1, 2013.

129. For instance, see: Jeffrey J. Nolan, Marisa R. Randazzo, Gene Deisinger, "Campus Threat Assessment and Management Teams: What Risk Managers Need to Know Now," University Risk Management and Insurance Association Journal, 2011, accessed October 15, 2013, http://www.margolishealy.com/files/resources/Campus_Threat_Assessment_and_Management_Teams_What_Risk_Managers_Need_to_Know_B0752105.pdf, 111.

130. Ibid., 9.

131. Ibid., 7, 9.

132. Ibid., 7.

133. Mary Ellen O'Toole, "The School Shooter: A Threat Assessment Perspective," Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1999, accessed October 2, 2013, http://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/publications/school-shooter, 8-9.

134. With some modifications, taken from: Robert A. Fein, Bryan Vossekuil, William S. Pollack, Randy Borum, William Modzeleski, and Marisa Reddy, Threat Assessment in Schools: A Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and to Creating Safe School Climates. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education, July 2004), http://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/threatassessmentguide.pdf, 48-51.

135. For instance, see: Paul Gill, John Horgan and Paige Deckert, "Tracing the Motivations and Antecedent Behaviors of Lone-Actor Terrorism," International Center for the Study of Terrorism, 2013, accessed September 29, 2013, http://www.icst.psu.edu/docs/3.ExecSum/ICST.LoneActor.ExecSumm.pdf.

136. Fein, Vossekuil, Pollack, Borum, Modzeleski, and Reddy, Threat Assessments in Schools, 51-55.

137. Unless directly noted elsewhere, information on the 11 Key Questions is taken from: Ibid., 68.

138. Given the diverse age differences among American Muslim violent extremists at the time of their arrests, ranging from teenagers (such as Osman Mohamed Mohamud, 17) to adults (Faisal Shehzad, 31), we modified this to simply someone who is a respected and responsible figure, as opposed to the original language "a responsible adult", which would wrongly suggest that the issue is primarily a youth-based one.

139. Braniff interview.

140. Fein, Vossekuil, Pollack, Borum, Modzeleski, and Reddy, Threat Assessments in Schools, 57.

141. Fein, Vossekuil, Pollack, Borum, Modzeleski, and Reddy, Threat Assessments in Schools, 58.

142. Ibid., 58.

143. Modzeleski interview.

144. Fein, Vossekuil, Pollack, Borum, Modzeleski, and Reddy, 57.

145. Osman M. Ali and Glen Milstein, "Mental Illness Recognition and Referral Practices Among Imams in the United States," Journal of Muslim Mental Health, 6, (2), 2012, http://quod.lib.umich.edu/j/jmmh/10381607.000-6.202?rgn=main;view=fulltext.

146. "Psychology Professor Develops New Model for Collaboration Between Clergy and Clinicians," Science Daily, June 2, 2008, accessed October 16, 2013, http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/06/080602114653.htm.

147. Horgan, "Fully Operational?"

148. We believe U.S. domestic violent Far-Right actors are a valid comparison group with U.S. domestic takfiri actors for three reasons. First, they share some broad operational and strategic similarities in terms of carrying out acts of violence, including: 1) a willingness to inflict civilian mass-casualties, 2) occasional attempts at suicide terrorist attacks, and their 3) adoption of cellular and/or lone-actor tactics and strategies. Second, the research literature on disengagement and "de-radicalization" does not suggest there are differences that demonstrate "effectiveness" (what little can be currently ascertained) corresponds to what ideology or ideological group a person identifies with and espouses. Rather "successful" disengagement appears to be strongly influenced by a set of psycho-social factors that differ based on the specific individual in question, irrespective of his/her ideology. On the attack and operational characteristics of U.S. domestic Far-Right violent extremists, see: Arie Perliger, "Identifying Three Trends in Far Right Violence in the United States." CTC Sentinel, September 26, 2012. http://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/identifying-three-trends-in-far-right-violence-in-the-united-states; Julie Bird, "Far-Right Extremists Build to More Violent Acts, Research Finds." Fierce Homeland Security, January 22, 2013. http://www.fiercehomelandsecurity.com/

story/far-right-extremists-build-more-violent-acts-research-finds/2013-01-22. "Background Report: On the Fifteenth Anniversary of the Oklahoma City Bombing." National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, April 16, 2010. http://www.start.umd.edu/start/announcements/2010April_OklahomaCityAnniversary.pdf. On the parallels between "Leaderless Resistance" and the lone-actor strategies currently advocated and employed by Al-Qaeda and its affiliates, see: Alejandro J. Beutel, "Radicalization and Homegrown Terrorism in Western Muslim Communities: Lessons Learned for America." Minaret of Freedom Institute, August 30, 2007. http://www.minaret.org/MPAC%20Backgrounder.pdf; Michael German, Thinking Like a Terrorist: Insights from a Former FBI Undercover Agent. (Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, 2007). P. 69; Marc Sageman, Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty-First Century. (Philadelphia, P.A.: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), P. 143-44. Also see: Louis Beam, "Leaderless Resistance." The Seditionist, February 1992. http://louisbeam.com/leaderless.htm. For a concise overview of the research literature of disengagement and "de-radicalization" successes, see: "Tackling Extremism: De-Radicalization and Disengagement." Institute for Strategic Dialogue, 2012. www.strategicdialogue.org/allnewmats/DeRadPaper2012.pdf.

149. Anonymous Imam #1, Qadhi Interview, Fazaga Interview.

150. Telephone Interview, Bryon Widner, former Neo-Nazi Skinhead and senior member of Hammerskins Nation, September 5, 2013.

151. Simi e-mail communication.

152. Qadhi interview. For instance, in reaction to anti-violence articles and lectures produced by Qadhi and other American Muslim scholars, particularly from the Salafi movement, there has been a lot of discussion generated on English-language forums that are frequently visited and commented on by takfiri sympathizes. See: Yasir Qadhi, "The Lure of Radicalism and Extremism Amongst Muslim Youth." Muslim Matters, October 18, 2010, accessed December 6, 2013, http://muslimmatters.org/2010/10/18/yasir-qadhi-the-lure-of-radicalism-amongst-muslim-youth/. Cf., "YQ [Yasir Qadhi] says: Jihadis have qualities of Khajirities." Islamic Awakening, March 18, 2011, accessed December 6, 2013, http://forums.islamicawakening.com/f18/yq-says-jihadis-have-qualities-of-kharijites-43729/; "Yasir Qadhi and Muslim Matters." Ummah.com, October 25, 2010, accessed December 6, 2013, http://www.ummah.com/forum/archive/index.php/t-276260.html; "The Batil Path of MuslimMatters." Islamic Awakening, October 10, 2011, accessed December 6, 2013, http://forums.islamicawakening.com/f18/the-batil-path-of-muslimmatters-51945/.

153. For instance, see: Jack Barclay, "Strategy to Reach, Empower, and Educate Teenagers (STREET): A Case Study in Government-Community Partnership and Direct Intervention to Counter Violent Extremism." Center on Global Counterterrorism Cooperation, December 2011, accessed August 13, 2013, http://www.globalct.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/barclay_policybrief_1114.pdf.

154. Also see: Institute for Strategic Dialogue, "Tackling Extremism: De-Radicalisation and Disengagement," Danish Ministry of Social Affairs and Integration, May 8-9, 2012, accessed August 13, 2013, http://english.sm.dk/international/eu-presidency-2012/conference-extremism/Documents/Conference-report-Tackling-Extremism.pdf, 3.

155. Anonymous Imam #1.

156. Telephone Interview, Daryle Lamont Jenkins, co-founder and Executive Director of One People's Project, August 31, 2013.

157. Telephone Interview, Jonathan Birdwell, Head of the Citizens Programme at Demos UK and co-author of The Edge of Violence, May 16, 2013.

158. Anonymous Imam #1.

159. Daryle Lamont Jenkins Interview.

160. Interview with community counter-extremism practitioner #1.

161. Ibid.

162. Ibid.

163. Anonymous Imam #1.

164. For instance, see: John Horgan, Walking Away from Terrorism: Accounts of Disengagement from Radical and Extremist Movements. (New York, NY: 2009), P. 1-19, 139-162. Horgan and Altier, "The Future of Terrorist De-Radicalization Programs"

165. Randy Borum, "Assessing Violence Risk in Tarasoff Situations: A Fact-Based Model of Inquiry," Behavioral Sciences and the Law, 19, 3, (2001): 383.

166. For instance, see: Mike German, "Behind the Lone Terrorist, a Pack Mentality," Washington Post, June 5, 2005, accessed August 13, 2013, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/06/04/AR2005060400147.html. For an overview of the academic research literature, see: Jason-Leigh Striegher, "Early Detection of the Lone Wolf: Advancement of Counter-Terrorism Investigations with an Absence or Abundance of Information and Intelligence," Journal of Policing, Intelligence, and Counter Terrorism, 8, (1), 2013: 45-47.

167. Jawad Kaleem, "Boston Bomber Suspects Had Attended Cambridge Mosque, Officials Say (Update)," Huffington Post, April 20, 2013, accessed August 13, 2013, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/04/20/boston-bombers-mosque-cambridge_n_3125192.html. Citing, Islamic Society of Boston, "Boston Mosque Details Transparent Interactions with Suspect," MSNBC.com, April 22, 2013, accessed August 13, 2013, http://msnbcmedia.msn.com/i/msnbc/sections/news/Islamic_Society_Statement.pdf.

168. Beth Daley and Martin Finucane, "Bombing Suspect Disrupted Cambridge Mosque," Boston Globe, April 21, 2013, accessed August 13, 2013, http://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2013/04/21/marathon-bombing-suspect-outbursts-had-disturbed-cambridge-mosque-goers/LkZnWkXgaRZcMDUdE6V9jM/story.html.

169. Community counter-extremism practitioner #1.

170. David G. Savage, "Supreme Court Upholds Law Against Advising Against Terrorists," Los Angeles Times, June 22, 2010, accessed August 4, 2013, http://articles.latimes.com/2010/jun/22/nation/la-na-court-terror-20100622.

171. For an overview of the legal responsibilities, see: Steven Granich, "Duty to Warn, Duty to Protect," The New Social Worker, 19, (1), http://www.socialworker.com/home/Feature_Articles/Ethics/Duty_to_Warn,_Duty_to_Protect/. For an overview of the state-by-state differences of the legal obligations to warn third parties about potential threats to safety from mental patients, see: "Mental Health Professionals' Duty to Warn/Protect," National Conference of State Legislators, January 2013, http://www.ncsl.org/issues-research/health/mental-health-professionals-duty-to-warn.aspx.

172. Interview with Muslim community counter-extremism practitioner #2. For the similarities found in the content of messages for and against violent extremism, broadly see: Sheryl Prentice, Paul J. Taylor, Paul Rayson, and Ellen Giebels, "Differentiating Act from Ideology: Evidence from Messages For and Against Violent Extremism." Negotiation and Conflict Management Research, 5, (3), August 2012: 289-306. Also available online at: http://eprints.lancs.ac.uk/58133/1/NCMR_Prentice_et_al..pdf.

173. Muslim ex-extremist #2 interview.

174. Bartlett, Birdwell, and King, The Edge of Violence, P. 101.

175. Karen Anderson, "Ashland Terror Suspect Had Been Kicked Out of Boston Mosque Over Views," CBS Boston, September 30, 2011, accessed June 28, 2013, http://boston.cbslocal.com/2011/09/30/ashland-terror-suspect-had-been-

kicked-out-of-boston-mosque-over-views/.

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177. Daley and Finucane, "Bombing Suspect Disrupted"

178. Sally Jacobs, David Filipov, and Patricia Wen, "The Fall of the House of Tsarnaev." Boston Globe, December 16, 2013, accessed December 16, 2013, http://www.bostonglobe.com/Page/Boston/2011-2020/WebGraphics/Metro/BostonGlobe.com/2013/12/15tsarnaev/tsarnaev.html

179. Kaleem, "Boston Bomber Suspects Had Attended", citing, Islamic Society of Boston, "Boston Mosque Details".

180. Ibid.

181. For instance, an official statement from the Islamic Society of Boston, where Tamerlan Tsarnaev had occasionally attended, noted that, "After the sermon and the congregational prayer ended, a few volunteer leaders of the mosque sat down with the older suspect and gave him a clear choice: either he stops interrupting sermons and remains silent or he would not be welcomed." (emphasis added). The wording of this statement implies that leaders were already aware of his prior behavior. See: Kaleem, "Boston Bomber Suspects Had Attended", citing, Islamic Society of Boston, "Boston Mosque Details". Also see: Daley and Finucane, "Bombing Suspect Disrupted".

182. Kaleem, "Boston Bomber Suspects Had Attended", citing, Islamic Society of Boston, "Boston Mosque Details".

183. Daley and Finucane, "Bombing Suspect Disrupted"

184. For instance, see: J.M. Berger, "Myths of Radicalization," IntelWire, May 8, 2013, accessed September 23, 2013, http://news.intelwire.com/2013/05/myths-of-radicalization.html.

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189. First Coast News, "Video: Fla. Muslims Credited with Tip on Plot Suspect (CAIR)," CAIRtv (YouTube channel), YouTube, January 11, 2012, accessed June 28, 2013, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hczMxIg8gn8.

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