

Government Agency-Focused Best Practices to Prevent Violent Extremism

OVERVIEW

These findings come from the Report on the National Summit on Empowering Communities to Prevent Violent Extremism. In August 2014, the Department of Justice's (DOJ) Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) and the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (FLETC) partnered with START to coordinate a National Summit on Empowering Communities to Prevent Violent Extremism. The recommendations included in the full report reflect the major themes that emerged, focusing on those that the participants appeared to support through debate and dialogue across the two-day event.

FINDINGS

While Summit participants widely supported making government services available to underserved communities, one delegation stressed that the goal should be to foster empowerment, and cautioned that it is important to avoid contributing to a victim-focused identity in communities.

Summit participants discussed the potential or perceived limitations of the mental health and educational communities in sharing health-related and education-related information with the law-enforcement community. The Summit illuminated the need for increased understanding on the part of law enforcement, educational, and other practitioners regarding when it is permissible or mandatory to divulge information. The Summit practitioners support increased training and awareness of these laws, specifically the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

“The community member will bring the government representative out and have that representative confirm that there’s no recording going on, that this is a safe space where people can feel comfortable saying what they’re saying. We’ll make them say this in front of everyone to give a sense of confidence to attendees that you can be honest here. There are no negative repercussions.”

Canadian Delegation

Four major recommendations from summit participants regarding government-focused practices are listed below:

1. Government agencies should aim to increase the civic engagement among marginalized communities and to build the capacity of community-based organizations.
2. Government agencies' approaches to CVE should be based on sustained, collaborative partnerships with communities.
3. Government agencies should better leverage the contributions that other sectors, such as mental health and education, can make to CVE.
4. Government agencies' CVE programs and policies should be based upon both best practices and scientific evidence.

RESEARCHERS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

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For a copy of the full report on this topic, please see the COPS website at <http://ric-zai-inc.com/Publications/cops-p326-pub.pdf>.



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