

Chart: CVE Lexicon

The language used to describe CVE initiatives is often muddled and deceptive. Federal and state agencies use terms inconsistently and local actors often create their own. CVE programs also change their names regularly, often in the face of community opposition or other public criticism, which thwarts accountability and obscures the nature and purpose of the re-named programs. This Lexicon aims to provide the reader with a clearer understanding of terms used in discussions of CVE. The definitions were derived from a variety of open source materials and unclassified information, including DHS’ CVE Lexicon, and documents obtained by the Center via the Freedom of Information Act.

Term	Definition
Boston, MA CVE Pilot Program	This program, run by the Massachusetts Office of U.S. Attorneys, was designed to include two components: training various community members to support individuals “vulnerable to violent extremism,” and a grant program to distribute CVE funds to “non-profits, for-profits, and/or education systems.” The program has since been renamed the Promoting Engagement, Acceptance and Community Empowerment Project. It has largely moved away from its original reporting framework, based on discredited signs of pre-terrorism, to one that requests proposals for information and referrals “for spouses, parents, guardians or caretakers. However, it is clear that the focus of Boston, MA CVE is still American Muslims.
Building Capacity	A category of the DHS CVE Grant Program “focused on building the capacity of third-party community-level non-profit organizations that have a mission of or conduct activities that significantly contribute to countering violent extremism.” Efforts to build capacity include: technical assistance, research, data-analytics, or marketing in support of the organization’s mission. Eligible applicants for this category are non-profit organizations and institutions of higher education.
Building Communities of Trust (BCT)	BCT is an initiative that focuses on developing relationships of trust between law enforcement intelligence fusion centers and the communities they serve – primarily immigrant and minority communities – to prevent terrorist related crime. BCT is employed through periodic meetings with selected community groups.
Building Community Resilience (BCR)	BCR is the Minnesota Office of U.S. Attorneys’ rebranded CVE effort, in response to community criticism of CVE programming. According to the published framework, citing public safety initiatives such as the DOJ’s Gang Reduction Model , BCR claims to address “community-identified” root causes of extremism such as internal identity crises, community isolation, and lack of opportunity.
Community Resilience Coordinators (CRCs)	Individuals in ten U.S. Attorneys’ offices who are currently participating, or will participate, in the CVE initiative in order to enhance federal engagement and support of local communities, according to the Justice Department .

Term	Definition
Community Training and Awareness Briefings (CTABs)	CTABs comprise CVE trainings for civilians led by the Dearborn, Michigan Police Department. CTABs contain lessons on “observational techniques” to “reduce vulnerability to possible terrorist incidents,” law enforcement and mental health training to spot troubling behavior, and active shooter training. CTABs closely resemble the federal government’s Community Awareness Briefing .
Community Awareness Briefings (CABs)	CABs are unclassified presentations on radicalization and violent extremist recruitment designed to build community awareness and understanding of violent extremism. CABs have been led by DHS, and various U.S. Attorneys Offices.
Community Awareness Exercise (CREX)	CREX is a half-day table-top exercise designed to improve law enforcement and community communication and share community resilience best practices. DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties and The National Counterterrorism Center Directorate of Strategic Operational Planning Domestic CVE team have worked with local partners to implement this exercise in cities across the United States.
Congregational Forums	These educational programs, led by Arlington, Texas Police Department officers, are intended to educate community members on various aspects of crime prevention. They are hosted in local Muslim organizations, including mosques that have agreed to participate.
The Connected Youth-Resilient Communities (CY-RC) Initiative	A CVE program through the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice at the University of San Diego intended to build the capacity of Community Based Organizations to engage Somali and Iraqi youth in San Diego and El Cajon’s refugee communities.
Citizen’s Academy	A program implemented by Denver Police Department and the Denver Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs (DOIRA), which seeks to build resilience to ISIS and other violent extremist groups by helping to assimilate refugees into Denver city life, educating parents on recruitment strategies used by extremists on teenagers, and building relationships with government agencies.
Citizen’s Academy (FBI)	The FBI-led Citizen’s Academy are six-to-eight-week classes designed to foster relationships between business, religious, civic, and community leaders and the Bureau. Classes meet in the evening at FBI field offices around the country and include CVE programming .
CVE Pilot Programs	Initiatives launched in 2014 by the Department of Justice in Boston, Los Angeles, and Minneapolis.
Don’t Be a Puppet	A CVE website built by the FBI that uses a series of interactive materials to educate schoolchildren to spot signs of violent extremism among their peers. The website identifies suspicious behavior so broadly that it invites stereotypes to influence what views and behavior get reported. For example, “ using private messaging apps ” or playing “ violent video games ” are potential signs of trouble, as are “ stress[] by problems at home, grades, peer pressure, bullying and ... frustration .”
The Disrupters	A series of hackathons that utilizes “Muslim American creative talent” to disrupt and counter violent extremist narratives, funded by a grant through America Abroad Media’s CVE program.
E Pluribus Unum (EPU)	A CVE program through the Alameda County Sheriff’s Office in Oakland, CA, which provides mental health and support services to “justice-involved individuals at risk for radicalization.”
Extremism	An ideology, belief, or attitude that the government considers to be far outside the acceptable attitudes of the status quo, and a precursor to terrorist violence.

Term	Definition
ExOut	Rochester Institute of Technology’s “ExOut Extremism” is a counternarrative based-CVE program. The initiative includes “ExOut Social Media & Online campaign,” “ExOut through Education program,” and “ExOut through Expression” art exhibit.
Faith-Based Partnerships	Federal, state, local, or tribal outreach to faith-based organizations such as churches, mosques, etc. with the intention of providing training designed to achieve social cohesion and build mutual respect, transparency, and trust to enrich the U.S. fight against terror and extremism.
FBI School CVE Guidance	An FBI document that counsels schools to review “concerning behaviors” among students to assess “the likelihood an individual is progressing on a trajectory to radicalization and/or future violent action in furtherance of an extremist cause.” The FBI School CVE Guidance does not single out any particular group or ideology as being at risk of violent extremism and disavows the use of terrorist profiles. But it urges schools to keep watch on and report on students’ political views, for example by identifying those who are “curious about the subject matter” of extremism.
Fusion Centers	These are regional or statewide hubs where federal, state, and local law enforcement and emergency response agencies come together to collect and share intelligence about national security, criminal, and some all-hazard threats, such as natural disasters.
Global Engagement Center	An interagency entity , housed at the State Department, which is charged with coordinating, integrating, and synchronizing counterterrorism messaging for foreign audiences. The center promotes communications from the U.S. government and works to amplify credible voices of moderation across the globe and throughout civil society.
Great Parenting Workshops	Workshops held in conjunction with the Metro-Nashville, Tennessee Police Department that focus on “family and parenting skills training” and “violence prevention to teach disengagement from violent extremist behaviors.”
Homegrown Violent Extremist (HVE)	According to the FBI, DHS, and National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) , an HVE is a person of any citizenship who has lived and/or operated primarily in the United States or its territories (typically Muslim) and who advocates, is engaged in, or is preparing to engage in ideologically-motivated terrorist activities (including providing support to terrorism), independently of direction from a foreign terrorist organization but in furtherance of political or social objectives promoted by such organizations. HVEs are distinct from traditional domestic terrorists, who engage in unlawful acts of violence to intimidate civilian populations or attempt to influence domestic policy without direction from or influence from a foreign actor.
Houston, TX CVE Training and Engagement Initiative	A CVE program through the Houston, Texas Mayor’s Office of Public Safety & Homeland Security, focused on “reducing the vulnerability of youth to extremist ideologies,” through various scenario-based workshops for parents and youth.
Houston, TX CVE Steering Committee	This committee, composed of governmental, interfaith, non-profit, law enforcement, academic, and other community partners, coordinates the Houston, Texas CVE Training and Engagement Initiative.

Term	Definition
Illinois Criminal Justice Authority's Targeted Violence Prevention Program (ICJIA-TVPP)	ICJIA-TVPP coordinates the “Engaged Bystander-Gatekeeper Training” CVE program, which train communities and mental health providers to identify and off-ramp individuals who “exhibit warning signs of radicalization” in the state of Illinois.
Integration Sessions	A component of Seattle, WA Police Department’s grant proposal which coaches CVE exercises within cultural competency and other law enforcement and civilian training efforts.
Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTFs)	These are teams of counterterrorism investigators, led by the FBI and augmented with other federal, state and local law enforcement officers and intelligence analysts.
Los Angeles, CA CVE Pilot Program	In 2013, the Los Angeles Sheriff’s Department partnered with the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), DHS, the U.S. Attorney’s Office, and the FBI, among others, to strengthen CVE efforts culminating the Los Angeles CVE Framework. The framework relies heavily on pre-existing programs, most of which involve Muslim communities. One of these programs, an LAPD-led CVE intervention program, called “Recognizing Extremist Network Early Warnings” (RENEW), was designed to provide individuals “already deemed to be on a path towards violent extremism,” with off-ramps to social, mental health, faith-based, and other services. The criteria for referrals is not specified, but criteria previously identified by the LAPD includes political speech, psychological disorders, patterns of behavior, and other vague indicators.
Montgomery County, MD CVE Program	In 2014, the Justice Department gave approximately \$500,000 to the World Organization for Resource Development and Education (WORDE) to run this program. The WORDE model attempts to identify individuals “at risk” for becoming terrorists. A 2014 WORDE instructor's manual includes a number of broadly described and scientifically unsupported ”risk factors” to predict terrorism, such as the presence of “prevalent poverty” and “high unemployment rates.” The Montgomery County PD is involved in many aspects of this program, including coordination of referrals and interventions.
Montgomery County BRAVE Model	Montgomery County government officials describe this program (formerly known as the Montgomery County Model) as a community-led public safety model, though it is funded through Department of Justice grants . Its core focus is on generating public awareness about the risk factors of violent extremism, and claims to have developed a method for identifying individuals vulnerable to violent extremism. An informal group of unidentified individuals operating in secret is then charged with evaluating whether these “at risk” individuals pose a risk and should be formally reported to the police, or can be treated through other non-law enforcement interventions. Through this model, the Montgomery County Police (and potentially the FBI) appear to have access to information about individuals who are identified as at risk.
Minneapolis-St. Paul CVE	This 2014 federal CVE effort, announced jointly with initiatives in Boston and Los Angeles, is focused mainly on Minnesota and St. Paul’s Somali-American community, the largest in the nation. The program has been renamed “Building Community Resilience,” and primarily targets young Somali-Muslims. The framework originally anticipated an intervention component, but it is unclear whether such a program has been established. But as early as 2014, the Minneapolis public school system announced plans to place youth workers in non-classroom settings to “identify issues and disaffection at school.”

Term	Definition
Muslim World Today	The Counter Extremism Project, a nonprofit, requested CVE grant funding to provide technical assistance to the Council for Democracy and Tolerance (CDT) on their initiative, the <i>Muslim World Today</i> program. The project establishes a “positive narrative-based” website, MuslimWorldToday.org , aimed at fostering “tolerance and pluralism within Muslim American communities.”
Nationwide Suspicious Activity Reporting (SAR) Initiative (NSI)	A collaborative effort by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI), DHS, FBI, and state, local, tribal, and territorial law enforcement fusion centers for gathering, documenting, processing, analyzing, and sharing “suspicious” activities reported by the public under ubiquitous “see something, say something” programs. The behaviors described as inherently suspicious in SAR program materials include such innocuous activities as photography, acquisition of expertise, and eliciting information. The ODNI and FBI each employ databases to warehouse SARs and make them available to participating agencies.
New Freedoms Project	A CVE program through the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security in Boston, which targets 139 men post-release from maximum security prison, who are “at high risk for violent extremism.”
Proactive Engagement to Achieve Community Empowerment (PEACE)	A CVE program through Nashville Center for Empowerment intended to increase community resistance to extremism and protect marginalized “New American” youth “at-risk for radicalization and violent extremism.” The program includes youth engagement and mentoring activities, as well as intervention elements, such as a referral services.
Project COMMON BOND	An international peace-building initiative led by Tuesday’s Children, which targets teenagers and young adults from 25 countries who have been directly impacted by acts of violent extremism. Tuesday’s Children intends to broaden the reach and impact of this initiative through CVE grant funding.
Project Connect	A CVE program run by the Arlington Police Department in Texas. The initiative intends to strengthen the relationship between Arlington Police Department and the Muslim community through workshops and outreach events.
Promoting Engagement, Acceptance and Community Empowerment (PEACE)	The Massachusetts U.S. Attorneys Office renamed CVE effort .
Recognizing Extremist Network Early Warnings (RENEW)	A CVE pilot program run jointly with the FBI, the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Office, the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, as well as the Joint Regional Intelligence Center.
RED Stop	A program originally implemented by the London Metropolitan Police that allows any individual to “easily and anonymously” report extremist internet content to law enforcement. Hennepin County, Minneapolis Sheriff’s Office (HCSO) has proposed a similar reporting infrastructure in their DHS CVE grant.

Term	Definition
Risk Factors	Characteristics CVE proponents use to identify individuals who they believe might engage in a terrorist act, support a terrorist organization, or adopt an extremist ideology at some point in the future. These predictive characteristics suffer from the same deficiencies as now-discredited “indicators” of pre-terrorism. There are no studies to date that have demonstrated a causal link between any one risk factor or combination of factors, and an individual becoming a terrorist. Therefore, the use of the term ‘risk factor’ in CVE materials is colloquial and not based on any reliable scientific research. Several of the risk factors CVE programs identify relate to political views and religious practices, raising concerns that people will be identified as ‘at risk’ on the basis of First Amendment-protected activities. Others are so broad and vaguely defined that they could apply to anyone the CVE practitioner might be suspicious of due to bias, personal enmity, or another improper basis.
Shared Responsibility Committee	An FBI CVE program that recruits select community members to evaluate individuals secretly if the FBI believes they are on a path toward violent extremism, and if no criminal activity is detected, recommend community-based treatment or counseling options. SRC members could include teachers, psychologists, social workers, or other parties that have no particular terrorism expertise. The FBI describes SRCs as “multi-disciplinary groups voluntarily formed in local communities,” but the FBI selects committee members, trains them, and requires them to sign a contract. According to a leaked draft of an SRC agreement, SRC members must promise not to divulge SRC activities to any outside party, but are required to report certain information to the FBI. The SRC program lacks due process protections for identified individuals, and risks undermining important privacy laws, are ethical and professional confidentiality obligations.
State Approaches to Violent Extremism (S.A.V.E) Policy Academy	DHS funds the National Governors Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices, S.A.V.E Policy Academy. S.A.V.E. supports officials from five states in implementing an executive-led, statewide roadmap for CVE.
Southern Nevada Community Resiliency and Intervention Coalition (SNRIC)	The Las Vegas PD’s CVE program is centered around the Southern Nevada Community Resiliency and Intervention Coalition (SNRIC), which will develop and implement intervention strategies for individuals “at risk of radicalization to violence.”
TeenTalk Program	TeenTalk is an anonymous CVE hotline and texting counseling service for “individuals struggling with thoughts of violent extremism.” It is a main component of Crisis Intervention of Houston’s CVE program.
Violent Extremism	The FBI defines violent extremism as encouraging, condoning, justifying, or supporting the commission of a violent act to achieve political, ideological, religious, social, or economic goals. The FBI lists white supremacy extremists, environmental extremists, militia extremists, religious extremists, anarchist extremists, as examples of “distorted beliefs” that some violent extremists use to justify violence and hateful attacks.

Term	Definition
Vulnerable Communities or Individuals (also called “at-risk”)	CVE proponents allege certain communities or individuals are “vulnerable” violent extremism or are “at risk” of being recruited by violent extremist organizations. These terms are only broadly defined as the notion that violence is justified in the furtherance of certain religious, social, and political ends. Recent government documents allege that Muslim Americans, particularly youth, who may be “alienated,” “withdrawn,” or feel “unjustly treated” are at risk of becoming terrorists.
World Organization for Resource Development and Education (WORDE)	A nonprofit, educational organization whose mission is to enhance communication and understanding between communities to mitigate social and political conflict derived from radical ideologies. WORDE operates the federally-funded Montgomery County (Maryland) CVE program, which it describes as an “early warning system” for “generating public awareness about the risk factors of violent extremism” and “empower[ing]... appropriate figures to intervene with vulnerable individuals before...violence.”
Youth and Policy Initiative Plus (YPIP)	A CVE program led by the Police Foundation that targets Somali youth and families. YPIP includes trainings for Somali youth and Boston Police Department officers, a youth mentoring program, and parent engagement sessions aimed at improving parent-police relations.