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Barriers to Family Suspicious Activity Reporting (SAR) of Mobilization Behaviors and Pre-Operational Planning: Report to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security

National Counterterrorism Innovation, Technology, and Education

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BARRIERS TO FAMILY SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY REPORTING (SAR) OF MOBILIZATION BEHAVIORS AND PRE-OPERATIONAL PLANNING

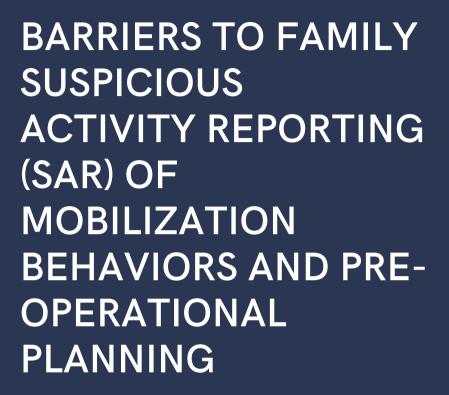*Report to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security*

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NCITE
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A U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

ABOUT THIS REPORT

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This report is part of the National Counterterrorism, Innovation, Technology, and Education Center (NCITE) project, led by Gina Scott Ligon, NCITE Program Director.

ABOUT NCITE

This new Department of Homeland Security Center of Excellence is an academic hub based at the Universiy of Nebraska Omaha focused on bolstering counterterrorism efforts and terrorism and targeted violence prevention. We are 50-plus academics at 18 universities in the U.S. and U.K. working on 16 research projects. The projects will result in innovation, technology, and education for today's counterterrorism workforce and inspire the workforce of the future.

INTRODUCTION AND METHODS

As part of a NCITE funded project, the "Building Family Resilience as a Form of Terrorism Prevention" focuses on how to support bystanders' response to potential radicalization of someone they know and care about. While this project addresses the relationship among family members, the study has broader application to other types of bystanders such as K-12 educators, school counselors, and athletic coaches; all of whom are well positioned to prevent and intervene with youth radicalization. The project is focused on how relatives interpret potential "warning signs" and what, if any, action they pursue to address perceived radicalization. As part of this study, we assess whether relatives contact any governmental or non-governmental authorities to help address the issue.

Phase 1 of the project involved conducting de-identified, end-user meetings with DHS Regional Prevention Coordinators (RPC) to discuss outreach and resources designed for bystanders. As part of the end-user meetings, we also discussed the types of resources RPCs envisioned being most effective as part of community awareness briefings (CABs). The end-user meetings were conducted in a conversational, brainstorming style with the research team recording ideas expressed by the RPCs. The bullet items below were culled from the end-user meeting notes.

1. Conversation Starters for Deradicalization

- Tips for practical language when engaging with radicalized individuals
- Recognizing "invitations" offered by radicalized people that may suggest that person is more open to a conversation or even seeking help

Goal: Remove more barriers from engaging in conversations, as those closest to the radicalized person can help the most

2. Signs & Signals for Radicalization

- Inventory-style listing of the following:
    - Common risk factors associated with White supremacist extremism (WSE)
    - Trigger events that led to awareness of radicalization
    - Missed opportunities family members now realize were present at earlier points in time

Goal: Learn from past extremism to prevent new extremism and potential violence

3. Spectrum of Radicalization

- Cross-reference levels of radicalization with different types of bystander interventions
- Provide real-life examples of radicalization and different indicators related to common behaviors and beliefs

Goal: Viewers can identify their loved one's level of radicalization, and which resources are most relevant.

4. Testimonial Archive

- Testimonials of individuals who had a person close to them become radicalized (e.g., parent, sibling, teacher, friend, etc.)
  - Archive of bystander testimonies that individuals could use to do their own research on these issues

Goal: Share previous knowledge on radicalization and connect with stories of people who share similar relationships to radicalized individuals

Questions about this report should be directed to Dr. Pete Simi at simi@chapman.edu.

Disclaimer:

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