

Presentation title:

Police programs that seek to increase community connectedness for reducing violent extremism behaviour, attitudes, and beliefs

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This 2020 Campbell Collaboration systematic review is sponsored by the USA Department of Homeland Security for the Five Research and Development (5RD) Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) network. The review focuses on the effectiveness of police programmes that aim to increase community connectedness on violent extremism attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours. There is currently insufficient evidence to establish whether police programmes aimed at countering violent extremism by promoting community connectedness are effective. Although the evidence identified by this review shows that such programmes are being implemented, they have not yet been rigorously evaluated. The one included study was a Muslim community-led initiative involving police that aimed to counter violent extremism through a community-based education and awareness programme. The programme aimed to improve referral networks for agencies/third parties to help assist individuals identified as at risk of radicalisation. Evidence from this study showed mixed small-to-medium effects on self-reported deradicalization measures in favour of the treatment group. Eight out of nine calculated effect sizes favoured the intervention, though six of these were statistically insignificant. Given the low number of studies identified, the authors have also provided a summary of a small sample of studies reporting on interventions that aligned with the review topic but did not meet the inclusion criteria due to weak evaluation designs. These studies illustrate a range of approaches being used by the police, such as recreation and sports activities, and community education and engagement around countering violent extremism and related topics. We will discuss the policy and research implications of these findings.