

## DEMV Task Force Draft Recommendations – August 2026

**Recommendation #1: The Legislature should establish a state program focused on preventing and addressing all forms of hate-fueled and targeted violence in Washington State using a public health and community-centered approach.**

- Staff proposed revision: “The Legislature should establish a state program focused on upstream prevention, using a public health and community centered approach, of forms of violence motivated by grievance, bias, and political, ideological, or religious goals.”
- The Hate-Fueled and Targeted Violence Program should be established in either the Department of Health’s Injury and Prevention Program or the Washington Attorney General Office’s Policy Division.
  - Proposed revision (RK): change “hate-fueled and” to “bias,” renaming the program “Bias Targeted Violence Program” with violence defined to include race, ethnicity, religion, gender orientation or preference, belief, etc.
  - Proposed revision (LC): change “hate-fueled and” to “hate-motivated” and define clearly what “hate-fueled violence” and “targeted violence” are.
  - Proposed revision (MS): title should reflect prevention.
  - Staff proposed revision: change title to Targeted Violence Prevention Program.
- The Program will serve as a statewide subject-matter expert and resource hub on hate-fueled and targeted violence prevention efforts and initiatives, including but not limited to developing educational programming and campaigns, conducting training, doing outreach, developing policy and legislative recommendations, overseeing grant funding, and other duties as developed.
- Staff proposed addition: “The Program will develop explicit civil liberties guardrails to ensure that the Program focuses on the prevention of violence and pathways/mobilization towards violence. The guardrails should ensure that constitutionally protected activities, such as speech, advocacy, protest, and association, are not the lone basis for intervention.”
- The Program will lead the implementation of the primordial and primary prevention recommendations of the Domestic Extremism & Mass Violence Task Force, and work in partnership with entities tasked with implementing the Task Force’s secondary and tertiary recommendations, as appropriate.
  - The Program will use community-based participatory research (CBPR) to test and evaluate the recommendations within the public health framework to contribute data on the efficacy and success of primordial and primary prevention efforts based on protective factors, as well as secondary and tertiary prevention efforts working to mitigate risk factors and strengthen protective factors.
  - The Program will partner with government agencies implementing secondary and tertiary recommendations rooted in risk assessment and management to develop policies and procedures for reevaluation, case closure, data privacy, and

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records governance to ensure the balance of protecting individual privacy, avoiding indefinite risk labelling of individuals, and maintaining public safety.

- Proposed addition (P4P): include community-based organizations in the development of risk assessment and management policies and procedures.
- The Program will develop and maintain a publicly accessible database on instances of hate-fueled and targeted violence that have occurred across Washington State, updated on an annual basis and accompanied by a publicly available report detailing trends and recommendations for violence prevention.
- The Program will develop and implement policy and legislative recommendations for hate-fueled and targeted violence prevention based on community needs and data.
- The Program will coordinate and lead collaborative efforts with other state agencies, local and Tribal agencies, and non-governmental and non-profit organizations to pursue and advance multi-disciplinary prevention activities against hate-fueled and targeted violence.
- The Program will manage the Prevention of Hate-Fueled and Targeted Violence Advisory Board, established to advise the Program on prevention efforts and initiatives, community outreach and engagement, and the development of the hate-fueled and targeted violence database.
  - Proposed addition (RK): ensure that Advisory Board is reflective of many stakeholders, including “formers” who have left and been reformed from violent extremist and targeted violence lifestyles and motivations.
  - For discussion (MS, LC): determine whether inclusion of an advisory board is necessary and rename to align with prevention work.
- Overall proposed addition (P4P): include family-based intervention and bystander support services among the resources that the Program catalogs, funds, and coordinates to ensure a full continuum from awareness through intervention.
- Staff proposed addition: “The Program should leverage partnerships with philanthropic foundations and grant opportunities to help support the operations of the Program.”

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### Additional Context

#### Statewide Subject Matter Expert

Washington currently lacks a central point of contact and subject-matter expert focusing on hate-fueled and targeted violence, which encompasses domestic violent extremism and mass violence, as well as other forms of violence driven by ideology or planned acts of violence against particular individuals, groups, or places.

#### Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR)

CBPR is a method of conducting scientific research where researchers and community groups work together as equal partners. This ensures that data and evidence gathered through rigorous testing and evaluation standards is also culturally relevant, rooted in the needs of communities and population groups impacted, and provides a range of diverse perspectives to inform specific tailoring of policy and programmatic work to the community it serves.

When the Program engages in CBPR to test and evaluate prevention efforts, they should partner with researchers and/or research institutions who have experience with researching, testing, and evaluation violence prevention efforts based on risk and protective factors. These researchers/research institutions should then serve as training and technical assistance (TTA) providers who assist the community-based organizations engaged in testing and evaluating implementation of the Task Force's recommendations.

#### Risk and Assessment Policies and Procedures

The Task Force recognizes the tension between public safety and the right to privacy, particularly in cases of risk assessment and management of individuals and in the aftermath of post-9/11 counterterrorism efforts. To balance the interests of maintaining public safety and protecting an individual's right to privacy, policies and procedures developed for recommendations rooted in risk assessment and management aim to avoid indefinite labelling of individuals and focus on the evidence-backed risk factors and indicators associated with extremism and violence. Policies and procedures should align with state and federal laws on privacy, confidentiality, civil liberties, and records governance.

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### Public Health Framework

#### Primordial Prevention

**Recommendation #2:** The Legislature should pass the [Youth Development Fund](#), an initiative that establishes an account to distribute grant funding to invest in equitable and positive youth development programming across Washington, giving youth the opportunity to foster friendships and peer-to-peer relationships, build active engagement and interpersonal skills, and decrease screen time and isolation.

- [Proposed addition \(RK\): include “increase social emotional awareness, wellness, and self-esteem” and include “alienation” after “decrease screen time and isolation.”](#)
- Programming funded by the Youth Development Fund should ensure that program leads have access to:
  - Trauma-informed training that enhances leadership, interpersonal, and mentorship skills,
  - Service provider information to provide to youth who are seeking support for their wellbeing,
  - Knowledge about youth safety and wellbeing topics, such as online safety, fostering healthy relationships and communication skills, and other relevant topics.
    - [Proposed addition \(RK\): include “social emotional connection and development” and “broad anti-violence or violence prevention programs” in topics listed as examples.](#)
- Programming funded by the Youth Development Fund should explore and develop pathways for older youth to become program leaders, providing an opportunity to practice leadership, interpersonal, and mentorship skills.
- Consistent with the Youth Development Fund, partnerships with foundations, local companies, and governments should be leveraged to ensure adequate funding, and to reduce barriers to participation, such as transportation and food costs, making programs accessible to any youth.

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**Recommendation #3:** The Legislature should develop and prioritize grant funding for **programs and community-based organizations that facilitate healthy and connected communities of all ages**, creating an increase in social capital, reduced isolation, peer-to-peer connections, improved social cohesion, and an overall sense of inclusion and belonging.

- Specific types of programs that fall under primordial prevention against targeted violence are:
  - Civic engagement programs that focus on building bridges between differences of opinion and reducing polarization or polarizing rhetoric.
  - Law enforcement outreach programs that strengthen ties and build trust between law enforcement and community.
    - Proposed revision (LC): remove law enforcement outreach programs and replace with “Outreach programs that focus on democratic principles, engagement with local government, advocacy, leadership skills, and policy making.”
  - Staff proposed revision: combine bullets #1 and #2 to say “Civic engagement and outreach programs that focus on reducing polarization, democratic principles, engagement with local government entities, advocacy, leadership skills, and policy making.”
  - Similar to youth after-school extracurricular activities, programs that support hobbies, health and wellbeing, faith-based/interfaith connections, cultural connection, networking, and mentorship foster peer-to-peer connections and senses of belonging and identity.
  - Proposed addition (P4P): include family and caregiver support groups to list of example programs – connection for adults caring for a person who is struggling provides the support needed to continue with prevention and intervention services.
  - Proposed addition (RK): include broad anti-violence or violence prevention programming in list of example programs.

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### Primary Prevention

**Recommendation #4:** The Hate-Fueled and Targeted Violence Program should develop and deploy **digital media literacy curricula and materials** for different age ranges and constituencies that assist the population in staying safe when navigating online spaces.

- Curricula and materials should teach and reinforce critical thinking and online safety skills that help users identify and build resilience against manipulative content, such as misinformation, disinformation, rumors, conspiracy theories, propaganda, scams, violence, extreme rhetoric, and other harmful content. Curricula and materials should have a component on data privacy and safety to teach users how to keep their personal information safe.
- Curricula and materials should be developed with entities who have subject-matter expertise in digital media literacy. Curricula and materials should include feedback from stakeholders and partners who may be deploying and/or receiving curricula and materials.
- Curricula and materials should be tailored to different groups of constituencies, including, at a minimum:
  - **Students:** curricula and materials should be endorsed by the Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and/or higher education institutions, and available to educators to adopt for classroom learning, librarians for library resources, or student-led clubs for club resources.
  - **Adults:** curricula and materials can be based on curricula developed for students, particularly of high school or higher education age, and tailored to the lifestyles of adults, such as being able to identify scams. Curricula can be deployed at local libraries, community centers, and online portals.
  - **Workplace:** curricula and materials should be integrated into workplace training standards, including new hire onboarding training and technology safety modules.
  - **Elected officials:** curricula and materials should be tailored to the unique needs and requirements of an online presence that holding a public office requires and can be integrated into annual safety training opportunities or other mandatory training courses.
  - **Proposed addition (P4P): curricula for parents, caregivers, and families; should be tailored to cover how extremist and exploitative content reaches young people, what changes tend to look like at home, and how to keep communication open to build healthy relationships.**
- Curricula and materials should be readily accessible through multiple mediums, developed in plain language, include definitions of key and/or technical terms, translated into at least the top 20 spoken languages in Washington, and accommodate impairments and disabilities.

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**Recommendation #5:** In partnership with relevant subject-matter experts, the Hate-Fueled and Targeted Violence Program should develop and deploy publicly accessible **training** specific to addressing and preventing violent extremism and targeted violence.

- Create **active bystander training** for recognizing early warning signs relating to violent extremism and targeted violence.
  - In addition to general bystander training, training specifically for intimate bystanders and bystanders in the workplace should be developed that considers the proximity, settings, and relationship dynamics one has with an individual potentially on the pathway to violence.
  - Training should be free to low-cost, accessible through multiple mediums, translated into at least the top 20 spoken languages in Washington, and accommodate impairments and disabilities.
  - Proposed addition (P4P): develop the intimate bystander training with practitioners who carry live cases and with people who bring lived experience, including former extremists and family members who have been through an intervention.
- Create **detailed, in-depth training related to nihilistic violence, sadistic online exploitation, and other forms of violent online predation.**
  - Training should be easily accessible for individuals who encounter youth in their professional capacity or with a duty to report in Washington State under [RCW 26.44.030](#).
  - Proposed addition (P4P): expand training accessibility to parents and caregivers since they are sometimes the first, and only, people positioned to notice changes.
- Proposed addition (P4P): pair every training with a concrete pathway to confidential, non-punitive support, such as helplines and community-based intervention services.

### Additional Context

#### Active Bystander Training

A [2022 journal article](#) found that bystander training specific to violent extremism and targeted violence warning signs have the opportunity to improve early reporting and interventions. Fear and lack of knowledge about violent extremism play large roles in the lack of early reporting.

Intimate bystanders are those closest to an individual (family, friends, teachers, peers) and are most likely to hear “[leakage](#)” indicating an individual’s pathway to violence and carrying out an incident of violent extremism or targeted violence. Leakage refers to a communication by the individual of an intent to commit harm by various means, such as letters, diaries, journals, blogs, videos, emails, voicemails, text messages, specific vernacular, social media platforms, etc.

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Bystanders in the [workplace](#) play an important role in intervening when conflicts, bullying, harassment, microaggressions, discrimination, and power imbalances create a hostile environment. These factors, among many others, are [common causes](#) of workplace grievances, which can escalate to workplace violence.

### Violent Online Predation

Violent online predation, including nihilistic violence and sadistic online exploitation, is one of the fastest growing forms of violent extremism across the world. Victims are mainly youth, while perpetrators are both youth and adults.

The Polarization & Extremism Research & Innovation Lab (PERIL) launched one of the first online databases tracking instances of nihilistic violent extremism (NVE) in 2026. NVE has grown from a fringe ideological position rooted in militant accelerationism to a widespread framework adopted by several extremist groups and individuals. NVE is a form of targeted violence which is motivated by the belief that society cannot be redeemed, is corrupt, and must be collapsed through chaos and mass violence. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) put out a Public Service Announcement in 2025 warning the public of the dangers of violent online networks and NVE.

### *Further Reading*

- PERIL NVE Tracker: <https://nve.perilresearch.com/>
- Institute for Strategic Dialogue Digital Dispatch – The Online Landscape of Subcultures of Nihilistic Violence: <https://www.isdglobal.org/digital-dispatch/online-landscape-subcultures-nihilistic-violence/>
- FBI PSA Alert I-030625-PSA: <https://www.ic3.gov/PSA/2025/PSA250306>

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**Recommendation #6:** Working in partnership with subject-matter experts, the Hate-Fueled and Targeted Violence Program should develop **public awareness and educational campaigns and materials** on topics related to violent extremism and targeted violence.

- Campaigns should be based on facts to inform the reader about the topic and provide actionable prevention steps, as applicable. At a minimum, campaigns should cover key topics, including but not limited to:
  - Violent extremism;
  - Targeted violence, including mass violence;
  - Nihilistic violence and sadistic online exploitation;
  - Violence prevention; and
  - Public health approach.
  - Proposed addition (P4P): in addition to prevention steps, include “help-seeking action” such as a number to call or a place to go.
  - Proposed addition (P4P): include at least one campaign centered towards destigmatizing seeking help for oneself or on behalf of others.
- Additional topics, such as specific ideologies, movements, trends, tools for upstream prevention, etc. should be identified for public awareness and educational campaigns.
- Campaigns should be accessible to anyone to ensure widespread awareness and education.
  - Campaign materials should be accessible both in-person and via mass media to reach individuals in urban and rural areas.
  - Campaign materials should be developed in plain language, translated into at least the top 20 spoken languages in Washington, and accommodate impairments and disabilities.
  - Campaign materials should be in both short and long forms, providing summary, high level information and in-depth information.
- Campaigns and educational materials should include a public service announcement (PSA) message that can be added to an email signature, news article, radio ad, television commercial, advertisements played at public events, and other online campaigns, similar to PSA messages on suicide prevention and domestic violence.
  - Proposed addition (P4P): remove “similar to PSA messages on suicide prevention and domestic violence” and instead include “help-seeking action” such as a number to call or a place to go as part of the PSA message.

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**Recommendation #7:** The Legislature should **restore funding for [HearMeWA](#)**, a vital primary prevention resource addressing youth safety and well-being before tragedy occurs by connecting callers with trained crisis counselors and providing opportunity for early off-ramping from harm and strengthening protective factors.

- In addition to restoring full operational and staff funding for HearMeWA, additional funding should be granted to implement training and upskill the program's responders to recognize, respond to, and guide callers through understanding the warning signs and indications associated with nihilistic violence, sadistic online exploitation, radicalization, extremism, and pathways to violence.
  - Training and additional policies and procedures associated with responding to nihilistic violence, sadistic online exploitation, radicalization, extremism, and pathways to violence should be developed in partnership with subject-matter experts and practitioners engaged in this work.
- **[Proposed addition \(P4P\): funding for training and protocols should include warm handoff to specialized intervention and family support providers while building capacity to handle specialized intervention.](#)**

### Additional Context

#### HearMeWA

In 2021, the Legislature appropriated funding to the AGO to develop and implement a youth safety and well-being tipline program to respond to risks or potential risks to the safety and well-being of youth.

In 2026, the Legislature cut all funding to HearMeWA, cutting off a vital and accessible resource for youth looking for support and resources that meet the unique needs of individuals under the age of 25.

Trained crisis counselors with Sandy Hook Promise are available to contact 24/7 via phone, webpage, or app. HearMeWA is available in English, Spanish, and Chinese, free for all Washington youth up to the age of 25, and is the only 24/7 statewide helpline in Washington dedicated solely to youth-centered, anonymous reporting.

#### Helpline Guidance

The United Kingdom and Australia have national helplines that are solely dedicated to providing callers with advice and coaching in recognizing signs of violent extremism and targeted violence.

- Action Counters Terrorism (United Kingdom): <https://actearly.uk/>
- Step Together (Australia): <https://steptoegether.gov.au/>

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### Secondary Prevention

**Recommendation #8:** The Legislature should provide funding and support to strengthen and expand the reach of Washington’s [School-Based Threat Assessment Program](#).

- The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) should receive additional funding and support to implement changes that strengthen Washington’s School-Based Threat Assessment Program.
  - Schools required to have School-Based Threat Assessment programs and teams should be required to report the number of threat assessments made throughout the school year to OSPI to inform improvements to the school-based threat assessment program, gain a better understanding of what is triggering a threat assessment process, and identify what additional resources and support services a student may need access to.
  - Based on the reports from Washington schools about the number of threat assessments made every school year, OSPI should release a publicly available trend report every two years, with disaggregated data protected from public disclosure to ensure the safety and privacy of a minor’s identity.
  - In partnership with school districts, OSPI should develop and implement an education and awareness campaign about the School-Based Threat Assessment Program to ensure parents, caregivers, and guardians have awareness and understanding of the program, which can assist in reducing surprise or uncertainty in the event that the child under their care goes through a threat assessment.
  - To strengthen overall school safety efforts, OSPI should develop and implement a standardized threat assessment and management protocol for non-student individuals who frequently interact with the school, such as parents, guardians, caretakers, school staff, and visitors.
  - To ensure that the most effective best practices are being implemented for school safety, OSPI should conduct a regular review and evaluation of different school-based and behavioral threat assessment models available, and update or affirm the recommended policies and procedures of Washington’s School-Based Threat Assessment Program accordingly.
  - OSPI should develop interdistrict communication protocols and pathways to ensure a continuum of care for students who transfer schools in the midst of a management plan under the School-Based Threat Assessment Program. Protocols and pathways should focus on providing continued support for the student’s success and well-being, and mitigate stigma that may arise from participation in the Program by prioritizing the student’s privacy and limiting knowledge of participation to those on the student’s care team.

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- RCW 28A.320.123 should be updated to include private and charter schools operating in Washington, ensuring a minimum standard of school safety and student intervention pathways across the state.
- Schools conducting a School-Based Threat Assessment should be required to refer the student to HearMeWA to connect with additional resources for their safety and well-being.
- Proposed addition (P4P, MS): if not already part of a district's or ESD's management plan, parents and caregivers should be active partners in the management plan including open communication pathways with the administrator of the management plan, and ensure that management plans refer to community-based services in addition to HearMeWA.

### Additional Context

Washington's School-Based Threat Assessment Program was established in 2021 and is codified at RCW 28A.320.123. The law requires Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in Washington to have School-Based Threat Assessment Programs and teams in place for school safety purposes. The Program is distinct from disciplinary procedures, focusing on the student's health and well-being by creating a support management plan after a threat assessment has been conducted.

The Program is limited to LEAs, which operate public K-12 schools. The Washington State Board of Education estimates that there are approximately 500 private schools operating in Washington statewide with over 80,000 students enrolled. Private schools and charter schools are not required by state law to have a School-Based Threat Assessment Program in place.

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**Recommendation #9:** The Legislature should provide funding and support to the Department of Health (DOH), community-based and nonprofit organizations, and mental health providers to increase capacity and access to **coaching and counseling services specific to off-ramping individuals on pathways to violent extremism and targeted violence.**

- Proposed revision (RK): add “programing” in addition to “coaching and counseling” (i.e. “coaching, counseling, and programming services”).
- DOH should convene an advisory group of relevant partners to identify and develop standardized and accessible training for mental health counseling and coaching services specific to violent extremism and targeted violence, creating a baseline level of consistency in how services are provided.
  - Proposed addition (P4P): include community-based practitioners with active caseloads and peer specialists with lived experience on the advisory group.
  - Proposed addition (P4P): development and advertising of services should plainly state that services are voluntary, confidential, and available outside of law enforcement settings.
  - DOH should contract with an organization who can serve as subject-matter expert to the advisory group and provide training and technical assistance during the first two years of deployment of training to providers across the state.
  - Training should be based on evidence-supported models, such as the Targeted Violence and Terrorism Strengths, needs, and risks: Assessment & Management Tool (T-SAM).
    - Proposed addition (P4P): pair assessment training with intervention training, and include training on motivational interviewing, trauma-informed practice, and family systems.
  - Training should consider any unique counseling needs that arise among different age groups, ensuring that all individuals regardless of age will receive adequate mental health services.
    - Proposed addition (P4P): training should directly address neurodivergence and co-occurring mental health needs.
  - Training and protocols should be available to organizations and providers already offering coaching and counseling services, as well as who would like to expand their services to include coaching and counseling.
  - Service providers and helplines available to provide coaching and counseling services specific to terrorism and violence should be included in any existing publicly accessible lists of health service providers that DOH maintains.
- Proposed addition (P4P): broaden scope of coaching and counseling services to include services for families and/or intimate bystanders (i.e. those are nearest to the individual radicalizing).

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### *Additional Context*

T-SAM is a risk assessment and management tool specifically for targeted violence and developed for mental health professionals who work in a variety of clinical settings. It is the first tool of its kind in the United States, developed and tested by mental health practitioners at Boston Children's Hospital.

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### Tertiary Prevention

**Recommendation #10:** In partnership with the [National Mass Violence Center](#), the Washington Emergency Management Division should develop a **Mass Violence Incident State Preparedness Plan** that is integrated into the Washington State Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.

- The plan should focus on response, recovery, and resiliency efforts in the aftermath of a mass violence incident (MVI). Efforts should align with the appropriate protocols and definitions required to activate state and federal assistance and resources. Recovery and resiliency partnerships, plans, and efforts should be established for the immediate aftermath as well as long-term recovery and healing of the community impacted by an MVI.
- [Proposed addition \(P4P\): ensure that recovery and resiliency planning includes support for families of perpetrators in addition to victims and wider community.](#)

### Additional Context

The National Mass Violence Center was established in October 2017 in partnership with the Office for Victims of Crime to research and understand the challenges and needs of crime victims, as well as provide training and technical assistance for professionals providing support services and governments developing incident preparedness and response plans.

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**Recommendation #11:** The Hate-Fueled and Targeted Violence Program should work with subject-matter experts to develop **training and build capacity** specific to addressing and preventing violent extremism and targeted violence for entities who work with individuals re-entering society post-incarceration.

- Similar to training recommended in primary prevention efforts and equipping entities to recognize signs of recidivism, training should focus on understanding pathways to violence, risk and protective factors associated with violent extremism and targeted violence, de-escalation and intervention methods, and referrals to services specific to violence off-ramping.
- Build capacity through training and funding for community-based organizations providing re-entry services to expand their programming to include coaching and counseling for violence off-ramping.
  - Proposed addition (P4P): include peer-support in addition to community-based organizations to create capacity for those with lived experience of disengaging from extremism.
- Training and education should be accessible to anyone who works with and supports individuals re-entering society post-incarceration, including but not limited to community-based organizations and non-profits, Department of Corrections staff, and mental health and wellbeing service providers.

### Additional Context

Re-entry services work to connect individuals leaving incarceration (i.e. jail or prison) to employment, housing, training, education, mentorship, family unification and engagement, physical and mental healthcare services, peer support, and other services that are integral to successful reintegration into society.

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**Recommendation #12:** The Legislature should prioritize **continued funding and support** to state and local government agencies, nonprofits, and volunteer organizations who develop and deploy programs currently available to incarcerated individuals that provide opportunities for positive personal growth, strengthening protective factors, and successful reentry.

### Additional Context

The philosophy of the [Federal Bureau of Prisons \(BOP\)](#) upholds that release preparation, or reentry, begins on the first day of incarceration.

For an example of the types of programs offered to incarcerated individuals, visit <https://doc.wa.gov/corrections/programs/current-programming>.



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## Suggested Revisions to the Draft Recommendation Framework

### Domestic Extremism and Mass Violence Task Force | Comment and Revision Period

Submitted by Emma Jouenne, Interim Program Director, Parents for Peace | August 2026 | For discussion at the August 14 task force meeting

Parents for Peace thanks the co-chairs and fellow task force members for the care that went into this draft. We support the framework's overall direction, and in particular its grounding in public health, its attention to privacy, and its insistence that prevention belongs to communities and not only to systems of enforcement.

The suggestions below come from our daily practice. Parents for Peace operates a national helpline and provides family-based intervention services for people concerned about a loved one moving toward extremism. In 2025 alone, we supported 152 family members and other intimate bystanders across 87 cases in more than twenty states. Our comments concentrate on the recommendations closest to that work: bystanders, families, helplines, and off-ramping services. Where we propose no changes, we support the recommendation as drafted.

### Two threads that run through our suggestions

First, families should be named wherever the framework speaks of prevention. Parents, caregivers, siblings, and partners are usually the first to notice change and the best positioned to influence it, because they already hold the relationship. In our 2025 intakes, parents were the calling bystander in nearly seven of every ten new cases. A framework that names families explicitly will fund and train for them explicitly.

Second, recognition needs a destination. Every recommendation that teaches people to spot warning signs should also hand them a confidential, non-punitive place to turn. The research cited in this draft makes the point already: fear and lack of knowledge are what suppress early reporting. Most families will not make their first call to the police about their own child. When training, campaigns, and threat assessment all end with a door a family can actually walk through, early contact happens earlier.

### Recommendation-by-recommendation comments

#### Recommendation 1. A statewide Hate-Fueled and Targeted Violence Program

We support establishing the Program and its role as a statewide hub, and we offer two suggestions.

- Name family-based intervention and bystander support services among the resources the Program catalogs, funds, and coordinates. The draft already directs the Program to work with nonprofit and non-governmental organizations; naming this service category ensures the hub reflects the full continuum from awareness through intervention.

- When the Program develops policies on reevaluation, case closure, and records governance with its government partners, bring community-based providers into that work. Much of the practical knowledge about closing cases responsibly, avoiding indefinite labels, and re-engaging when circumstances change lives with the organizations doing this work every day.

## **Recommendation 2. Youth Development Fund**

We support this recommendation as drafted. Belonging built early is the most affordable prevention there is.

## **Recommendation 3. Grant funding for connected communities**

We support this recommendation, and we suggest adding family and caregiver support groups to the list of example program types. Connection for the adults around a struggling young person is protective in its own right, and it is often what keeps a family engaged long enough for everything else to work.

## **Recommendation 4. Digital media literacy curricula**

We support this recommendation with one revision: add parents, caregivers, and families as a named constituency alongside students, adults, workplaces, and elected officials. The median age of the individuals of concern in our 2025 caseload was 20, and our fastest growing case type involves online grooming of even younger people. Parents are navigating that landscape largely unprepared. Curricula tailored to families should cover how extremist and exploitative content actually reaches young people, what changes tend to look like at home, and how to keep conversation open rather than driving behavior underground.

## **Recommendation 5. Bystander training and coaching**

This recommendation sits at the heart of our model, and we support it strongly. Three revisions:

- Develop the intimate bystander training with practitioners who carry live cases and with people who bring lived experience, including former extremists and family members who have been through an intervention. Proximity, setting, and relationship dynamics, which the draft rightly highlights, are exactly what this training has to get right, and they are learned in practice.
- Pair every training with a concrete pathway to confidential, non-punitive support, such as helplines and community-based intervention services. The draft cites the research finding that fear and lack of knowledge suppress early reporting; the pathway is the answer to that finding. Recognition without a destination produces silence.
- Make the training on nihilistic violence and sadistic online exploitation available to parents and caregivers, not only to those with a professional duty to report. In 2025 we opened a small but growing cluster of these cases, every one involving a younger individual, and the adults at home were the first and sometimes only people positioned to notice.

## **Recommendation 6. Public awareness and educational campaigns**

We support this recommendation with two additions. First, require every campaign to carry a clear help-seeking action, a number to call or a place to go, rather than treating the suicide prevention and domestic violence model as a comparison only. Second, dedicate at least one campaign to the stigma families feel about seeking help for a loved one. Shame is one of the most consistent barriers we hear on our helpline, and a campaign that frames reaching out as an act of love rather than betrayal would move people who are currently sitting silent.

## **Recommendation 7. Restoring HearMeWA**

We support restoring full funding, and we support the upskilling of responders. Two revisions:

- Fund warm-handoff referral protocols from HearMeWA to specialized intervention and family support providers for calls involving radicalization, extremism, or violent online predation. A crisis line does its best work when a first contact becomes sustained support, and that requires protocols, relationships, and follow-up rather than a list of numbers.
- The additional context cites the United Kingdom and Australia as models. Specialized helplines and community-based intervention services already operate in the United States, and Washington can connect to existing national capacity while it builds its own.

## **Recommendation 8. School-Based Threat Assessment Program**

We support the expansion, and the interdistrict continuity language is one of the strongest additions in this draft. Two revisions:

- Management plans should treat parents and caregivers as active partners who receive coaching and support, not only notification. A family that understands the plan and has somewhere to bring its own fear will carry that plan much further than a family that is simply informed of it.
- Alongside the required HearMeWA referral, referral options should include community-based family support and intervention services, so the pathway out of a threat assessment fits the situation rather than defaulting to a single door.

## **Recommendation 9. Coaching and counseling for off-ramping**

This is the recommendation where our practice gives us the most to offer, and our suggestions here are the most substantive.

- Broaden the service definition to include coaching for families and intimate bystanders, not only counseling for the individual of concern. In 2025, roughly six of every ten of our cases involved no direct contact with the individual at all, and that is by design: the family reaches out first, and working through the people who hold the relationship is an evidence-informed intervention in its own right. A program funded only for individual-facing counseling will miss most of the people who actually pick up the phone.
- Include community-based practitioners with active caseloads and peer specialists with lived experience on the advisory group, alongside clinicians.
- Pair assessment training with intervention training. T-SAM is a strong assessment and management tool, and assessing risk and shifting it are different skill sets. Statewide training should also cover motivational interviewing, trauma-informed practice, and family systems work.
- Address neurodivergence and co-occurring mental health needs directly. In our 2025 caseload, 62 percent of cases carried a documented mental health diagnosis, and autism spectrum disorder appeared in roughly a third. Training that skips this will not match the population providers actually meet.
- State plainly that services are voluntary, confidential, and available outside law enforcement settings, consistent with the privacy principles in Recommendation 1. That is what makes early help-seeking possible.

### **Recommendation 10. Mass Violence Incident State Preparedness Plan**

We support this recommendation, and we suggest one addition: recovery and resiliency planning should include support pathways for the families of perpetrators as well as victims and the wider community. These families are grieving too, they are often isolated at the moment they most need connection, and supporting them well is itself a prevention investment.

### **Recommendation 11. Training for re-entry partners**

We support this recommendation with two additions. Build family engagement into re-entry off-ramping; the services listed in the additional context already include family unification, and families are who sustain change after programming ends. And make peer support delivered by people with lived experience of extremism and disengagement an eligible funded service, since those voices open conversations that credentials alone cannot.

### **Recommendation 12. Continued funding for in-custody programming**

We support this recommendation as drafted.

## **Closing**

We are glad to walk through any of these suggestions on August 14, and we are happy to share more of our practice data with the group where it would help the discussion. One small note for the next pass: the numbering format is inconsistent in a few places (Recommendations 3 and 7 are missing a space after the word Recommendation), which is easy to tidy before the voting draft.

Thank you for the work that went into this framework, and for the chance to strengthen it.

**Emma Jouenne**

Program Director, Parents for Peace

## **Response to Domestic Extremism and Mass Violence Task Force Draft Recommendations**

**From:** Sheriff Mark Crider, Walla Walla County Sheriff

**Date:** July 30, 2026

As a member of this task force since its inception, I have been actively engaged in the discussions and dialogue surrounding these important issues. I want to be clear that we all share a common goal: reducing the risk of extremism and mass violence and improving the safety of our communities. That objective is both important and widely supported.

The challenge lies not in whether we should address extremism, but in determining how it is defined, what interventions are appropriate, and whether expanding government programs is the most effective response. We should also consider the roles of families, communities, mental health resources, and social media platforms in shaping the environment in which radicalization can occur.

I remain concerned that the task force's discussions and recommendations have focused disproportionately on certain forms of extremism while giving less attention to others. Violence motivated by ideological beliefs is unacceptable regardless of its source [Left-Wing Terrorism Is on the Rise - The Atlantic](#) or political orientation. Public policy responses should be balanced, objective, and grounded in evidence rather than influenced by any particular political perspective. A comprehensive approach requires acknowledging and addressing all forms of extremist violence.

As I reviewed the draft recommendations, I was struck by the similarities between some of these proposals and previous violence-prevention initiatives that have faced criticism from civil liberties organizations. For example, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) has expressed concerns [The Problems with "Violent Extremism" and "Violence Prevention" Programs | American Civil Liberties Union](#) about prior federal Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) programs, arguing that they relied on vague indicators and risked encouraging the monitoring of lawful speech, association, and religious activity. Whether one agrees with those criticisms or not, they highlight the importance of ensuring that any future efforts include strong safeguards for privacy, due process, and constitutional rights.

I am also concerned that many of the recommendations rely heavily on expanding state government functions, creating new administrative structures, and increasing public expenditures. In my experience, simply directing additional funding toward complex social problems does not necessarily produce meaningful outcomes. We should carefully evaluate whether these proposals would deliver measurable improvements or whether resources would be better invested in strengthening families, supporting local communities, and addressing the underlying factors that contribute to radicalization and violence.

In particular, I believe greater attention should be given to the influence of social media and online platforms. Many of the concerns discussed by this task force involve individuals who have been exposed to increasingly extreme content through algorithm-driven online environments. We should examine the extent to which social media contributes to radicalization and whether policy solutions should focus more directly on that issue. Attempting to counter those influences through government programs alone may prove both difficult and ineffective.

With respect to the specific recommendations, I offer the following observations:

#### **Recommendation #1**

This proposal appears to create a significant new government structure at a time of substantial budget constraints. The anticipated outcomes are not clearly defined, and there are legitimate concerns regarding privacy, civil liberties, and potential government overreach.

#### **Recommendation #2**

This concept has merit, provided that any subject matter expert involved is mindful of concerns related to labeling groups or individuals and understands the importance of protecting constitutional rights.

#### **Recommendation #3**

This recommendation would require additional taxpayer funding for community organizations and is closely related to the concerns raised regarding Recommendation #1.

#### **Recommendation #4**

This appears to overlap with Recommendation #1 and may introduce an unnecessary level of administrative oversight and micromanagement.

#### **Recommendation #5**

Similar to Recommendation #4, this proposal appears duplicative of Recommendation #1 and may add unnecessary bureaucracy.

#### **Recommendation #6**

This recommendation raises similar concerns regarding overlap, expansion of administrative functions, and micromanagement.

#### **Recommendation #7**

The Legislature has already made a policy decision to discontinue funding for this program, and that decision should be acknowledged as part of the discussion.

### **Recommendation #8**

This recommendation is reasonable on its face. Threat assessment and violence-prevention efforts in schools have demonstrated positive results in some circumstances. However, I am concerned that additional programs of this nature could further contribute to some families choosing private education alternatives if they perceive excessive monitoring or intervention within public schools.

### **Recommendation #9**

The Department of Health is already a large state agency, and I am not convinced that expanding its responsibilities in this area would be the most effective approach. Community-based organizations may be better positioned to deliver these services and build local trust.

### **Recommendation #10**

I would encourage the task force to examine how this recommendation would have applied in recent incidents, such as the Bite of Seattle event, and determine whether it would have meaningfully improved prevention, preparedness, or response.

### **Recommendation #11**

This proposal appears to be another component of Recommendation #1 and raises similar concerns regarding administrative expansion and unnecessary oversight.

### **Recommendation #12**

Both WASPC and I have long supported effective reentry programs. This recommendation has merit and addresses a recognized public safety need, although meaningful progress in this area has historically been limited.

Finally, I note that the report does not include an estimate of the total cost associated with implementing these recommendations. At a time when the Governor is asking state agencies to prepare for significant budget reductions, any proposal involving new expenditures should include a clear fiscal analysis, expected outcomes, and measurable performance indicators.

The issue before us is important, and I share the task force's commitment to reducing extremism and preventing violence. However, I do not believe that expanding government programs and bureaucracy, particularly without clearly defined objectives and measurable results, is the most effective path forward. I appreciate the opportunity to provide my perspective and thank the task force for its work and consideration.

Respectfully,

**Sheriff Mark Crider**

**Walla Walla County Sheriff**