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# FINAL REPORT

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**TITLE:** Community Reporting Thresholds: Sharing Information with Authorities Concerning Terrorism and Targeted Violence

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Parents, siblings, partners, and friends are often the first people to suspect a loved one is on the trajectory towards targeted violence, including terrorism. These intimate bystanders are well positioned to facilitate prevention efforts if there are known and trusted reporting pathways to law enforcement or other resources. To inform US approaches to intimate bystander reporting we conducted mixed qualitative-quantitative interviews with 24 law enforcement and community professionals working in targeted violence prevention and 123 community members recruited in California and Illinois. We adapted methods used by prior studies in Australia and the UK, including using hypothetical scenario-based interviews and adding a scenario on targeted workplace violence.

Overall, intimate bystanders reported weighing numerous factors when deciding whether to report or take other actions, and we organized them into four levels of a "Social-Ecological Model of Intimate Bystander Reporting for Targeted Violence Prevention." The model describes a total of 28 factors at four levels—Individual, Relationships, Community, and Societal. Intimate bystander reporting is affected by this range of influences and nested interactions. Factors can influence intimate bystander reporting differently, based on cumulative and intersectional experiences. The interaction between factors at the different levels is just as important as the influence of factors within a single level. For example, fears that harm will come to the person-of-concern (Relationship level factors) may influence reporting mainly when they occur in combination with factors at the Community level (Trust of Law Enforcement) and Societal level (Police Violence, Racism and Discrimination).

To represent the multiple stages of intimate bystanders' decision making and possible actions, based on the findings we developed the "ICARE Model (Intimate bystander deCision mAking for Reporting targeted violencE)." It shows that much of the intimate bystander's decision making and possible actions do not involve or depend upon law enforcement. They are often entirely self-directed or involve other community practitioners, many of whom are not trained in responding to targeted violence or terrorism. It also identifies the key questions which intimate bystanders face at different stages of the process for which they expressed difficulty finding answers.

After learning of the violence risk, intimate bystanders **Conduct Online Research.** They seek help on how to talk to someone thinking about mass violence, how to identify risk factors for violence, how to identify local resources such as violence prevention organizations or hotlines, and how to find other information that could help them clarify any uncertainty about the risk or what they should do. Intimate bystanders **Talk with a Family Member or Friend. They seek** guidance and support from someone they really trust. Some intimate bystanders wanted to talk with mutual friends of the person-of-concern, or his family members, to see if these people had also noticed alarming signs in his behavior. Some intimate bystanders also would **Talk Directly with the Person-of-Concern.** Their aim would be to talk them out of their plan or get them help, such as mental health care. Some intimate bystanders said this would also help to gauge how serious the person was regarding their plan, which would help them decide whether or not law enforcement involvement was necessary. Many intimate bystanders said they would **Talk to a Community Practitioner** who may be able to help them weigh the situation, address the risk, and decide whether to contact law enforcement. They did so fearing that going to law enforcement would only increase the likelihood of a violent outcome, specifically of harm to the

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person-of-concern, and especially if the person-of-concern was a racial or ethnic minority. Intimate bystanders were ready and willing to **Give a Report to Law Enforcement**, particularly when the threat was perceived to be more serious and imminent, and when they perceived law enforcement to be trustworthy.

Several of our findings align with the results of the prior studies from Australia and the UK.  1) Intimate bystanders considering reporting are motivated by care for the person-of-concern and experience considerable uncertainty and confusion about levels or risk and how to report. 2) Before reporting to law enforcement, intimate bystanders search for information and engage family, friends, and professionals, seeking their advice and assistance, which may delay reporting. 3) Intimate bystanders prefer telephone or face to face reporting rather than doing so over the internet or using a mobile phone app. This finding is surprising given the wide age range in our study and the ubiquity of the internet in daily life and runs counter to current efforts to stand up centralized, online reporting systems. 4) Intimate bystanders want follow-up from authorities on the progress and outcomes of their reporting and some want additional support and counseling.

Several of our findings add to and are different from the prior studies. 1) Intimate bystanders in the US expressed high levels of fear and concern regarding the safety of the person-of-concern from law enforcement over-reaction and violence. While more commonly discussed by non-White intimate bystanders, even White participants expressed concerns about law enforcement being too likely to overreact and do harm, not only to Black individuals, but also to a range of identities including Hispanic or Latinos and those with mental health diagnoses. 2) Most decisions and actions of intimate bystanders are either self-directed, or involve family, friends, community, and on-line resources, not law enforcement. Intimate

bystanders in the US who want to talk to community practitioners face obstacles knowing who to go to and how to access them, especially mental health providers. 3) Importantly, intimate bystanders' reporting decisions or actions for ideologically motivated violence, such as terrorism, are indistinguishable from non-ideologically motivated violence, such as targeted workplace violence.

Top recommendations include: **Educate** communities about potential warning signs, how to make sense of their concerns, and how the reporting process works, including information sharing, referrals, diversion, follow-up, and support. **Provide** multiple modalities for intimate bystander information sharing and formal reporting of persons-of-concern, expanding the range of options for reporting to include options for in-person, telephone, and on-line reporting. **Dismantle** racist policing practices to remedy inequities and increase community trust in law enforcement. **Sensitize** law enforcement to fears of harm that many persons have regarding reporting. **Train** law enforcement in understanding and responding to diverse cultural practices of the communities they serve relevant to reporting, including the use of community practitioners and organizations as intermediaries. **Design** reporting materials and channels to integrate both non-ideologically motivated targeted violence and ideologically-motivated violence. **Provide** a continuum of support options to intimate bystanders who report or share information. This should include immediate validation of their reporting, emphasizing the difficulty and courage to report, following-up on the outcomes of the report, providing clear understanding of the reporting process, and individual counseling or debriefing. **Identify** and train community advocates and organizations to receive reports of concerns or information about possible targeted violence. **Train** mental health professionals, social service workers, faith leaders, and educators in how to support intimate bystanders, including in behavioral threat assessment, management,

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and prevention. **Develop** and disseminate clear statements on how law enforcement and municipal governments are accountable to intimate bystanders who make a report.

## SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT

### Major Goals and Objectives

Parents, siblings, partners, and friends are often the first people to suspect a loved one is on the trajectory towards targeted violence or terrorism. These intimate bystanders are well positioned to facilitate prevention efforts if there are known and trusted reporting pathways to law enforcement or other resources. Little is known in the US about the reporting processes for intimate bystanders to targeted violence or terrorism.

Previous studies in Australia (Grossman, 2015) and the UK (Thomas et al., 2017) have explored these issues. Grossman's study focused on Muslim persons in Australia, a key policy and community concern at the time because of foreign fighters travelling to Islamic State-held territories. Her study concluded that five core domains influence reporting thresholds – psychological, informational, communication, support and trust, and education and outreach. Across these domains, the primary motivation for intimate bystanders to report loved ones was care and concern.  However, they did not know how to report outside the national security hotline mechanism, which many considered inappropriate for sharing early concerns rather than imminent threats. Reporting to authorities was seen as a last resort if other ways of reaching the person-of-concern were unsuccessful.

Australian Muslim respondents overwhelmingly preferred face to face reporting because of the efficacy and accountability face to face encounters provide. They worried about overreactions by law enforcement and agonized over the individual and community harms that could be caused by reporting. They wanted clear information about early intervention and

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support, rather than a securitized response to their concerns. They were also more likely to report through community brokers and trusted community figures rather than going directly to law enforcement.

Thomas et al.'s UK study replicated the Australian study methodology and expanded sampling to include community members from "marginalized White British majority communities" in addition to Muslim-background young adults, in recognition of the demographic profile of those involved in UK domestic terrorism plots and in travel to ISIS-held territory in Syria. Despite persistent allegations of a stigmatizing state focus on British Muslim communities, the UK study found that British Muslim respondents would report concerns about a loved one to law enforcement and would prefer face-to-face for the same reasons identified in the Australian study. This reporting to police would often be the end point of a 'staged process', whereby intimate bystanders would first attempt to intercede with the person-of-concern, then draw on advice and guidance from friends and family, and often also draw on support from trusted practitioners or figures in their own community. These UK findings have led directly to the establishment of a police led-national website www.actearly.uk which enables the opportunity to share concerns about a loved one via telephone or chat.

Our study built on the Australian and UK studies to understand the processes of intimate bystanders in the US, in order to inform new, localized and contextually-sensitive understandings of and approaches to community reporting issues. We interviewed members of law enforcement, community practitioners, and community members in California and Illinois. We describe their perspectives on barriers, facilitators, and pathways. Our study enhanced the prior studies with a larger and more demographically-diverse sample. It included a focus on ISIS/Al-Qa'eda-inspired

foreign-terrorism, White Power movement-inspired domestic terrorism, and--of particular relevance to the US---non-ideologically motivated targeted, workplace violence.

## Research Questions

This report addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the thresholds, facilitators, and barriers to intimate bystanders reporting persons-of-concern?

2. What processes, pathways, means, and channels do intimate bystanders favor when willing to share concerns? Are there differences by demographic factors (race, age, gender) or by the type of targeted violence (ideologically-motivated versus non-ideologically motivated, targeted violence)?

## Research Design, Methods, Analytical and Data Analysis Techniques

This study was a mixed methods qualitative-quantitative study with two complementary phases. During Phase 1 we conducted qualitative interviews with 25 law enforcement and community practitioners in violence prevention working in California and Illinois, between December 2019 and May 2020. Participants were from California (n=13) and Illinois (n=12) and worked on violence prevention from various sectors including law enforcement (n=5), university threat assessment units (n=4), health and human services (n=8), faith-based organizations (n=4), and community-based organizations (n=4). During Phase 2 we conducted mixed qualitative-quantitative interviews with 123 community members living in California and Illinois. Interviews were conducted from March 2021 to July 2021 virtually over Zoom. 62 identified as female and 61 identified as male. The average age was 31 years with a standard deviation of 13.5 years. 19 (15%) participants were Hispanic and 104 (85%) were non-Hispanic. Approximately 34% of participants were Asian, 29% were White, 17% were Black or African American, 2%

were American Indian or Alaskan Native, and 1% were Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. 17% identified as "Other" race. About 39% of participants identified as Christians, 19% as Muslims, 34% as non-practicing.

Our study built on the hypothetical scenario-based interview approach of the Australian and UK studies, adapting those scenarios to address US conditions and creating a new scenario on targeted workplace violence. Community members were read a scenario and asked to respond to questions. White-identified participants were offered a choice between "Connor" and "Sam" scenarios, while participants who did not identify themselves as White were offered a choice between "Joseph" and "Sam." Connor was a white supremacist targeting a nearby religious establishment. Joseph was a person of color who had experienced discrimination from law enforcement and was eager to use violence to exercise his beliefs. Sam was a disgruntled and aggrieved employee researching mass shootings online at his workplace. Questions include the following topics: What reasons might motivate them to share concerns about the person suspected of planning targeted violence with authorities? What information or support would help them decide whether to share their concerns with authorities? What factors might encourage or discourage people to share their concerns? How would they go about reporting currently? What are their preferences for people and agencies that they could approach to share their concerns? How would they prefer to make the report (e.g., telephone, face-to-face, website, mobile phone app)?

In both phases we analyzed the data using a grounded theory approach. Research team members coded the transcripts using thematic analysis. We used consensus building to develop the final structure of relationships among the themes. Discrepancies in coding were discussed among the coders and clarified to reach a 100% agreement in code applications. Inter-rater

reliability was established to be above 0.90 between the researchers conducting coding on the Pooled Cohen's Kappa scale, indicating "very good agreement".

This report provides findings from Phase 2 primarily, with supplementation from Phase 1 (a summary of the Phase 1 results is included in the Artifacts section). We refer to the Phase 2 participants as intimate bystanders since that is the role they were asked to adopt as they responded to the scenario.

## Changes in Approach from Original Design and Reasons for Changes

Phase 2 participants were 18 years and older. The grant proposal was for Phase 2 participants to be 16 years or older. However, recruitment of persons under age 18 was deemed infeasible due to the COVID pandemic, lockdowns in Southern California and Chicago, prolonged school closures and the shift to virtual education, and the overwhelming stress experienced by school administrators, students, and their parents.

## RESULTS

## Research Question 1: What are the Thresholds, Facilitators, and Barriers to Intimate Bystander Reporting of Persons-of-Concern?

Phase 1 and Phase 2 study participants identified multiple factors that influence intimate bystanders' decisions to report a person-of-concern. We designed the "Social-Ecological Model of Intimate Bystander Reporting for Targeted Violence Prevention" based on these factors (Figure 1). The overall claim of the model is that the process of reporting by intimate bystanders is a dynamic interaction between individuals and their environmental context. The model describes factors at each of four different levels—individual, relationship, community, and societal. Intimate bystander reporting is affected by this complex range of influences and nested interactions. Our model recognizes that factors can cross between multiple levels (hence, the

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dotted lines separating each layer of the model). They can also influence intimate bystander reporting differently, based on cumulative and intersectional experience. We describe the factors below.

FIGURE 1: *Social-Ecological Model of Intimate Bystander Reporting for Targeted Violence Prevention*
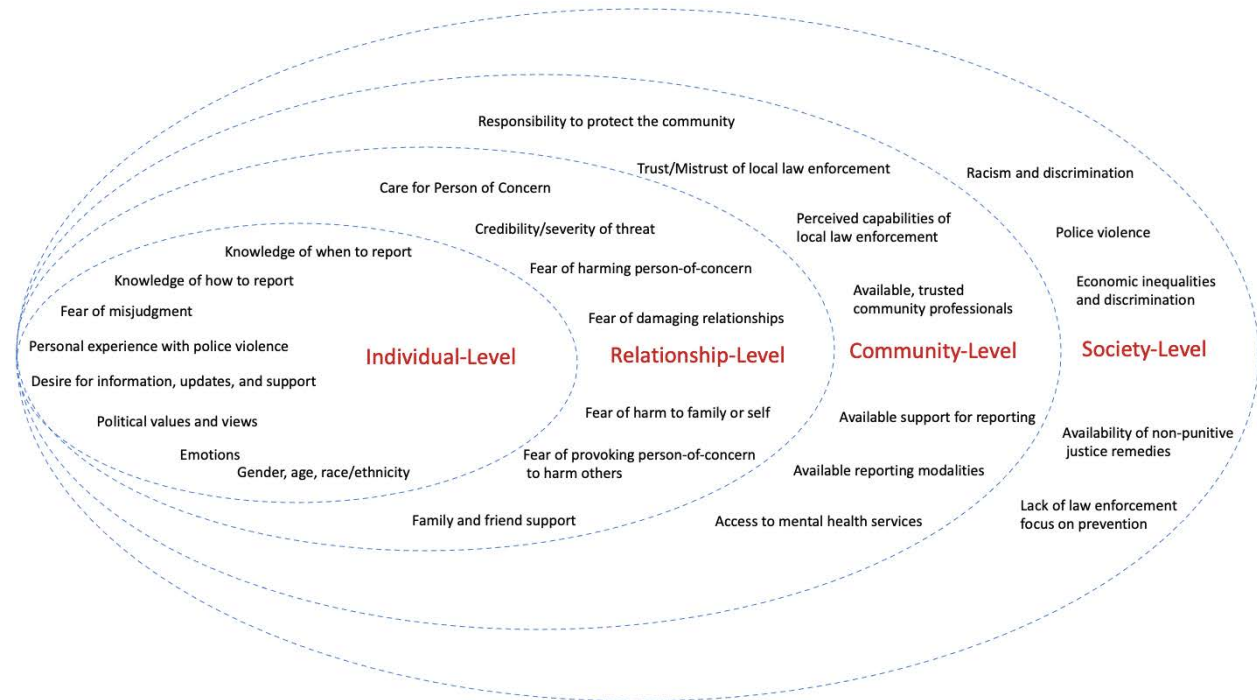


## Individual Level Factors

The Individual Level of the model identifies personal factors that influence intimate bystander reporting of persons-of-concern.

**Fear of misjudgment:** Intimate bystanders feared misjudging the credibility or severity of the threat and making an "incorrect" report as a result. As one said, "*I wouldn't make the decision to go to law enforcement just on my own, because, well, what if I'm wrong? Or they're like, "Well, you have no evidence. He hasn't done anything." Do you know he's committed a crime?*" -( California, 39, Male, Asian, Non-Practicing)

**Knowledge of when to report:** Intimate bystanders did not know or understand what behaviors or statements may precede violence and were not confident in their ability to identify a threshold for when reporting was necessary. This made many reluctant to contact law enforcement as a first choice. Intimate bystanders were also unsure about whether law enforcement would be receptive to a report about a plan, rather than about a crime that had already been committed.

> *"If it's still at the point where he doesn't have any planning, there's less urgency than maybe I'd consider looking up... I don't know, certain groups…maybe something for significant racial discrimination or anything like that. And seeing if those groups could help him vent whatever he's thinking, maybe help change [his] mindset." -(Illinois, 20, Male, Middle Eastern, Muslim)*

Instead, they described taking steps to understand what they might be witnessing and what the red flags that should definitely be reported to law enforcement might be, including doing internet searches about as well as talking with non-law enforcement professionals already known to them for advice.

**Knowledge of how to report:** Intimate bystanders were confused or very unclear about who to report to besides the police. Many were unsure of the best way to contact law enforcement, including whether they should call a non-emergency line or 911; whether any alternatives to police or law enforcement existed to handle this type of situation; and whether a hotline or an anonymous reporting option was available.

> *"I think like a hotline that can, what's it called, assess the severity of a concern. And then from there with the help of a professional in that field, then we can call law enforcement*

*together or figure out what steps could be taken next." -(California, 34, Female, Latinx, Non-Practicing)*

**Desire for information, updates, and support:** Many intimate bystanders said they would like follow-up from law enforcement after making a report. They wanted information about what happened to their report.

*"What happens next? What happens to that report? What happens to me? What happens to him? Where does that all go? I need to have an understanding of what's the procedure, what's the process." -(California, 52, Female, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, Non-Practicing).*

Many intimate bystanders explained that reporting on a friend or family member would be a tough decision, and they would like emotional support and counseling after making the report.

*"And I guess a follow up to counseling or having those resources provided for someone, because of course it could be a traumatic experience, or just kind of like a lot of emotions occurring" -(Illinois, 51, Female, Black or African American, Christian).*

Several wanted reassurance that they would be protected from retaliation from the person-of-concern.

**Personal experiences with police violence:** Intimate bystanders who had personally experienced, witnessed, or had close friends/relatives experience police harassment or violence were worried that calling the police would put themselves or the person-of-concern in harm's way.

*"It would make me feel very afraid because I personally do not trust law enforcement or authorities, only because of my own personal experiences and my community's personal*

*experiences with law enforcement. It's not a safe relationship.” -(California, 25, Female, Black or African American, Muslim).*

**Political views and values:** Although we did not collect data on political affiliation, researchers noted distinct perspectives in the sample that seemed to align with national conversations at the time of the study. Within a few of the White-identified participants recruited from Illinois suburbs we detected a reluctance to ascribe violent intentions to hate-based groups. While these intimate bystanders recognized the importance of the community's safety in cases of potential violence, they emphasized that it was important to not *"paint with a broad brush and say, 'Everyone who has these ideals, these political mindsets are dangerous and threats to local and national security.'" (Illinois, 21, Male, White, Agnostic).* A concern for protecting "free speech" was more often mentioned by these White participants responding to the Connor scenario, and may reflect the American emphasis on free speech, some acceptance of violent 'talk', or both.

**Gender, age, race, ethnicity:** We found indications of some gender differences. Overall, women rated their comfort sharing or reporting to any entity higher than men. In the qualitative data we also found that men were slightly more likely to report straight to law enforcement and that women more often than men described that they would go to a church, faith-based group, or other community leader to share their concerns before reporting to law enforcement, and were also more likely to seek support for themselves and the person-of-concern. Some women expressed feeling intimidated talking face-to-face with law enforcement. Non-white women felt that they would not be taken seriously because of a history of law enforcement mistreatment toward women of color, and that they would *"need to control [their] emotions"*, because they would be viewed as *"overly dramatic"* or because they are *"small."* We found no differences by

age in reporting actions, pathways, modalities or other preferences. Racial and ethnic differences appear quite strong in our study and appear in several of the factors below, including trust and mistrust of law enforcement, racism and discrimination, and police violence (see below).

**Emotions:** Intimate bystanders must navigate complex emotional territory as an element of their decision making in reporting. Participants described a spectrum of emotions that included "sad", "confused", "stressed and anxious", "in denial", and "alarmed" when faced with the scenarios.

*"I would not be able to stop thinking about it and just be stressed out constantly over it. I feel like if this was somebody close to me, I could be in denial as well. Even with all the indications, I'd still probably have a hard time believing it."* -*(Illinois, 18, Male, South Asian, Muslim)*.

## Relationship Level Factors

This level includes close, interpersonal relationships that influence the propensity to share concerns about or report a person-of-concern.

**Care for the person-of-concern:** Consistent with the previous Australian and UK studies, we identified care and anxiety about the person-of-concern as the main motivation for deciding to report concerns to law enforcement. While the main individual-level psychosocial barrier to reporting was the fears we describe, the main individual-level psychosocial trigger for people who were able to overcome or tolerate feeling conflicted or uneasy was deep care for the person-of-concern, because they are frightened about the safety of the community, or both**.** This level of care also influenced how they would go about reporting**.** Intimate bystanders believed they had a better ability to assess the credibility and severity of the threat when the person-of-

concern was closer to them, and in these cases they would often seek to intervene directly with this person-of-concern.

> *"I would say, as I would... If it's on a spectrum, how close I am to him, the closer I was to him would be... I'd be more reluctant to go to the authorities. So, for example, if I was really, really close with Sam, then I would probably do everything in my power to help him without going to the authorities first." -(Illinois, 18, Male, Hispanic or Latino, Catholic).*

Their fears of how law enforcement would respond, their worry about associated anticipated or unintended consequences, and their concerns about harming the existing close personal relationship, were amplified in such cases. These respondents expressed a stronger preference for first seeking help from a mental health or other community professional who were perceived as less likely to harm the person-of-concern.

**Credibility of the threat:** The majority of intimate bystanders wrestled with a crucial question---have the actions and statements by the person-of-concern reached the threshold of being a credible threat of injury to others? Some signs of credibility included a clear plan for committing targeted violence, a specific date and time, a specified target, available means (weapons or firearms), a sudden change in behavior, or another "*concrete step that demonstrates not only a desire but an ability." (California, 23, Male, Asian, Muslim).* Amid concerns and fears discussed below, intimate bystanders said they would seek out more information themselves and/or engage family and friends for support to understand and identify a credible threat. Once identified, participants frequently would report to law enforcement. Non-White intimate bystanders often held the concern that law enforcement should not be involved until the threat was too severe to be ignored due to the history of police violence and racial discrimination.

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*"So I would try to do the transformative justice process, and then if that is not working and if things are escalating quicker and things like that, then I would be forced to contact the authorities, but the authorities would be the last people on the list of people to contact, just for safety reasons." -(California, 25, Female, Black or African American, Muslim)*

**Fear of harm to person-of-concern:** Another related reason for intimate bystanders' reluctance to report was concern that the person was not a threat or had not committed an actual crime yet, and a report could harm them. Intimate bystanders worried that reporting would criminalize the person-of-concern *"blowing the whistle too early...it could potentially ruin his life if he really didn't mean it," (California, 29, Female, Asian/Filipino, Catholic)* or lead to harm to the person-of-concern at the hands of law enforcement.

"*And possibly when he's mentally unstable and he's confronted by law enforcement, that's going to tend to end up in a shooting." -(Illinois, 18, Male, Hispanic, White, Catholic).*

**Fear of damaging relationships:** Many intimate bystanders would feel reluctant to report for fear that it could damage their relationship with the person-of-concern.

*"I feel like that would ruin the friendship. I wouldn't do that unless I really know he's going to do something bad." -(Illinois, 19, Male, Hispanic, White, Catholic).*

**Fear of harm to self or family:** One of the most frequently offered reasons for worry about reporting was fearing for one's personal safety or the safety of their family if the person-of-concern found out who reported them and then retaliated.

*"I would worry for my safety, if he ever found out that I was the one who maybe said something and then like nothing happened on the end of the police, like would he retaliate on me?" -(Illinois, 30, Female, White, Non-Practicing).*

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Some intimate bystanders stated that they would be worried about facing consequences if their report ended up only being false, or that by trying to help the report could somehow penalize them or get them in trouble with law enforcement.

*"With the police or the legal authorities, you can't rationalize anything. And they manipulate the questions, and you could wind up in trouble sometimes." -(Illinois 65, Male, White, Non-Practicing).*

**Fear of provoking the person-of-concern to harm others:** A few intimate bystanders explained that they would be hesitant to report because the person-of-concern could find out they were being reported on, and that could catalyze them into acting sooner.

**"***And I'm also concerned that if he finds out that I told authorities, or if he finds out that I told someone else, that he might just do it immediately, right after." -(Illinois, 18, Male, Middle Eastern, Muslim)*

**Family and friend support:** When intimate bystanders expressed doubts and questions about the credibility of the threat, they would often turn to their own family and friends to help them resolve these uncertainties. For instance, when the concern was that they might be misreading the situation, they would turn to their friends and family to check whether they were misinterpreting the situation and overreacting.

*"Yeah, I definitely think having my friends and family, my wife, aware of this and like, "Hey, this is what I know, what should I do?" given the situation who can make sure that I'm not totally missing the point here." -(Illinois, 35, Male, White, Non-Practicing).*

Friends and family were also a resource who could advise the intimate bystander on the best course of action and next steps. Some saw friends and family as persons to help intervene with the person-of-concern. Some intimate bystanders also saw them as a source of emotional

support. On the other hand, some gave opposing opinions about consulting their family and friends. Drawing on family as a resource can become complex when the person-of-concern is themselves a family member. Also, family members may be too biased to give accurate guidance, they might be viewed as accomplices or liable, or they may overreact and cause the situation to spiral out of control.

## Community Level Factors

The Community Level examines the real-world environments, such as neighborhoods, in which individuals live and social relationships occur, and identifies the factors in these settings that are associated with intimate bystander reporting.

**Responsibility to protect the community:** Almost all intimate bystanders recognized the value of reporting to law enforcement and understood that their role as an intimate bystander would be to protect the community from a potential violent attack. Aside from one individual, everyone in the community sample said that they would eventually involve law enforcement if they perceived the situation to be serious enough. They were motivated to protect others from injury, as well as by their care for the person-of-concern. However, they described a conflict between this responsibility to prevent harm to the broader community and their loyalty to the person-of-concern or fears of misjudgment or harm from reporting. Though many seesawed between these two concerns, for most intimate bystanders their sense of obligation to protect the community outweighed other qualms when they believed the threat to be credible and severe. Actively seeking information, seeking help from others in the community, or talking directly with the intimate were frequently deployed strategies to resolving this conflict.

> *"I definitely think there's a duty… if someone is going to harm themselves or someone else, you have to say something... if he's just like, "no, I need to do this", then, then I*

*obviously need to put whatever friendship or relationship we have aside and inform the*

*authorities to take action." -(California, 36, Female, Afghani, Muslim)*

Participants who said they would not call the police under any circumstances primarily

cited concerns around immigration and citizenship. One described worries about *"citizen status"*

and concerns that *"we'll get deported because of our status" (California, 22, Male, Afghani,*

*Muslim)*, preferring to talk with trusted authority figures in the community to try and resolve the

situation. Another said they were "*Really aware of people's concerns about ICE and Migration*"

and that if the person of concern was an immigrant, "*I'm not going to get you deported for this. I*

*just won't." -(California, 27, Female, Latinx, Non-Practicing)*

**Trust or mistrust of local law enforcement:** Many intimate bystanders stated that their

willingness to report to their local police would depend on their location and the reputation of the

police in their specific city. Because of experiences and knowledge of local police violence and

discrimination they were hesitant to ask police for help, fearing similar treatment.

*"I would have to be careful with what ... With whom I get in contact with on the police*

*force." -(Illinois, 59, Female, Black or African American, Baptist)*

Muslim participants often mentioned that their community has felt targeted by law

enforcement over the past 20 years, and that this criminalization has led to a hesitancy to reach

out to police due to fears of being labeled as a terrorist or terrorist-sympathizer. A few White-

identified participants who were presented with the Connor scenario noted that they would have

some concerns reporting a white nationalist to local police, because of the possibility that

members of the police may be involved in or sympathetic to those ideologies. The FBI were seen

as less likely to have been infiltrated by such groups.

**Perceived capabilities of local law enforcement:** Several intimate bystanders believed that local police were not capable of responding appropriately to a person-of-concern whose behavior stemmed from a mental health condition. They were concerned that local police would misinterpret psychological symptoms as signs of aggression and respond with excessive force, increasing the chance of injury or death to the person-of-concern.

> *"And sometimes people who are going through mental health episodes, they end up getting hurt or sometimes killed just because police aren't properly trained always to deescalate those situations." -(Illinois, 21, Female, Hispanic Bi-Racial, Non-Practicing)*

This also translated into skepticism regarding the preventative capacity of local law enforcement specific to these potential violent acts and if the police had the best interests of others in mind: *"instead of helping them, I feel like they would ruin their [loved one's] life" (California, 37, Female, White, Christian)*. Some intimate bystanders recalled situations where law enforcement had been warned of an impending attack and had not been able to stop it, and so they did not trust that reporting would prevent loss of life.

> *"In a lot of experiences with this sort of violence, there were warnings given to the police that were not heeded. I would want to figure out who to call, because the local authorities, I just wouldn't have confidence in, even the FBI, I'd be a little bit concerned." -(California, 47, Male, White, Agnostic)*

**Availability of trusted community professionals:** Phase 1 participants described the need to properly train community practitioners and members in a position to receive a report from an intimate bystander on what questions to ask the intimates who are sharing concerns and on providing information regarding next steps. This should include mental health professionals, social service providers, school administrators, and faith-based leaders. A social service provider

stated, *"I think most of them wouldn't know what to do if a parent came to them and said, 'I'm really concerned. I'm seeing X, Y, Z signs with my son.' I don't know that your average religious leader would know how to handle that."* (California, 31, Female, Asian, Non-Practicing)

**Availability of support for reporting:** According to Phase 1 participants, a lack of community-based, non-law enforcement staff who are properly trained and can take reports of concerns held by intimates is a barrier for intimate bystander reporting. A mental health service provider explained,

> *"It's a resource issue and human resource and financial resource. I think if there were more PERT [Psychiatric Emergency Response Team] resources, then some things actually could be headed off faster. We will sometimes call and even in the middle of a day, it's a Friday afternoon and they'll say we don't have a PERT officer available, but we'll just send a regular officer. And then that changes the entire experience for the client."* -(California, 61, Threat Assessment Unit)

Some intimate bystanders suggested that resources during the reporting process could help make them feel more comfortable or encourage reports from more reluctant individuals. For example, providing translation services or having bi-lingual staff available could help individuals with less English proficiency. In addition, participants urged police departments to allow reporters to choose who to speak with, since some people may prefer a specific gender.

**Available reporting modalities:** Most intimate bystanders were not sure what the available options were for reporting a situation like the one presented in the study (see Knowledge of How to Report). Some intimate bystanders reported that they would be hesitant to report unless available modalities allowed them to be anonymous. They were concerned that they may be linked to the person-of-concern in future investigations by law enforcement.

*"As a Muslim, if it were another Muslim, I would be concerned that they would somehow pull me into the issue" -(California, 30, Female, Middle Eastern, Muslim).*

Other concerns were a potential lawsuit against them or that there will be "*a second investigation, they'll ask me why I didn't report earlier.*" *(California, 25, Male, Middle Eastern, Muslim).* Another reason for anonymity was to ensure the intimate bystander's safety. However, other intimate bystanders worried that police would not take an anonymous tip seriously. Anonymous reporting also did not allow for any follow-up if police needed additional information to pursue the tip, or if the reporter wanted to know the result of the report.

**Access to mental health services:** Intimate bystanders felt mental health practitioners would be able to provide them with advice and guidance for how to proceed. They could provide counseling to the person-of-concern, and they could make a formal report to law enforcement on the intimate bystander's behalf if necessary.

> *"I feel like they would be able to kind of get that information out of him and they also have the authority, they can report that as well if they see any indication of something." -*
> *(Illinois, 18, Male, South Asian, Muslim)*

However, participants also worried that connecting the person-of-concern with mental health support may be difficult, especially if the person did not consent to treatment. Other obstacles mentioned were administrative barriers, insurance problems, and high costs of mental health care. Several participants were aware of the mandated reporter obligation of trained mental health professionals, and this was usually seen as a benefit (i.e. the professional will decide, not me).

## Societal Level Factors

This level looks at the factors at the macro-societal level, such as political and social policies, that help create a climate that encourages or inhibits intimate bystander reporting.

**Racism and discrimination:** Both White and Non-White intimate bystanders described how institutional racism and discrimination would influence their reporting. Non-White participants talked about their anticipation of experiencing discrimination during the reporting process. The specific fears expressed were of stereotypes these participants felt police may hold about people of their identity. For example, intimate bystanders who identified as Black discussed concerns that the police would see them as criminals or as untrustworthy. Intimate bystanders who identified as Latino discussed firsthand experiences of police responding aggressively, and how white-passing Latinos were treated better by police than those with darker skin. Muslim intimate bystanders often mentioned that their community has felt targeted by police and FBI.

> *"I'm a Muslim, and [if] I go to law enforcement speaking to them about this issue I feel like I'm raising a lot more attention about me than it would if I weren't any of these, let's say. I do think if I were stereotypically, let's say a stereotypical white American male, I guess, and also I gave off the vibe that I'm a law-abiding citizen then I don't think I would have as many concerns." -(California, 25, Male, Middle Eastern, Muslim)*

Asian intimate bystanders and women worried that police would not take their report seriously, or that they would have to be extra pushy or insistent to be listened to. White intimate bystanders were concerned about violence to non-White persons-of-concern too.

**Police violence:** Closely tied to systemic racism and discrimination, but explicitly mentioned by both White and non-White intimate bystanders, is the long history of police violence in the US. Black and Latino participants spoke about this as a wide-spread societal

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problem that went beyond the private prejudices held by individual law enforcement officers but was also embedded in the system and reproduced in cultural and societal norms.

> *"I would say as a black person, it's really hard maybe to talk to the police officers, mainly because they don't really... They see us as a 25 year old black man...Maybe they will say that I'm just trying to set up my drug competitor and they won't take this matter very seriously. I would say maybe my race would be the biggest problem when contacting the police officers." -(California, 25, Male, Black or African American, Christian)*

**Economic inequality and discrimination:** Some intimate bystanders expressed the impression that low-income neighborhoods are treated differently by police, and that their physical location and community makeup would factor into their decision whether to contact law enforcement. Intimate bystanders felt that police would not respond with urgency if the report came from a low-income area, and also described these areas as more heavily policed; the police presence in low-income neighborhoods was seen as primarily antagonistic, not supportive of community members or their safety concerns.

> *"And depending on where you live, I think, depends on how they would respond, either with force or with understanding… In lower-income places, I would be very, very reluctant to report them to the cops, knowing how bad it can turn out for them and for the people surrounding them." -(California, 31, Female, Asian, Non-Practicing)*

**Availability of non-punitive justice remedies:** Several intimate bystanders held the belief that law enforcement and the larger criminal justice system could coordinate various degrees of a response including mental health care and social service needs. They believed that law enforcement would and could provide access to non-punitive remedies. We only heard this opinion from White-identified intimate bystanders.

*"I can, if anything, delegate it to the police…. police are pretty overarching. If you report it there, it's most likely going to get to where it needs to be, if that's not them." -(Illinois, 18, Male, Hispanic, Catholic)*

**Lack of law enforcement focus on prevention:** Many intimate bystanders stated that the scenarios presented in this study were not always best addressed with police involvement, but they did not think police departments were capable of engaging in prevention efforts. They were unsure whether this situation as presented would fall under the purview of law enforcement, and whether law enforcement would be receptive to a report about a plan rather than about a crime that had already been committed. Intimate bystanders stated that police involvement would be necessary if the situation progressed to a certain point where weapons were involved, violence was likely, and physical intervention may be required, but before that point was reached they would be much less equipped to intervene. Intimate bystanders identified law enforcement's role as responding to crime once it had occurred.

*"They're not trained for that, they're trained to stop a robbery or something [who is] shooting them." -(Illinois, 20, Male, Hispanic, Catholic)*
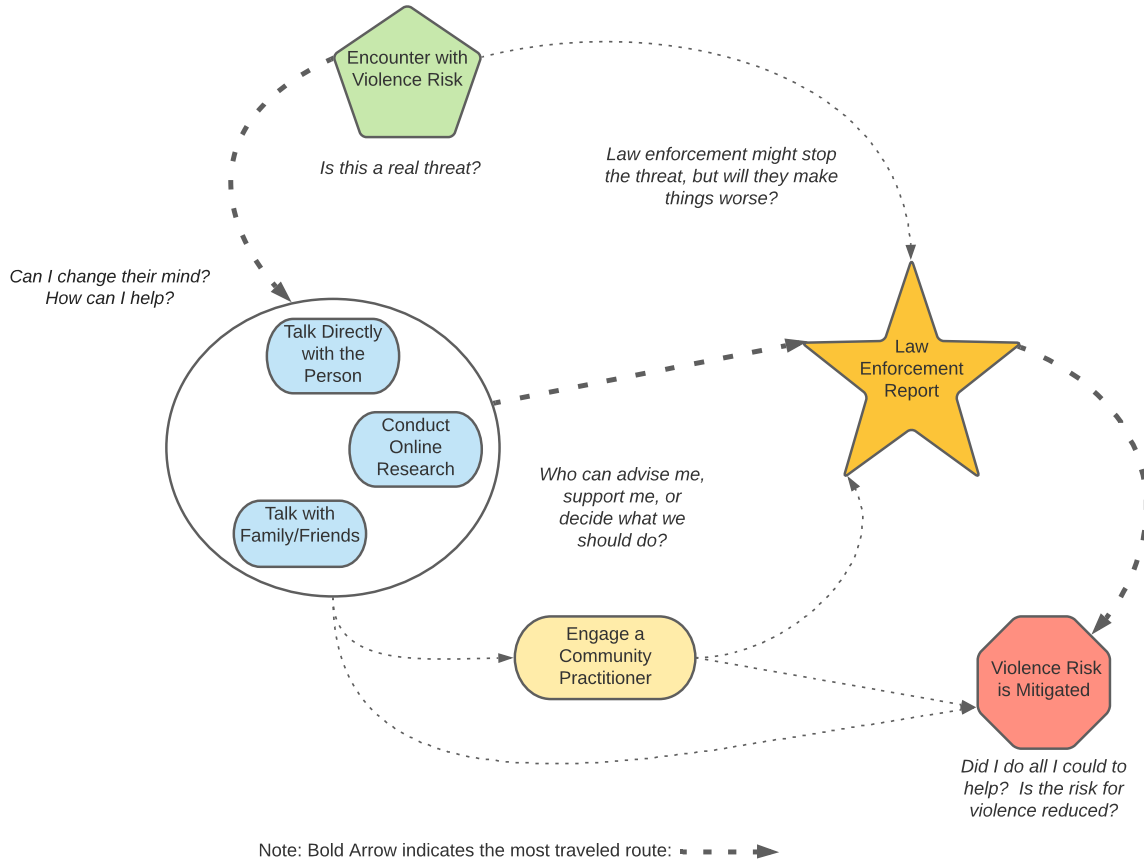
This was not seen as a failure on the part of existing police departments necessarily, but rather as a fact stemming from the role of police within US society. While intimate bystanders felt that the situations presented were preventable, they saw that this work could be done more effectively by mental health experts or multi-disciplinary teams rather than by police alone.

**Research Question 2: What Processes, Pathways, Means and Conduits do Intimate Bystanders Favor when Willing to Share Concerns? Are There Differences by Demographic Factors (Race, Age, Gender) or by the Type of Targeted Violence (Ideologically-Motivated versus Non-Ideologically Motivated)?**

The study findings showed that for intimate bystanders, reporting a parent, child, sibling, partner, close friend, or co-worker is never easy. Reporting involved questions of judging the validity and severity of the threat of violence. It also involved managing fears about potential harm that reporting could cause to themselves, the person-of-concern, or their relationship. It also involved moral dilemmas, balancing the potential for harm to the person-of-concern with harm towards yourself, others, or the community. These concerns and fears complicated the reporting process for intimate bystanders, often causing them to struggle with their decisions and to feel unprepared for an encounter with the potential for targeted violence. In some circumstances they would directly contact law enforcement, but in most they would take other steps first which do not involve law enforcement. Importantly, all but one intimate bystander said they would eventually involve law enforcement if the situation were serious enough. One intimate bystander described the series of steps she would take:

> *"Initially, I would probably talk to Joseph first and foremost to get the severity of the situation. And then I would probably go to a friend or something, well, somebody I know is wanting to do something crazy. How should I handle this? Do I go to the authorities? I don't know. I would look online, use online help and what to do if I have a friend who X, Y, and Z. And at that point, most people would probably tell me to go to the authorities anyway. So that's probably what I would end up doing, the things I would end up using."*
>
> *-(Illinois, 21, Female, Black or African American, Non-Practicing)*

*FIGURE 2: ICARE Model (Intimate bystander deCision mAking for Reporting targeted violencE)*



Encounter with Violence Risk

*Is this a real threat?*

*Law enforcement might stop the threat, but will they make things worse?*

*Can I change their mind? How can I help?*

Talk Directly with the Person

Conduct Online Research

Talk with Family/Friends

*Who can advise me, support me, or decide what we should do?*

Law Enforcement Report

Engage a Community Practitioner

Violence Risk is Mitigated

*Did I do all I could to help? Is the risk for violence reduced?*

Note: Bold Arrow indicates the most traveled route: ▪ ▪ ▪ ➤

To represent the multiple stages of intimate bystanders' decision making and possible actions, we developed the "ICARE Model (Intimate bystander deCision mAking for Reporting targeted violencE)" (Figure 2). In the scenarios presented to them as part of the study, most intimate bystanders followed the bold arrow pathway to law enforcement reporting. The figure also identifies the key questions which intimate bystanders face at different stages of the process. Additionally, the figure shows how much of the intimate bystander's decision making and possible actions do not involve or depend upon law enforcement and are either entirely self-directed or involve other community practitioners, many of whom are not trained in responding to targeted violence. The process model is summarized below.

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**Encounter with violence risk:** Intimate bystanders' initial reactions were almost all the same, including never expecting anything like this to happen, worry for the person-of-concern and believing that something needed to be done. However, to know what to do, they wanted to learn more about the nature of the risk and who they could turn to for help. For many intimate bystanders, there was a hesitancy to go to law enforcement unless the risk was considered highly serious and imminent. One intimate bystander stated: *"If it's an imminent threat, then I wouldn't waste time at first. If there is time, then I would consult someone first." (California, 36, Female, White, Latinx, Catholic)*

**Conduct on-line research:** Most intimate bystanders said they would first do some research on-line. They wanted help on how to talk to someone planning to commit mass violence, to identify risk factors for violence, local resources such as violence prevention organizations or hotlines, expert advice, and other information that could help them clarify any uncertainty about the risk or what they should do. One intimate bystander said she wanted to gain *"more information on what the reporting process is and what happens in the aftermath" (Illinois, 21, Female, Bi-Racial Hispanic, Non-Practicing)*. The most common method participants described was to Google search keywords related to the situation, such as "violence prevention" or "planning attack". However, one man noted,

> *"I'm a Muslim, and ...I would feel less comfortable Googling stuff about this scenario. I would be a lot less comfortable going online and discussing things, I would much, much prefer to speak in person to somebody about what steps I need to take because of this issue. I think it would raise too much attention with my background as it is." -(California, 25, Male, Middle Eastern, Muslim)*

**Talk with a family member or friend:** Most intimate bystanders said they would talk informally with a trusted family member or friend, who could listen to the problem and provide guidance and support. Some participants said that they would want to talk with mutual friends of the person-of-concern, or his family members, to see if these people had also noticed any alarming signs in his recent behavior.

*"I would definitely talk to other friends and my parents and siblings and be like, listen, this is happening. What should I do?" -(Illinois, 19, Male, White, Catholic)*

**Talk directly with the person-of-concern:** Many intimate bystanders wanted to talk directly with the intimate, either alone or together with a family member or mutual friend. Their aim was to talk them out of their plan or get them the help they may need. Some intimate bystanders said this would also help to gauge how serious the person was regarding their plan, which would help them decide whether law enforcement involvement was necessary or not. They could gather further details about his plan (target, timing, location, motivation) that could potentially be shared during reporting. Others said this would be a good opportunity to leverage people who also cared about the person and to remind them of their support network, and the good things they have in life.

*"That's why I wouldn't go to the authorities first. I'd try and stop the situation first, try to get him to come to the realization." -(Illinois, 19, Male, White, Non-Practicing)*

**Engage a community practitioner:** Many intimate bystanders said they would talk to a community practitioner who may be able to help them weigh up and address the risk or decide whether to contact law enforcement. They feared that going to law enforcement would only increase the likelihood of a violent outcome or harm to the person. They wanted to speak with someone they trusted about the situation to gather guidance, emotional support, and to talk

through their possible plan of action. The different types of community practitioners considered included mental health professionals, faith leaders, social workers, staff at community-based organizations, and business human resources staff. The intimate bystanders wanted someone who would listen to them, corroborate their concerns, and allow them the space to decide what to do without judgment or interference. If an intervention was needed, they felt that a non-law enforcement practitioner, compared with law enforcement, would have a greater capacity for compassion, resourcing, and an ability to address the underlying cause of the person's potential violence. One intimate bystander said a community practitioner can "*help bring in a different opinion on what to do, a different suggestion on what to do and they can help*" *(Illinois, 19, Male, Pakistani, Muslim)*. Some intimate bystanders wanted community practitioners to be the one to contact law enforcement if that were necessary. However, one major problem mentioned by intimate bystanders was many reported not knowing which community practitioner was best to involve and how to reach them. Some intimate bystanders said they would go to a mental health professional because they *"have the authority, they can report that as well if they see any indication…[or] if somebody is going to be harmed then I know they're allowed to report"* *(Illinois, 18, Male, South Asian, Muslim)*. Still, even accessing mental health providers was difficult for many.

**Give a report to law enforcement:** Intimate bystanders were ready and willing to report to law enforcement, especially when the perceived threat was more serious and imminent, and when they had trust in the police. For them, the benefits of reporting to law enforcement outweighed the costs so they alerted law enforcement to the threat. It helped when they had an officer they already knew personally, or someone with advanced training in violence prevention or threat assessment, which reassured them that the officer would not over-react. Or the intimate

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bystander believed that law enforcement could connect the intimate with a therapist, social worker, or other support after assessing the situation and recognizing his needs. Some intimate bystanders would contact law enforcement only after first talking with a family member or friend, the person of concern, or community practitioners.

> *"I think I might try to, if it was someone I cared about, I'd tell them that maybe they should seek counseling or something like that since Sam has a history of mental illness and stuff. But if these problems persist and he wasn't willing to go to counseling, and then he was still talking about all this mass shooting stuff, then I think I'd still have to report it." -(Illinois, 19, Male, Asian, Non-Practicing)*

Many intimate bystanders worried that law enforcement involvement would make the situation worse rather than better by responding with excessive force, hastening a violent altercation, or responding with racial or cultural bias, or alternatively ignoring the report and allowing the threat to go unchecked.

**Violence risk is mitigated:** Intimate bystanders reported that their intention was to do what they can to prevent violence from happening, without making matters worse. Many felt that once they reported to police, they had handed off the situation.

> *"I can, if anything, delegate it to the police. I mean, I trust them with that stuff."* - *(Illinois, 18, Male, Hispanic, Catholic)*

However, they also recognized that they didn't control what law enforcement and others would do, and they could only hope that their decisions and actions would help. In addition, they were not confident in their own ability to recognize a true threat, which also made it difficult to know if the danger had passed.

Intimate bystanders were not certain how the situation would ultimately end if they did make a report, and whether law enforcement would take the person of concern into custody, just interview them, or take some other action. Some people hoped that they would be able to mitigate the violent threat by seeking help or support for the person of concern and avoid law enforcement involvement altogether. Others said they would take additional steps to ensure public safety in addition to making a police report, such as contacting the potential targets the person of concern was considering attacking, in case law enforcement was not able to stop the attack.

> *"If you knew who the targets were, if it's a, you said, a church or an organization like this… I might go and talk to those people quietly and grab them and say, 'Look, there might be some organizations that are against your church or religion, whatever. Please be very careful.'" -(Illinois, 65, Female, White, Catholic)*

**Differences by Scenario**

We looked at whether the intimate bystanders responded differently to the different scenarios in terms of their reporting process. Although two of the scenarios were focused on ideology (White Power, ISIS-Al Qaeda inspired) versus a non-ideological workplace targeted attack, the **participants did not respond differently or perceive a different level of credibility; a threat was a threat and it didn't matter the motivation.** As noted earlier, a few intimate bystanders for the Connor (White Power) scenario also noted that they would have some concerns reporting a white nationalist to local police, because of the possibility that members of the police may be involved in or sympathetic to his ideology.

## Differences by Demographic Background

Participants were asked to give a numerical rating on a scale from 1-10 (1 being most comfortable, 10 being least comfortable) regarding their level of comfort "sharing concerns" about the scenario presented with different people or organizations. **Overall, intimate bystanders of different genders, age, race, ethnicity, and religion largely agreed in their ranking of comfort for sharing concerns.** Participants overall gave high ranks to relatives (mean ranking 4.1), friends (3.8), and mental health professionals (2.9). Participants who identified with any religion rated faith leaders significantly higher than those who did not (4.5 v. 6.3, p<0.004), although as a group religious intimate bystanders still did not rate faith leaders as highly as they rated family, friends, and mental health practitioners. However, a minority of respondents were just as comfortable with faith leaders as they were with family, friends, and mental health practitioners: 15/37 Christians (40%) and 7/21 Muslims (33%) ranked faith leaders a 1 or 2 out of 10. Qualitative findings showed that while many religious intimate bystanders were comfortable sharing their concerns with faith leaders, they did so to seek guidance and support and did not think making a formal report to a faith leader would be appropriate. Police and FBI had average ratings around 5.

**White-identified intimate bystanders were more comfortable sharing concerns with both police and FBI relative to the rest of the sample.** Whites were more comfortable sharing concerns with the police (3.6 v. 4.6, p<0.03) and FBI (4.1 v. 6.0, p<0.002).  Notably, this difference may have been confounded by the scenario choice: "Connor" was only offered to White intimate bystanders and was perceived to be more serious, thus police or FBI attention was seen as more necessary.  In the Sam workplace scenario offered to all intimate bystanders, we found a similar trend in White preference for police (3.4 v. 4.1, p=0.15) but not for FBI (5.9

v. 5.7, p=0.54). Additionally, Chicago area Whites expressed higher comfort sharing concerns with police relative to Los Angeles Whites (3.4 v. 4.0, p=0.32).

**Black-identified intimate bystanders were significantly more comfortable sharing concerns with a variety of alternative resources.** Black-identified intimate bystanders reported feeling more comfortable sharing concerns with mental health practitioners (1.3 vs 3.1, p<0.008), teachers (4.2 vs 5.7, p<0.01), faith leaders (3.9 vs 5.4, p=0.007), and community leaders (4.2 vs 5.4, p=0.03) compared to the rest of the sample. This result may reflect Black intimate bystanders' desires to identify alternative resources that would address the person-of-concern's underlying turmoil before turning to law enforcement to help protect them from police overreactions. By contrast, White-identified intimate bystanders reported feeling less comfortable sharing concerns with mental health practitioners compared to non-Whites (4.6 v. 2.2, p<0.0001), and this difference held when restricting to the Sam workplace scenario (4.2 vs 2.1, p=0.003).

**Reporting Modalities**

*FIGURE 3: Preference for Modalities for Reporting*
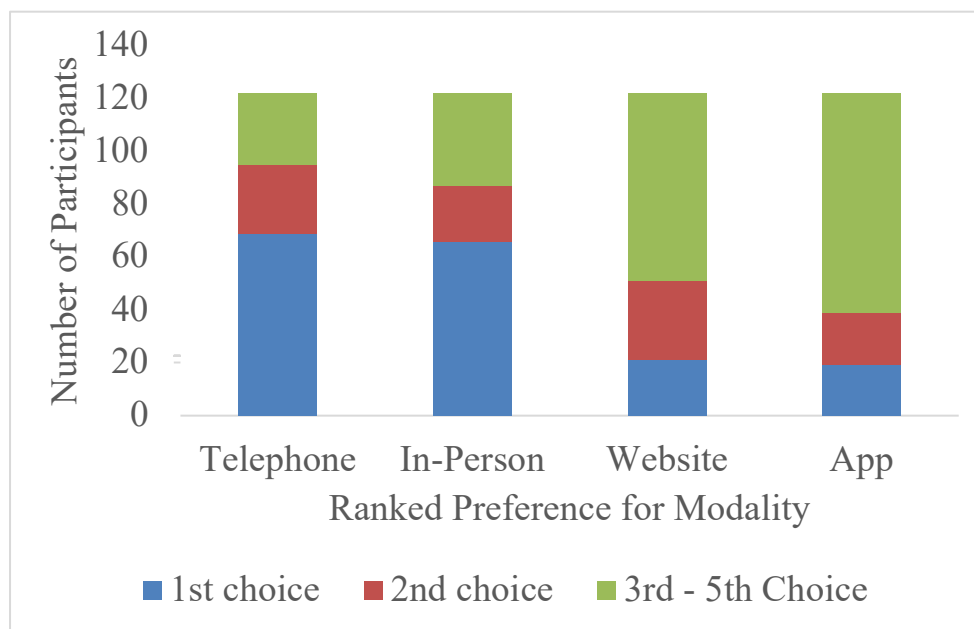


**Intimate bystanders ranked the telephone and in-person modalities as their first choices overall.** The telephone was the most popular reporting option: 69/123 (56%) intimate bystanders ranked it as their first choice and 26/123 (21%) intimate bystanders ranked it as their second choice. In-person reporting was the second most preferred method: 66/123 (54%) intimate bystanders ranked it first and 21/123 (17%) ranked it second. Reporting by telephone was perceived as fast and facilitating anonymity.  Many intimate bystanders expressed a preference for telephone reporting to local professionals, such as a mental health practitioner, to obtain more guidance and support before contacting law enforcement. Intimate bystanders who preferred to report in-person felt it conveyed the severity of the situation, indicating *"that I have strong concerns" (Illinois, 59, Female, Black or African American, Baptist) "whereas if you are doing it over the phone or online, you never really know how the other side is going to interpret what you are telling them." (Illinois, 19, Male, White, Non-Practicing)*. Consistent with the Australian and UK studies, reporting in person was perceived as a way to hold the police more

accountable to the intimate bystanders' report. In-person communication allowed individuals to receive feedback from the report taker about what they were doing and that their reporting was correct, again evident in the previous Australian and UK studies, where face-to-face reporting was overwhelmingly the preferred option.

**Overall, participants did not prefer websites and apps relative to telephone and in-person reporting methods.** A majority of participants did not prefer websites (71/123, 58%) or apps (83/123, 67%), ranking them as a 3 or lower out of 5. Participants feared that their report submitted via smartphone app, website, or email can *"go unanswered by law enforcement" (California, 29, Female, White, Non-Practicing)*. Moreover, texting, mobile application, or secure websites may have character or content limitations preventing one to *"talk about it in detail"* or share as much as the reporter feels comfortable with sharing *(Illinois, 22, Male, Pakistani, Muslim)*. Other intimate bystanders shared this concern: *"On the phone where I can express what's going on in full detail, because your secure websites will have a text limit. So if you look at any of these websites, the FBI's, the criminal justice reporting system for IP crimes, whatever, it's 500 words" (California, 23, Male, Asian, Muslim)*.

> *"I would probably be thinking, did they receive my concern? Did it go through? And it's not like you're talking to someone directly" -(California, 34, Female, Latinx, Non-Practicing)*.

Those who did prefer websites or apps cited their ease of access in reporting and facilitation of anonymity and confidentiality. Similarly, because reporting online prevented one's identity to be disclosed, it had the potential to reduce situations in which implicit bias or discrimination may change *"opinions [of the report-taker or authorities] and change [their] advice to you in a way" (Illinois, 19, Male, Asian, Muslim)*.

Table 1 below summarizes the reasons given for these modality preferences.

*TABLE 1: Reasons for Preferred Reporting Modalities*

| Reason for Preference | In-Person | Telephone or Hotline | Website or App |
|---|---|---|---|
| Fast | | | ✓ |
| Convenient | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Facilitates Anonymity | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Reduces Risk of Bias | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Live Verbal Feedback | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Facilitates Guidance | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Conveys Severity | ✓ | | |
| Understand Report-Taker's Intentions | ✓ | | |
| Verbal and Physical Cues | ✓ | | |

## Expected Applicability of the Research

This study found that intimate bystanders will report to law enforcement if the violence risk is deemed serious enough, yet they face multiple barriers and reporting to law enforcement is one of multiple possible actions for mitigating violence risk. Several of the US study findings align with the results of the prior studies in Australia and the UK:

- Intimate bystanders considering reporting are motivated by care and concern for the person posing a possible violence risk.

- Intimate bystanders face difficulties in assessing the proper threshold for reporting and may be beset by concerns about misjudgment, often waiting for noticeable, concrete actions--such as naming a plan or date---to have occurred before reporting.

- Intimate bystanders experience considerable uncertainty and confusion about what reporting resources and choices are available to them.

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- Intimate bystanders approach decision-making and reporting in stages: Before reporting to law enforcement, they search for information and engage family, friends, and professionals, seeking their advice and assistance, which may delay eventual reporting.

- Intimate bystanders prefer locally-based telephone or face to face reporting rather than doing so over the internet or using a mobile phone app.

- Intimate bystanders, especially from minority communities, are burdened by the harms that may be caused to the person-of-concern, themselves or their family, or the community if they do report.

- Some intimate bystanders want follow-up from authorities on the progress and outcomes of their reporting and some want additional support and counseling.

    Several US findings were different from or added to the prior studies:

- Intimate bystanders in the US expressed a high level of fears and concerns regarding the safety of the person posing violence risk from law enforcement over-reaction.

- The vast majority of decisions and actions of intimate bystanders are either self-directed, or involve family, friends, community, and on-line resources, not law enforcement.

- Those intimate bystanders in the US who want to talk to community practitioners, face difficulty knowing who to go to and how to access them.

- Intimate bystander's reporting decisions or actions for ideologically motivated violence, such as terrorism, is indistinguishable from non-ideologically motivated violence, such as targeted workplace violence.

    Another important area of difference concerned the role played by racial disparities and institutional racism on reporting by intimate bystanders. While more commonly discussed by non-White intimate bystanders, even White intimate bystanders expressed concerns about law

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enforcement being likely to overreact and do harm, especially to Black people. The primacy of this finding likely reflects a combination of the racially and ethnically diverse sample in our study, the prominence of institutional racism in the US, and the salience of police violence in national debates at the time of our study.

Because of the important role played by institutional racism, as well as other social and community dimensions reflected in the data, we developed a four-level socio-ecological framework to better understand intimate bystander reporting in the US This framework extends prior studies as it claims that intimate bystander reporting should be viewed as more than primarily an individual phenomenon (e.g., "should I help?"). Reporting decisions and actions should also be viewed within the context of society and its policies (e.g., "Are the histories and institutions capable of being non-discriminatory and fair?"). Intimate bystander reporting is the outcome of interactions among many factors at the four levels. The interaction between factors at the different levels is just as important as the influence of factors within a single level. For example, fears that harm will come to the person-of-concern (Relationship level factors) may influence reporting mainly when they occur in combination with factors at the community level (Trust of Law Enforcement) and societal level (Police Violence, Racism and Discrimination). One conclusion is that policymakers and practitioners wanting to improve reporting need to attend more closely to how community and societal factors influence intimate bystanders. A priority must be dismantling policing practices that perpetuate racial inequities in policing, so as to increase community trust. The model also situates intimate bystander reporting beside other population-based approaches to violence prevention. We offer this model as a framework for organizing future programs and a shared and comparative research agenda.

To represent the multiple stages of intimate bystanders' decision making and possible actions, we developed the "ICARE Model (Intimate bystander deCision mAking for Reporting targeted violencE)." It shows how much of the intimate bystander's decision making and possible actions do not involve or depend upon law enforcement and are either entirely self-directed or involve other community practitioners, many of whom are not trained in responding to targeted violence. It also identifies the key questions which intimate bystanders face at different stages of the process for which they expressed difficulty finding answers. One key implication of this study is to develop engaging and accessible web-based resources to help support and guide intimate bystanders in answering their questions and directing them to resources and remedies. Another key implication is to better equip community practitioners with the tools for assessing and managing targeted violence.

By elucidating the socio-ecological context and decision-making process of intimate bystander reporting, this study can inform new, contextually-sensitive approaches to intimate bystander reporting programs and policies in the US. The responsibility for acting on these recommendations is shared by law enforcement, other local, state, and federal government agencies, and community based organizations. Successful outcomes will require communication, coordination, and collaboration between all these entities.

Top priorities include:

- **Educate** intimate bystanders regarding potential warning signs, how to make sense of the concerns you have, how the reporting process works, including information sharing, referrals, diversion, follow-up and support.

- **Provide** multiple modalities for intimate bystander information sharing and formal reporting of persons-of-concern, expanding the range of options for reporting to include options for in-person, telephone, and remote (e.g. on-line) reporting.

- **Dismantle** racist policing practices to remedy inequities and increase community trust in law enforcement.

- **Sensitize** law enforcement to fears of harm that many persons have regarding reporting.

- **Train** law enforcement in better understanding and responding to diverse cultural practices of the communities they serve relevant to reporting, including the use of community practitioners and organizations as intermediaries.

- **Design** reporting materials and channels which integrate both non-ideologically motivated targeted violence and ideologically-motivated violence.

- **Provide** a "continuum of support options" to intimate bystanders who report. This should include immediate validation of their reporting, emphasizing the difficulty and courage to report, following-up on the outcomes of the report, providing clear understanding of the reporting process, and individual counseling or debriefing.

- **Identify** and train community advocates and organizations to receive reports or information about targeted violence.

- **Train** mental health professionals, social service workers, faith leaders, health care workers, and educators in how to support intimate bystanders, including in behavioral threat assessment, management, and prevention.

- **Develop** and disseminate clear statements on how law enforcement and municipal governments are accountable to intimate bystanders who make a report or share information.

## Limitations

A limitation of our study is that the attitudes and behavioral intentions of the intimate bystanders who were provided hypothetical scenarios may not accurately predict their responses in actual situations. Our study is also limited by the convenience sampling method of both the Phase 1 and 2 participants from two urban areas--the results may not be generalizable. The Connor scenario was only presented to participants who identified as white. No female scenarios were provided to participants since the majority of targeted violence in the US is conducted by males.

## ARTIFACTS

Eisenman, D. "The Future of Hate Prevention", LA City Civil + Human Rights and Equity Department, Live Televised Discussion, October 21, 2021. Available at

https://civilandhumanrights.lacity.org/get-involved/highlights/future-hate-prevention

Eisenman D., Weine S., Grossman M., Thomas P., Polutnik-Smith C., Jones N., Shah N. "Ten Ways to Improve Community Reporting for Violent Extremism and Targeted Violence"

Weine S., Eisenman D. "To Prevent Domestic Terrorism, the US Needs Community Reporting That Protects Civil Liberties", Just Security, February 9, 2021.

https://www.justsecurity.org/74544/to-prevent-domestic-terrorism-the-us-needs-community-reporting-that-protects-civil-liberties/

"I CARE 2 Quant Phase 2 Full Dataset" contains data from the quantitative questions for all 123 participants from the community interviews, Phase 2 of this study in Excel format along with generated variable syntax.

"I CARE Quant Phase 2 Data" contains the raw Phase 2 quantitative data in CSV file format for use in SPSS.

"I CARE Complete Analysis Do File" contains generated variable syntax, labels, and analysis steps conducted for this report in rich text format.

"I CARE Qual Phase 1 CA" contains transcripts for each Phase 1 interview conducted in California in zip file format.

"I CARE Qual Phase 1 IL" contains transcripts for each Phase 1 interview conducted in Illinois in zip file format.

"I CARE Qual Phase 2 CA" contains transcripts for each Phase 2 interview conducted in California in zip file format.

"I CARE Qual Phase 2 IL" contains transcripts for each Phase 2 interview conducted in Illinois in zip file format.

"I CARE Phase 1 Code List" contains the code list that was uploaded to Dedoose and used to code interviews during Phase 1 qualitative analysis.

"I CARE Phase 2 Code List" contains the code list that was uploaded to Dedoose and used to code interviews during Phase 2 qualitative analysis.

"I CARE Secondary Data Analyst User Guide" contains a guide for secondary data users.

## REFERENCES

Grossman, M. (2015). *Community Reporting Thresholds: Sharing Information with Authorities Concerning Violent Extremist Activity and Involvement in Foreign Conflict*. Canberra: Countering Violent Extremism Subcommittee, Australia-New Zealand Counter-Terrorism Committee.

Thomas, P. & Grossman, M. (2017). Community Reporting Thresholds. *CREST.* Retrieved from https://crestresearch.ac.uk/resources/community-reporting-tresholds-full-report/