

---

## Title registration for a systematic review: Police programs that seek to increase community connectedness for reducing violent extremism behaviour, attitudes, and beliefs

Lorraine Mazerolle, Adrian Cherney, Elizabeth Eggins,  
Angela Higginson, Lorelei Hine, Emma Belton

---

*Submitted to the Coordinating Group of:*

Crime and Justice

Education

Disability

International Development

Nutrition

Food Security

Social Welfare

Methods

Knowledge Translation and  
Implementation

Business and Management

Other:

*Plans to co-register:*

No

Yes  Cochrane  Other

Maybe

Date submitted: 12 February 2019

Date revision submitted:

Approval date:

Publication date: 5 March 2019

---

## **Title of the review**

---

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

---

## **Background**

---

Community engagement and connectedness are identified as potential mitigating factors for those at risk of engaging in violent extremism (Cherney & Hartley, 2017). A focus on inclusion, social connectedness and positive cultural norms is essential for prevention efforts designed to build inclusive communities and weaken the influence of extremist messages and recruiters (Van Den Bos, 2018; Grossman et al., 2016; Schanzer, Kurzman, Toliver, & Miller, 2018). Growing research suggests that cohesive communities are resilient against violent extremist influences; for example, it is argued that a greater sense of belonging and acceptance can reduce extremist behaviour, attitudes, and beliefs (Cherney et al., 2018; Van Den Bos, 2018; Grossman et al., 2016).

Police have a critical role in preventing violent extremism as their direct engagement with the public means that they have a deeper understanding of their local communities and have the opportunity to develop improved community relations. This can help police to identify individuals who might be at risk of radicalisation and work with community leaders to counter the influence of violent extremist groups. Importantly, police can act as key agents in promoting community connectedness as they can work with community members to build trust, minimise social distancing – particularly amongst culturally diverse communities – and strengthen a sense of belonging by showing that they have the interests of the community at heart (Cherney & Hartley, 2017; Murray, Mueller-Johnson, & Sherman, 2015).

Increasingly, police and local governments are working together to actively engage the community to reduce social isolation, improve economic opportunity and aim to create social and cultural norms that prevent violent extremism (Schanzer et al., 2018). Thus, it is essential to understand the effectiveness of policing programs aimed at promoting community connectedness and their impact on reducing violent extremism.

---

## **Policy relevance**

---

Community engagement approaches have become a key component of police counterterrorism efforts (Cherney & Hartley, 2017). These strategies have emphasised community engagement and outreach to identify potential terror threats. This has involved police programs that aim to promote collaborative problem solving between police and community members to tackle radicalisation, such as through identifying youth at risk of radicalising to violent extremism (Cherney, 2018). Following 9/11, police units in Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada were established to undertake outreach

with particular community groups (e.g., Muslim communities), with the aim of tackling violence extremism by enhancing relations and connectedness between police and these communities, and also between community members (Cherney, 2018; Ramiriz et al., 2013). Given this context, the current proposed review is necessary to ascertain if there is evidence indicating that such initiatives are effective.

---

## Objectives

---

The primary objective of this review is to answer the question: how effective are police programs that seek to increase community connectedness for reducing violent extremism attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours? If there are sufficient data, the review will also examine whether the effectiveness of these interventions vary by the following factors: geographical location, target population, and type of policing strategy used to promote connectedness.

---

## Existing reviews

---

We conducted a search of the literature using the following terms to identify existing reviews: terrorism\* OR extremism\* OR radicali\*. Searches of the following locations did not identify any existing systematic reviews (completed or ongoing) on the specific topic proposed in this proposal:

- Campbell Collaboration
- Cochrane Collaboration
- PROSPERO registry
- Google Scholar

---

## Intervention

---

This review will include any policing intervention that aims to promote community connectedness. Specifically, each study must meet two intervention criteria:

1. Report on a *policing intervention*, defined as some kind of a strategy, technique, approach, activity, campaign, training, program, directive, or funding/organisational change that involves police in some way (other agencies or organisations can be involved; Higginson, Eggins, Mazerolle, & Stanko, 2015). Police involvement is broadly defined as:
  - Police initiation, development or leadership;
  - Police are recipients of the intervention or the intervention is related, focused or targeted to police practices; or
  - Delivery or implementation of the intervention by police.

**AND**

2. Report on a policing intervention that *aims to promote community connectedness*. For the purposes of this review, we define the promotion of community connectedness to mean an intention to increase linkages or ties between either the

community members themselves, or community members and police. Other terminology that may be used to represent connectedness in the literature includes (Thomas, 2019):

- Promotion of common values, norms, and/or reciprocity;
- Promotion of social networks, collective efficacy, social cohesion, and/or social capital; or
- Promotion of shared problem-solving or citizen engagement.

We anticipate that policing interventions aiming to promote community connectedness will include, more generally, community consultation, partnership, or collaboration with citizens and/or organisational entities. Specific strategies may include:

- Community meetings or forums;
- Developing partnerships with specific organisations (Fox, 2012);
- Police liaison programs involving community members (Cherney et al., 2018); or
- Police work with community leaders to enhance personal skills (e.g., self-identity, self-awareness and resilience), employment skills (e.g., teamwork and self-awareness), or leadership skills (Thomas, 2019).

---

## **Population**

---

This review will consider the impact of community connectedness policing interventions on the following population subjects:

1. Individuals of any age, gender, or ethnicity
2. Micro places (e.g., street corners, buildings, police beats, street segments)
3. Macro places (e.g., neighbourhoods, communities, police districts)

We will place no limits on the geographical region reported in the study. Specifically, we will include high-, low- and middle-income and developing countries in the review.

---

## **Outcomes**

---

This review will include studies where the measured outcome is violent extremism attitudes, beliefs and behaviour. For the purposes of this review, violent extremism is defined as “advocating, engaging in, preparing, or otherwise supporting ideologically motivated or justified violence to further social, economic, and political objectives” (United States Agency for International Development (USAID), cited in Khalil & Zeythen, 2016, p. 2). The review will also include studies where the outcome is disengagement and deradicalisation, which are often encompassed within conceptualisations of violent extremism (Klausen, Campion, Needle, Nguyen, & Libretti, 2016). Disengagement generally captures the behavioural aspect of extremism and refers to reducing or ceasing physical involvement in violent or radical activities (Horgan, 2009). In contrast, deradicalisation is defined as the psychological shift in attitudes or beliefs (Horgan & Braddock, 2010). This can encompass a variety of ideologies, including: Islamist (Islamist or jihadist), far-right (right-wing), far-left (left-wing) and single

issue (anti-abortion, animal liberationists; National Consortium of the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism [START], 2018).

We will include outcome data that is measured through self-report instruments, interviews, observations and/or official data (e.g., recidivism rates). Some examples of how violent extremism attitudes, beliefs and behaviour can be measured include:

- Disillusionment or disappointment with group members and leaders (Barrelle, 2015);
- Modification of social identity, through the reduction of group identity into a personal identity (Barrelle, 2015);
- Disillusionment of radical ideology or growing hesitation to engage in violence (San, 2018);
- Accepting cultural and religious differences or engaging in pluralistic views (Barrelle, 2015);
- Severing ties with social networks and recruiters for violent extremism (Perliger & Pedahzur, 2011);
- Severing association with extremist circles or discontinuing extremist activity (San, 2018); and
- Renouncing extremist views (Berger, 2016).

---

## **Study designs**

---

This review will include quantitative impact evaluations that utilise a randomised experimental (e.g., RCTs) or a quasi-experimental design with a comparison group that does not receive the intervention. We will include studies where the comparison group receives 'business-as-usual' policing, no intervention or an alternative intervention (treatment-treatment designs).

Although not as robust as RCTs, 'strong' quasi-experiments can be used to provide causal inference when there are elements of the design that aim to minimise threats to internal validity (see Farrington, 2003; Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, 2002). Minimising threats to internal validity can include: controlling case assignment to treatment and control groups (regression discontinuity), matching characteristics of the treatment and control groups (matched control), statistically accounting for differences between the treatment and control groups (designs using multiple regression analysis), or providing a difference-in-difference analysis (parallel cohorts with pre-test and post-test measures). Therefore, we will include the following 'strong' quasi-experimental designs in this review:

- Cross-over designs
- Regression discontinuity designs
- Designs using multivariate controls (e.g., multiple regression)
- Matched control group designs with or without pre-intervention baseline measures (propensity or statistically matched)
- Unmatched control group designs without pre-intervention measures where the control group has face validity

- Unmatched control group designs with pre-post intervention measures which allow for difference-in-difference analysis
- Short interrupted time-series designs with control group (less than 25 pre- and 25 post-intervention observations (Glass, 1997)
- Long interrupted time-series designs with or without a control group ( $\geq 25$  pre- and post-intervention observations (Glass, 1997)

Weaker quasi-experimental designs can be used to demonstrate the magnitude of the relationship between an intervention and an outcome. However, we will exclude the following weaker quasi-experimental designs due to their limitations in establishing causality:

- Raw unadjusted correlational designs where the variation in the level of the intervention is compared to the variation in the level of the outcome; and
- Single group designs with pre- and post-intervention measures.

---

## References

---

- Barrelle, K. (2015). Pro-integration: disengagement from and life after extremism. *Behavioural Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression*, 7, 129–142. doi: 10.1080/19434472.2014.988165
- Berger, J. M. (2016). Making CVE Work. *International Centre for Counter-terrorism. The Hague*, 7. doi: 10.19165/2016.1.05
- Cherney, A. (2018). Police community engagement and outreach in a counterterrorism context. *Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism*, 13, 60–79. doi: 10.1080/18335330.2018.1432880
- Cherney, A., & Hartley, J. (2017). Community engagement to tackle terrorism and violent extremism: Challenges, tensions and pitfalls. *Policing and Society*, 27, 750–763. doi: 10.1080/10439463.2015.1089871
- Cherney, A., & Murphy, K. (2017). Police and community cooperation in counterterrorism: Evidence and insights from Australia. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 40(12), 1023–1037. doi: 10.1080/1057610X.2016.1253987
- Cherney, A., Bell, J., Leslie, E., Cherney, L., & Mazerolle, L. (2018). *Countering violent extremism evaluation indicator document*. Australian and New Zealand Counter-Terrorism Committee, National Countering Violent Extremism Evaluation Framework and Guide. Brisbane, Australia: University of Queensland.
- Farrington, D. P. (2003). Methodological quality standards for evaluation research. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 587, 49–68. doi: 10.1177/0002716202250789
- Fox, J. P. (2012). *Legitimacy and law enforcement: The counterinsurgency against gang crime in the United States* (Doctoral dissertation, Georgetown University).
- Glass, G. V. (1997). Interrupted time series quasi-experiments. In R. M. Jaeger (Ed.), *Complementary methods for research in education* (2nd ed., pp. 589–608). Washington DC: American Educational Research Association.
- Grossman, M., Peucker, M., Smith, D., & Dellal, H. (2016). *Stocktake research project: A systematic literature*

- and selected program review on social cohesion, community resilience and violent extremism 2011–2015*. Victoria, Australia: Community Resilience Unit, Department of Premier and Cabinet.
- Higginson, A., Eggins, E., Mazerolle, L., & Stanko, E. (2015). *The Global Policing Database* [Database and Protocol]. Retrieved from <http://www.gpd.uq.edu.au>
- Horgan, J. (2009). Individual disengagement: A psychological analysis. In T. Bjorgo & J. Horgan (Eds.), *Leaving terrorism behind: Individual and collective disengagement* (pp. 35-47). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Horgan, J., & Braddock, K. (2010). Rehabilitating the terrorists? Challenges in assessing the effectiveness of de-radicalisation programs. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 22, 267–291. doi: 10.1080/09546551003594748
- Khalil, J., & Zeuthen, M. (2016). *Countering violent extremism and risk reduction: A guide to program design and evaluation*. London: Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Services.
- Klausen, J., Champion, S., Needle, N., Nguyen, G., & Libretti, R. (2016). Toward a behavioural model of “homegrown” radicalisation trajectories. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 39(1), 67–83. doi: 10.1080/1057610X.2015.1099995
- Murray, A., Mueller-Johnson, K., & Sherman, L. (2015) Evidence-based policing of U.K. Muslim communities: Linking confidence in the police with area vulnerability to violent extremism. *International Criminal Justice Review*, 25, 64–79. doi: 10.1080/15614260500293986
- National Consortium of the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). *Profiles of individual in the United States (PIRUS) Codebook*. [Codebook]. Retrieved from <https://www.start.umd.edu/sites/default/files/files/research/PIRUSCodebook.pdf>
- Perliger, A., & Pedahzur, A. (2011). Social network analysis in the study of terrorism and political violence. *Political Science & Politics*, 44, 45–50. doi: 10.1017/S10490965100001848
- Ramiriz, D., Quinlan, T. L., Malloy, S. P., & Shutt, T. (2013). Community partnerships thwart terrorism. In D.P. Silk, B. Spalek & M. O’Rawe (Eds.), *Preventing ideological violence: Communities, police and case studies of success* (pp. 151–169). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- San, S. (2018). Counter-terrorism policing innovations in Turkey: A case study of Turkish National Police CVE experiment. *Policing and Society*, 28, 1-16. doi: 10.1080/10439463.2018.1561697
- Schanzer, D., Kurzman, C., Toliver, J., & Miller, E. (2016). *Challenge and promise of using community policing strategies to prevent violent extremism: A call for community partnerships with law enforcement to enhance public safety, final report*. United States: National Institute of Justice, US Department of Justice.
- Shadish, W. R., Cook, T. D., & Campbell, D. T. (2002). *Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for generalized causal inference*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.
- Thomas, K. T. (2019). Bridging social boundaries and building social connectedness: Through youth development programs. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*. Advance Online Publication. doi: 10.1108/EDI-02-2018-0019

Van Den Bos, K. (2018). *Why people radicalise: How unfairness judgments are used to fuel radical beliefs, extremist behaviours, and terrorism*. New York: Oxford University Press.

---

## Review authors

---

### Lead review author:

Name:	Lorraine Mazerolle
Title:	Professor
Affiliation:	University of Queensland
Address:	School of Social Science, St Lucia Campus
City, State, Province or County:	St Lucia, Queensland
Post code:	4072
Country:	Australia
Phone:	+61 7 334 67877
Email:	<a href="mailto:l.mazerolle@uq.edu.au">l.mazerolle@uq.edu.au</a>

### Co-authors:

Name:	Adrian Cherney
Title:	Associate Professor
Affiliation:	University of Queensland
Address:	School of Social Science, St Lucia Campus
City, State, Province or County:	St Lucia, Queensland
Post code:	4072
Country:	Australia
Phone:	+61 73365 6663
Email:	<a href="mailto:a.cherney@uq.edu.au">a.cherney@uq.edu.au</a>

Name:	Elizabeth Eggins
Title:	Ms
Affiliation:	University of Queensland (UQ)
Address:	School of Social Science, St Lucia Campus
City, State, Province or County:	St Lucia, Queensland
Post code:	4072

Country:	Australia
Email:	<a href="mailto:e.eggins@uq.edu.au">e.eggins@uq.edu.au</a>
Name:	Angela Higginson
Title:	Doctor
Affiliation:	Queensland University of Technology
Address:	School of Justice, Gardens Point Campus
City, State, Province or County:	Brisbane, Queensland
Post code:	4000
Country:	Australia
Phone:	+61 7 3138 4491
Email:	<a href="mailto:angela.higginson@qut.edu.au">angela.higginson@qut.edu.au</a>
Name:	Lorelei Hine
Title:	Ms
Affiliation:	University of Queensland
Address:	School of Social Science, St Lucia Campus
City, State, Province or County:	St Lucia, Queensland
Post code:	4072
Country:	Australia
Email:	<a href="mailto:l.hine@uq.edu.au">l.hine@uq.edu.au</a>
Name:	Emma Belton
Title:	Ms
Affiliation:	University of Queensland
Address:	School of Social Science, St Lucia Campus
City, State, Province or County:	St Lucia, Queensland
Post code:	4072
Country:	Australia
Email:	<a href="mailto:e.belton@uq.edu.au">e.belton@uq.edu.au</a>

---

## **Roles and responsibilities**

---

- Content: Mazerolle, Cherney, Belton, Eggins, Higginson, Hine
- Systematic review methods: Eggins, Higginson, Hine
- Statistical analysis: Higginson, Eggins
- Information retrieval: Eggins, Higginson, Hine

Lorraine Mazerolle is a Professor of Criminology in the School of Social Science at the University of Queensland and current Co-Chair of the Campbell Collaboration Crime and Justice Coordinating Group. She has won numerous US and Australian competitive research grants - including systematic reviews - on topics such as third party policing, police engagement with high risk people and disadvantaged communities, community regulation, problem-oriented policing, police technologies, civil remedies, street-level drug enforcement and policing public housing sites.

Adrian Cherney is an Associate Professor in the School of Social Science at the University of Queensland and an Australian Research Council (ARC) Future Fellow. His current research focuses on the evaluation of programs aimed at countering violent extremism and he has undertaken research on the supervision of terrorist offenders in Australian who have been released into the community on parole. His ARC Future Fellowship aims to develop and test metrics and methods to evaluate case-managed interventions targeting individuals who have been charged for a terrorist offence or have been identified as at risk of radicalising to violent extremism. He has secured both international and national competitive grants.

Ms Elizabeth Eggins is the Managing Editor of the Campbell Collaboration Crime and Justice Coordinating Group. She has co-authored and managed multiple systematic reviews in criminology and social welfare disciplines, with particular expertise in methodology, analysis, and information retrieval.

Dr Angela Higginson is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Justice, Faculty of Law, QUT and current editor of the Campbell Collaboration Crime and Justice Coordinating Group. She is an ARC Discovery Early Career Research Award (DECRA) fellow for 2018-2020, and her DECRA project examines the correlates and consequences of ethnically-motivated youth hate crime in Australia. Much of Angela's work has focused on policing and community processes for crime control, with a particular expertise in evaluation through systematic reviews and meta-analysis.

Ms Lorelei Hine is a Research Assistant in the School of Social Science at the University of Queensland. She has assisted with the project management of several systematic reviews as well as the Global Policing Database. This has provided her with expertise in both systematic review methodology and substantive content in relation to criminal justice interventions.

Ms Emma Belton is a PhD student and Research Assistant in the School of Social Science at the University of Queensland. She has co-authored and worked on projects in the area of

countering violent extremism (CVE), including the collection and analysis of data and evaluations of programs aimed CVE.

---

## **Funding**

---

This review is funded by a Campbell Collaboration grant awarded to Lorraine Mazerolle, Elizabeth Eggins, Adrian Cherney and Angela Higginson via the Department of Homeland Security. The final review is due for submission to the Campbell Collaboration on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

---

## **Potential conflicts of interest**

---

Three of the review authors have internal roles within the Campbell Collaboration Crime and Justice Group. Lorraine Mazerolle is the Co-Chair of the Crime and Justice Coordinating Group (CJCG), Angela Higginson is the Editor of the CJCG, and Elizabeth Eggins is the Managing Editor of the CJCG. Consequently, Mazerolle, Higginson and Eggins will not be involved in any editorial or internal Campbell Collaboration communications about this review. In addition, Adrian Cherney has published research that is closely linked with the review topic. To minimise potential bias, Cherney will not be involved in the screening or coding of any studies for this review.

---

## **Preliminary timeframe**

---

Note, if the protocol or review is not submitted within six months and 18 months of title registration, respectively, the review area is opened up for other authors.

- Date you plan to submit a draft protocol: 30 April 2019
- Date you plan to submit a draft review: 20 December 2019