

Department of Homeland Security (DHS)  
FY2020 Targeted Violence and Terrorism  
Prevention (TVTP) Grantee Evaluation

Site Profile

# McCain Institute at Arizona State University



Developed for:



Science and  
Technology

Developed by RTI International

# List of Abbreviations

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<b>DEEP</b>	Disruption and Early Engagement Project
<b>DHS</b>	Department of Homeland Security
<b>IMP</b>	Implementation and Measurement Plan
<b>PPN</b>	Prevention Practitioners Network
<b>TVTP</b>	Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention

## Executive Summary

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The Science and Technology Directorate at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security funded RTI International to research and evaluate a Fiscal Year 2020 Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention (TVTP) grant to the McCain Institute at Arizona State University to examine program accomplishments, challenges, and recommendations. The research team conducted a process evaluation of the McCain Institute's grant, which comprised four main components. Researchers reviewed read-ahead materials and available recordings of workshops and symposia, reviewed survey data collected by the McCain Institute, observed the Fall 2022 Symposium, interviewed symposium participants and grant partners, and reviewed website metric data. Table ES-A summarizes findings from this evaluation.

The McCain Institute successfully created a network of practitioners in the TVTP field called the Prevention Practitioners Network (PPN) and surpassed its target goal for PPN participants. The McCain Institute used this network to facilitate knowledge sharing and collaboration among PPN participants through a series of workshops and symposia. The extent of knowledge gain from these events could not be assessed because of inconsistencies in data collection; however, participants at the Fall 2022 Symposium said that they referred to reading materials developed for these events in their work and used the symposium to network with other professionals in the field. The McCain Institute developed reading materials and practice guides related to the TVTP concepts and program design elements discussed at workshops and symposia and made them available on the PPN website (<https://www.mccaininstitute.org/programs/preventing-targeted-violence/prevention-practitioners-network/>). These materials were later compiled into a comprehensive framework for TVTP program design, titled Preventing Targeted Violence and Terrorism: A Guide for Practitioners. Last, the McCain Institute created a national network directory to help practitioners, organizations, and community members locate resources and local providers willing to accept targeted violence and terrorism referrals. The McCain Institute took steps throughout the grant period to bolster the sustainability of this program and was already planning future events when the grant period ended.

Table ES-A. Summary of Findings

 <p><b>Objectives</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevention and intervention practitioners participate in practitioners network (i.e., the PPN)</li> <li>• Increase knowledge sharing and collaboration among network members</li> <li>• Framework simplifies design stages for new prevention and intervention initiatives</li> <li>• Increase number of mental and behavioral health professionals able and willing to receive referrals</li> <li>• Government officials locate relevant programs in their regions for referrals</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Outputs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expanded the PPN to 910 participants</li> <li>• Hosted nine workshops</li> <li>• Hosted four symposia</li> <li>• Published nine sets of reading materials</li> <li>• Published four practice guides</li> <li>• Published a comprehensive framework for TVTP program design: <i>Preventing Targeted Violence and Terrorism: A Guide for Practitioners</i></li> <li>• Developed a network directory of TVTP providers and resources</li> <li>• Added 22 licensed clinicians and 109 resources to the directory</li> <li>• Documented 20,985 views of recorded videos of workshops and symposia</li> <li>• Achieved 353 views of the reading materials, practice guides, and PPN Practitioners' Guide</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Challenges</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pivoting delivery methods because of COVID-19 restrictions</li> <li>• Inconsistent data collection due to staff turnover</li> <li>• Difficulty quantifying success among various practitioners</li> <li>• Lack of planning time between symposia</li> <li>• Practitioner hesitation to self-identify as working in the TVTP space</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Recommendations</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop standard operating procedures to facilitate staff transitions</li> <li>• Incorporate timing considerations for the pacing of events</li> <li>• Use qualitative data to share project successes</li> <li>• Design Implementation and Measurement Plans around measurable objectives</li> </ul>

# Site Profile: Arizona State University— The McCain Institute

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The McCain Institute for International Leadership at Arizona State University was awarded a two-year grant by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Center for Prevention Programs and Partnerships in 2020 and was selected in 2021 to undergo an independent evaluation. This site profile reviews the McCain Institute's grant design, project implementation, accomplishments, and challenges in targeted violence and terrorism prevention (TVTP). It concludes with relevant recommendations for future programming. The research team conducted an evaluability assessment of the McCain Institute's Fiscal Year 2020 Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention grant and, on the basis of project readiness, determined that a process evaluation was most appropriate. Such an evaluation provides a deeper understanding of the processes of a project to learn what mechanisms may contribute to its effectiveness and it details project accomplishments at the output level.

## The McCain Institute

The McCain Institute is a Washington, D.C.–based think tank that works in cooperation with Arizona State University. The McCain Institute used grant funding to establish a network for prevention and intervention practitioners to facilitate knowledge sharing and collaboration among TVTP practitioners. In addition to TVTP, the McCain Institute seeks to provide policymakers and practitioners across the country with actionable solutions to issues related to human trafficking, governance, and national security.



# The McCain Institute's Fiscal Year 2020 TVTP Grant Summary

The McCain Institute's FY2020 TVTP grant program was governed by three goals working in tandem to facilitate learning and networking events, from which a Prevention Practitioners Network (PPN) could be developed. Building on these events and the PPN, the McCain Institute partnered with the Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD) and One World Strong to develop a comprehensive framework outlining TVTP program design considerations for practitioners and to create a national directory of providers and resources. Each of these components—the PPN, workshops and symposia, a framework for TVTP practitioners, and the national directory—was driven by project objectives supporting these goals. This report presents the findings from the process evaluation of these components, as well as an overall discussion of evaluation findings, including a look at the grant project's sustainability and recommendations for the TVTP grant program. The four components of the grant program are described here and pictured in Figure 1.



**Prevention Practitioners Network:** The McCain Institute established the PPN to create a network for practitioners in the TVTP field to synthesize

the latest research, share promising practices, and facilitate networking and collaboration among practitioners. The PPN grew through the workshops and symposia hosted by the McCain Institute: everyone who attended events was considered a PPN participant and all PPN participants received invitations to upcoming events. By the end of the grant, the PPN included 910 participants.



**Workshops and symposia:** The McCain Institute hosted a series of nine workshops on topics related to program design challenges or relevant

TVTP information. Staff promoted the workshops to all PPN participants and CP3 grantees, as well as numerous professional associations. The McCain Institute also conducted four symposia to facilitate knowledge sharing and collaboration among TVTP practitioners. It partnered with ISD, a United Kingdom-based research organization, to produce practice guides and other read-ahead material related to prevention and intervention programs for the workshops and symposia. The read-ahead materials provided a background to the workshop topics, outlined key concepts, and listed resources for further reading. The McCain Institute and ISD produced 9 sets of read-ahead materials, four practice guides, and one comprehensive framework for these events, which are available for download on the PPN website.



**Comprehensive framework for TVTP practitioners:**

The McCain Institute and ISD worked together to create a comprehensive framework outlining program design considerations for TVTP and behavioral interventions. This framework, titled *Preventing Targeted Violence and Terrorism: A Guide for Practitioners* (hereinafter referred to as PPN Practitioners' Guide), compiled the four practice guides and read-ahead materials developed for the workshops and symposia.

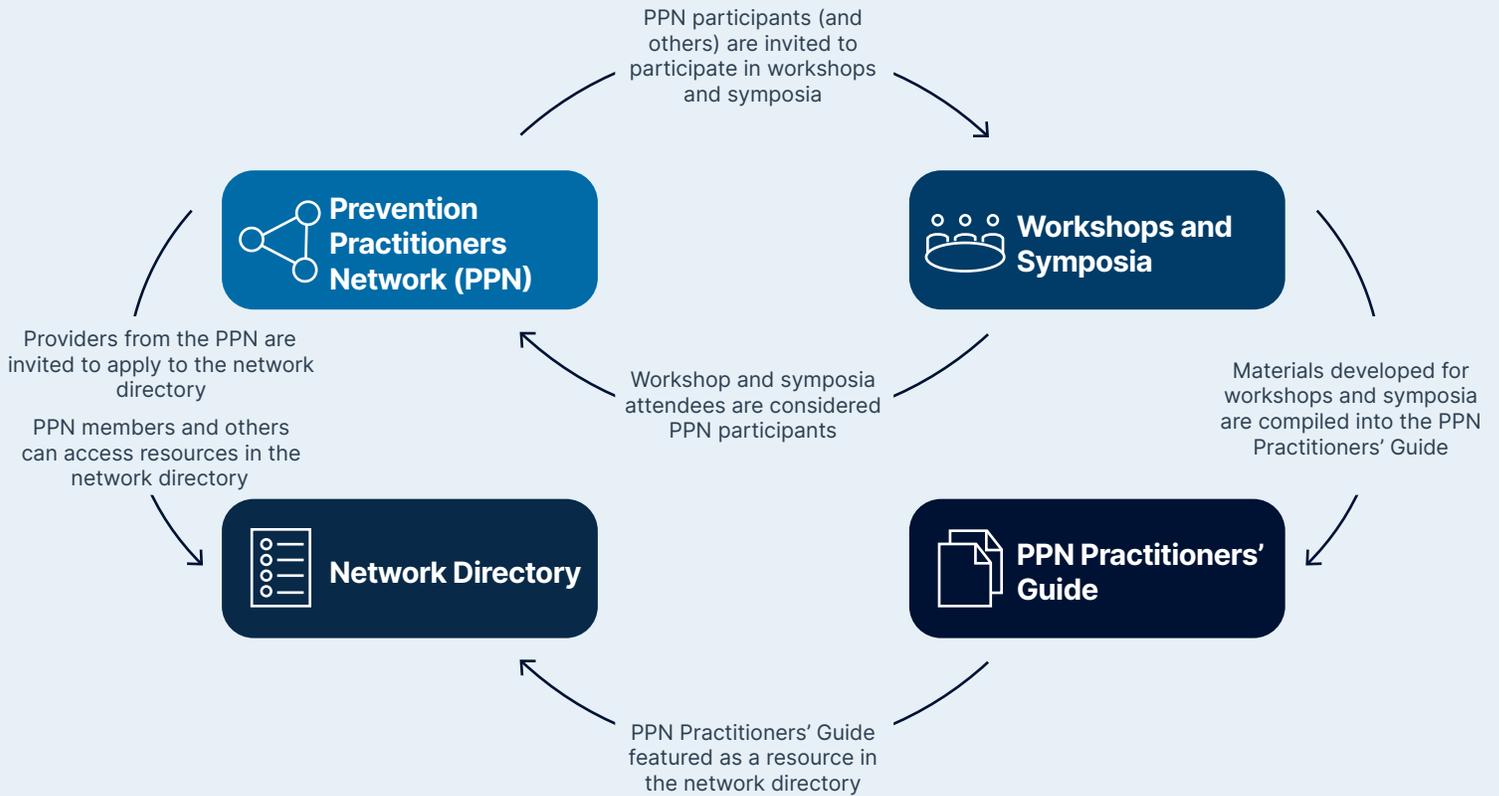


**National network directory of TVTP providers and resources:**

The McCain Institute created a network directory to help practitioners access resources and find mental health professionals willing to accept referrals. Members of the PPN were invited to apply to be part of the directory. The McCain Institute partnered with One World Strong to create a mobile phone app for the directory. Two other organizations—Parents for Peace and the Citizen Crime Commission Disruption and Early Engagement Project (DEEP)—helped design and test the app. By the end of the grant period, the app was functional and the network directory included 22 licensed clinicians and 109 resources.

For the McCain Institute's full Implementation & Measurement Plan (IMP), which outlines its goals, target audiences, objectives, activities, inputs, time frame, anticipated outputs, performance measures, and data collection plan, contact DHS.

**Figure 1. The McCain Institute's Interrelated Grant Components**



## Design and Methods for Process Evaluation

The research team conducted a process evaluation of the McCain Institute's grant program, focusing on the four main components identified above: the creation of the PPN, workshops and symposia, a comprehensive framework for TVTP program design, and the network directory. This process evaluation will discuss how program activities were carried out to understand development decisions and describe how the program functions. This type of evaluation allows researchers to gain a deeper understanding of how and why a project works the way it does and can offer useful information on challenges and implementation considerations for future projects. Not all of the McCain Institute's objectives were measurable with the data collected. In these cases, the evaluation team identified successes that could be measured with the data provided.

The research team observed the Summer and Fall 2022 Symposia and conducted interviews with a convenience sample of Fall 2022 Symposium participants, as well as with McCain Institute staff and some of their grant partners to gain a better understanding of the challenges, considerations, and processes that shaped project implementation. In addition, researchers analyzed a variety of program documents and project metrics, including PPN membership data, website metrics, and workshop and symposia materials. These documents and metrics were carefully reviewed alongside the observation and interview data to investigate the grant program's implementation process and identify the challenges, successes, and unanticipated outcomes associated with implementation.



## Process Evaluation Findings

### PPN Creates a TVTP Community of Practice

This section will examine the process evaluation findings regarding the PPN, which corresponds with Goal 1, Objective 1.1 in the McCain Institute's IMP.

#### **OBJECTIVE 1.1:**

**Prevention and intervention practitioners participate in practitioners network.**

#### **The McCain Institute Creates a Steering Committee to Guide PPN Creation**

The McCain Institute's first step toward creating the PPN was to establish a steering committee of interdisciplinary experts to draft a charter and code of ethics, as well as to establish membership criteria. The steering committee consisted of 13 experts recruited by the project director, surpassing the original goal of five to nine members. Once the initial materials were complete, the steering committee transformed into the Advisory Board and continued to serve in a leadership role.

The Advisory Board established five committees to guide the PPN: membership, ethics, development, programs, and public relations. Committee members were recruited beginning in the third quarter of the project through an invitation from the McCain Institute. Many Advisory Board members joined committees in addition to the Board; other committee members said that they had a pre-existing relationship with the project director, which may have facilitated their willingness to participate in the project. Although the committees were largely staffed at this point, McCain had one last push for committee recruitment during the project's first networking symposium in December 2021. The five committees met for the first time in January 2022. Since then, these committees have created or updated PPN documents, such as the code of ethics, PPN policy and procedures, an ethics complaint form, and a one-page, overall description of the PPN.

#### **Inclusive PPN Membership Criteria Allows the Network to Grow Rapidly**

Although the project originally planned to be selective about PPN membership, the Advisory Board and membership committee ultimately decided not to restrict membership and changed the language from "PPN member" to "PPN participant." Anyone who registered for a PPN workshop or symposium, or joined the PPN electronic mailing list, would be considered a PPN participant. The McCain Institute also expanded the scope of practitioners that it recruited to the PPN to include threat assessment professionals, schools, association bodies, and probation and parole officers in addition to the mental and behavioral health professionals it originally sought. As a result of these decisions, the McCain Institute surpassed its original goal of recruiting 75 PPN members. By the end of the period of performance, 910 people had been added to the PPN mailing list.

#### **Advisory Board Meets Monthly to Discuss PPN Development**

From January 2022 until the end of the grant period, the Advisory Board and PPN committees met monthly to review content developed for the workshops and symposia, find presenters for symposia, and discuss other issues. These roughly two-hour meetings were preceded by the circulation of reading materials and an agenda to guide discussion.

When interviewed, Advisory Board members said that the Advisory Board and committee meetings were well organized and that members were respectful of each other and open to disagreements. All interviewed participants expressed an intention to continue serving on the Board; however, some worried that the time investment required to participate on the numerous committees was burdensome and could become unsustainable. As mentioned above, many Advisory Board members also served on one or more committees, which would require them to attend numerous meetings. One member suggested that better planning by the McCain Institute to organize committee meetings around specific topics and inform committee members about the topics in advance could allow people to be more strategic in selecting which meetings they attend.



## Workshops and Symposia Facilitate Networking and Collaboration Among PPN Members

This section will examine the process evaluation findings regarding the workshops and symposia, which correspond with Goal 1, Objective 1.2 in the McCain Institute’s IMP.

### OBJECTIVE 1.2:

**Increase knowledge sharing and collaboration among network members.**

The McCain Institute successfully hosted nine workshops and four symposia. Each featured presentations by PPN practitioners and researchers. Interviews conducted by the evaluation team revealed anecdotal evidence that these events facilitated networking and collaboration among members.

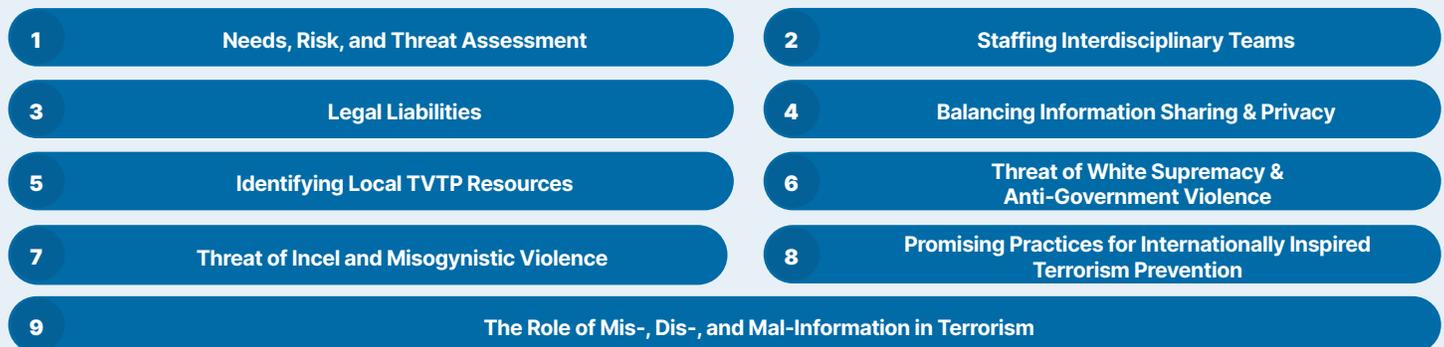
### Workshops Facilitate Knowledge Sharing Across the PPN

The McCain Institute hosted nine virtual workshops over the period of performance. The workshops, which typically lasted two hours and featured experienced practitioners and researchers, spanned 10 months, from January through October 2021. The McCain Institute partnered with ISD to develop read-ahead materials for each workshop. ISD was brought in to help with this development because of its experience supporting practitioners and governments through initiatives like the Strong Cities Network, which helps local governments create tailored strategies to counter hate and

extremism in their communities. The read-ahead materials featured research relevant to the workshop topic, program models, and potential TVTP program design considerations. For the early workshop topics, the project director surveyed TVTP practitioners she knew to see what topics they thought the McCain Institute should cover. The Advisory Board also helped come up with the first few workshop topic ideas; later workshop ideas were suggested by earlier workshop participants. Figure 2 details the topics of the nine workshops.

From the outset, workshop attendance was higher than anticipated. The McCain Institute had estimated that 30 people would attend the first workshop; however, 130 people registered and 97 attended. Initial workshop participants were recruited using the McCain Institute’s existing connections with governments, community organizations, and law enforcement and public safety officials. Once the PPN was established, the McCain Institute promoted upcoming events using the PPN electronic mailing list; however, outreach to professional networks and associations like the National Association for Behavioral Intervention and Threat Assessment and the National Organization of Forensic Social Work continued to be an important tool to spread awareness of PPN events. McCain Institute staff reported that they continued to see higher participation rates in workshops 2-9 than originally anticipated, although inconsistent data tracking prevented researchers from verifying this. Acknowledging these inconsistencies, estimates suggest that an average of 58 people attended each of those 8 workshops. Except for Workshops 4 and 5, which contained sensitive topics and discussions that the McCain Institute did not feel comfortable publishing, each workshop was recorded. The videos of these recorded workshops were uploaded to YouTube and the PPN website to increase the accessibility of the information for those who were unable to join in real time.

Figure 2. PPN Workshop Topics



Note: “Incel” is short for “involuntary celibacy.”



## Symposia Create Opportunities for Practitioners to Network

The McCain Institute originally planned for three in-person symposia to facilitate networking and collaboration among practitioners in the TVTP field. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the first two symposia were held virtually. The McCain Institute saw value in having in-person networking opportunities so, once pandemic restrictions were relaxed and the third symposium was held in person, staff applied for a three-month no-cost extension and added a fourth symposium so they could host two in-person events. Symposium invitations were sent to the entire PPN participant list, garnering participation from professionals from a variety of fields, including mental and behavioral health professionals, educators, law enforcement officials, and government employees. The topics for the symposia and their corresponding sessions are listed in Figure 3.

The first two symposia (Winter 2021 and Spring 2022), which took place virtually, spanned two days and included both plenary and breakout sessions on various topics related to the symposium theme. Though the need to host the first two

symposia virtually may have limited participants' ability to network, the remote setting did allow some practitioners to attend who would have otherwise been unable to travel.

The third symposium (Summer 2022) was held in person for one day in Washington, D.C., without a virtual option, although the sessions were recorded and posted online. The fourth symposium (Fall 2022) used a hybrid meeting approach with both in-person (Washington, D.C.) and virtual attendance options for the one-day meeting. The McCain Institute set up a Zoom room and sent out the Zoom link the day before, encouraging those who could not attend in person to join virtually. Only those attending via Zoom were able to chat with each other, though McCain Institute staff did monitor the Zoom chat for any relevant session questions. When asked how the hybrid symposium experience went, one participant attending virtually noted that online attendees found opportunities to network using the chat function during sessions. The Spring, Summer, and Fall 2022 Symposia were recorded, and videos were uploaded to the PPN website. Only the first day of the virtual Winter 2021 Symposium was recorded and uploaded to YouTube. Neither the full recording nor a link to YouTube were uploaded to McCain's website. This appears to have been an oversight during a staff transition.

Figure 3. Symposia Topics and Sessions

### Winter 2021 Symposium: Current State of Threat and Progression of Prevention (Virtual)

- Bridging Traditional Practices With the Virtual Space: How to Support Online/Offline Interventions
- Moving Forward: How Has COVID-19 Shifted the Prevention Landscape?
- Measuring Effectiveness
- The Needs of Practitioners
- Information Sharing in the Prevention Space
- Youth-Focused Programs and Educational Interventions

### Spring 2022 Symposium: Integrating Threat Assessment and Behavior Management (Virtual)

- Clarifying Roles & Competencies
- Reconciling Language across Assessments
- Integrative Assessment & Management in Schools
- When and How to Involve Law Enforcement

### Summer 2022 Symposium: Prevention Through Education (In-Person)

- Early Childhood and Intergenerational Trauma
- Responding to Concerning Behavior
- Protective Factors
- Resources for Educators and Adults
- What's Working in Schools

### Fall 2022 Symposium: Tertiary Prevention (In-Person)

- Diversion and Alternative Sentencing
- State, Local, and Federal Re-entry and Parole
- Psychological-Behavioral Approaches to Prevent Terrorism and Facilitate Reintegration
- Regional Efforts for Tertiary Providers
- Community-Based Tertiary Programming
- TVT Assessment and Management in Community-Based Mental Health Services
- Assessing Disengagement



### Observations of and Participant Reflections on the Fall 2022 Symposium

The research team observed the McCain Institute's Fall 2022 Symposium on tertiary prevention. The symposium began with a brief welcome and introduction from the project director and committee updates. This was followed by sequential hour-long sessions featuring a single speaker, panel discussion, or presentation of an organization's work, with question-and-answer periods. To facilitate discussion, McCain Institute staff put discussion topics on approximately half of the lunch tables and encouraged people interested in discussing that topic to sit together. The McCain Institute also hosted two happy hour events—the day before and the day of the symposium—to facilitate networking. The primary opportunities for networking during the event were the morning breakfast hour, 10- to 15-minute breaks between sessions, the “working lunch” break, and happy hour events.

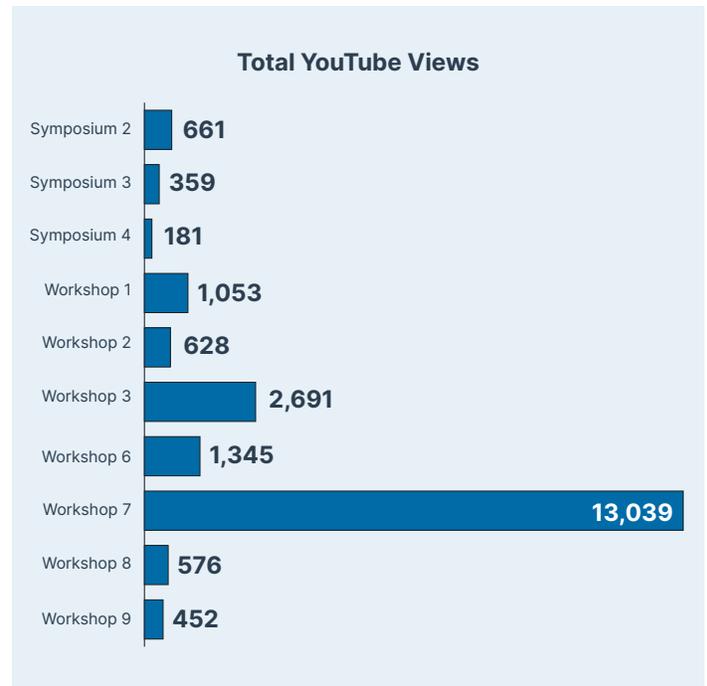
Researchers conducted post-event interviews with eight attendees—seven who attended in person and one who attended virtually—discussing the Fall 2022 Symposium and any other PPN events they had attended. Results from these interviews suggest that the symposium did facilitate knowledge sharing and collaboration among network members (Objective 1.2). Participants stated that they appreciated learning about what others are doing in the field and being able to compare experiences, as well as the small group discussions. Almost all interviewees said they were able to exchange contact information with practitioners they had not met before; however, many expressed a desire for more time to network, noting that the lunch break was not sufficient. Several interviewees said that they likely would not have been able to attend had it not been for the DHS Center for Prevention Programs and Partnerships (CP3) conference that took place the following day. These attendees were able to extend their DHS CP3 conference trip and arrive a day early to attend the Fall 2022 Symposium.

### PPN Events Create Opportunities for Knowledge Sharing and Networking Among Practitioners

All nine workshops occurred before the evaluation began, so researchers were unable to implement empirical pre- and posttests and are therefore unable to state whether workshops resulted in knowledge gain by participants. The McCain Institute developed and administered brief three-question surveys before and after each workshop to measure participants' self-reported confidence in their knowledge. Self-reported confidence levels can provide useful feedback to trainers, but they cannot be used to demonstrate an equivalent increase in participants' knowledge. Additionally, a portion of these data were lost as a result of staff turnover, so researchers were unable to analyze them.

In April 2022, the McCain Institute began tracking the number of YouTube views of each workshop and symposium, except for Workshops 4 and 5 and Symposium 1, for which videos were not available. Figure 4 shows the total number of views of each event from April 15 through December 31, 2022. Note that Workshop 7 (“Threat of Incel and Misogynistic Violence”)<sup>1</sup> received substantially more views than the other events. There is no clear evidence to explain this difference; however, the McCain Institute suspects the incel community may have found the video and shared it among themselves.

Figure 4. YouTube Views of Workshops and Symposia



1 “Incel” is short for “involuntary celibacy.”



To measure increased collaboration, the McCain Institute collected post-event surveys to assess collaboration and networking during and after events. However, the cadence of data collection varied within and across workshops and symposia and many recurring questions about networking and collaboration did not distinguish between the various events. The limitations associated with inconsistent data collection (discussed further in the Challenges section below) led the research team to focus its analysis on the Fall 2022 Symposium.

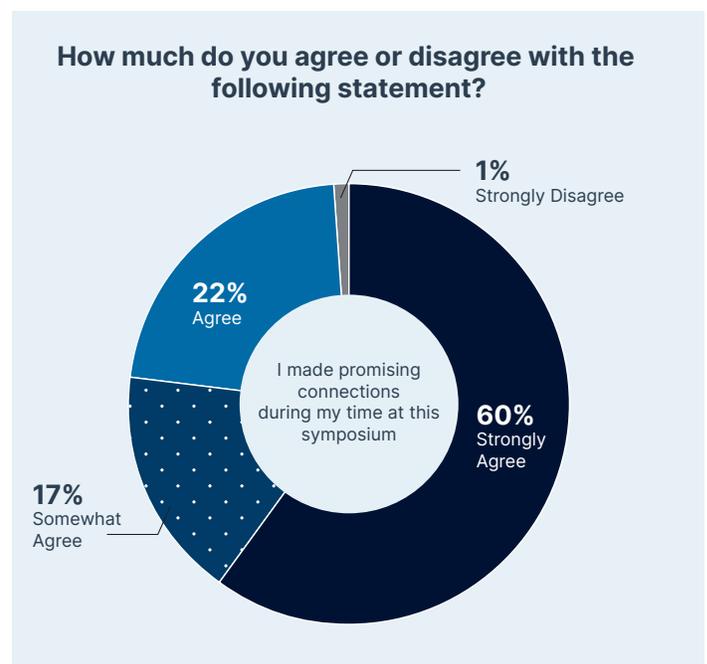
The Fall 2022 Symposium had 191 registrants and a total of 135 people attended (115 in person, 20 virtually). Of these 135 attendees, six responded to the pre-event survey provided by the McCain Institute and 77 completed the post-event survey. McCain Institute staff said that they made time for the pre-event survey on the day of the Fall 2022 Symposium; however, the evaluation team observed that many attendees were not aware of the request or opportunity to complete the survey. In contrast, the post-event survey was clearly announced and the McCain Institute provided participants with QR codes to easily access the survey. Approximately 40 completed the survey the day of the event; the McCain Institute then sent two follow-up emails with links to the survey in the two weeks following the event. These emails effectively increased the response rate: after the second email, 57% of participants (77 of 135) had responded.

The pre-event survey included one question asking respondents to rate their knowledge on seven topics related to tertiary prevention on a scale of “Poor” to “Excellent.” These topics were diversion and alternative sentencing; state, local, and federal re-entry and parole; psychological-behavioral approaches to prevent terrorism and facilitate reintegration; regional efforts for tertiary providers; community-based tertiary programming; programming and key performance indicators for state-level targeted violence prevention; and assessing disengagement. No respondents rated their knowledge as “Excellent” or “Very good” on these topics; half described their knowledge of diversion and alternative sentencing and of state, local, and federal re-entry and parole as “Poor.”

The post-event survey included questions asking participants to share how they learned about the event and why they decided to attend, what their level of confidence in their knowledge was after the event, how the event may have facilitated networking, and how satisfied they were with the

event. Survey results suggest that the Fall 2022 Symposium was effective in promoting knowledge sharing and facilitating networking. Participants said that they valued the presentation of research and practical advice by symposium presenters. Despite some feedback from participants that they had wished for more time to network, the majority of respondents indicated that they had made “promising connections” at the symposium (Figure 5). Almost all (71 of 77, or 93%) respondents reported that they had exchanged contact information with at least one person; 15 (19%) said that they had exchanged contact information with 10 or more people.

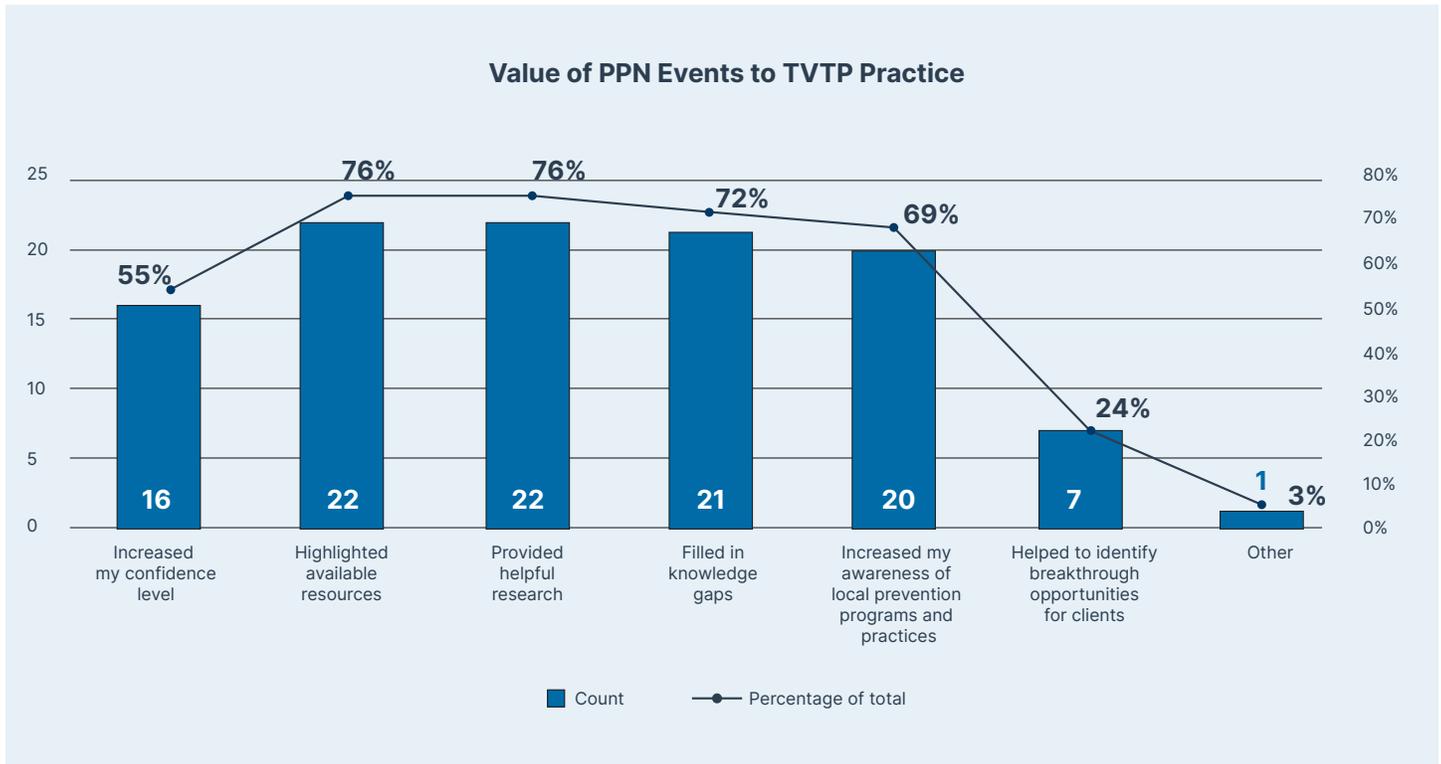
**Figure 5. Share of Participants Who Made “Promising Connections” at the Fall 2022 Symposium**



The post-event survey also included questions about participation in prior PPN workshops and symposia. Of the 77 respondents, 29 had attended a prior event. Respondent feedback about these events bolsters anecdotal evidence that the McCain Institute workshops and symposia facilitated knowledge sharing and collaboration among TVTP practitioners. All 29 respondents who had attended a prior event agreed that the workshops, symposia, or both were helpful in their practice. The vast majority said that these events were constructive because they provided helpful research or filled in knowledge gaps (Figure 6).



Figure 6. Impact of PPN Events on Respondents' TVTP Practice



Most respondents who had participated in a previous event reported that they had made new connections at these events (24 of 29, or 83%). Of these, 70% (17 of 24) said that they had since reached out to a connection made at a PPN event to collaborate on a future project.



## PPN Practitioners' Guide Offers a Guide for Behavioral Intervention Programs

This section examines the process evaluation's findings regarding the development of the PPN Practitioners' Guide, which corresponds with Goal 2, Objective 2.1 in the McCain Institute's IMP.

### **OBJECTIVE 2.1:**

**Framework simplifies design stages for new prevention and intervention initiatives.**

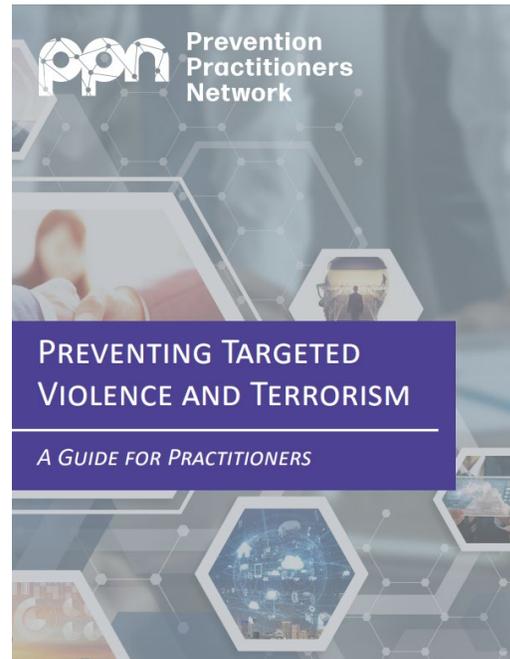
### **PPN Guide for Practitioners Outlined Prevention and Intervention Program Design Considerations**

The McCain Institute partnered with ISD to develop an overall framework document outlining the basics of TVTP program design, which it promoted throughout the United States with the help of Strong Cities Network. This document was a compilation of practice guides developed from workshop read-ahead materials and lessons learned from practitioners, researchers, and subject matter experts. Before the end of the grant in December 2022, the McCain Institute and ISD had produced nine read-ahead materials and four practice guides. ISD synthesized these materials to create a streamlined, comprehensive framework, completed a draft in October 2022, and passed it to the Advisory Board for review. The final version, titled Preventing Targeted Violence and Terrorism: A Guide for Practitioners (i.e., PPN Practitioners' Guide; Figure 7), was completed at the beginning of November 2022.

The PPN Practitioners' Guide begins with an overview of the current violent extremist threat landscape and proceeds with an overview of multidisciplinary teams. The chapter provides guidance on how to structure a multidisciplinary team, establish standard operating procedures, and conduct program evaluations. The next chapters outline primary prevention and behavioral intervention programs. The chapter on primary prevention provides a useful introduction to early intervention and offers some program design considerations. The McCain Institute discussed creating a fifth practice guide, focusing on early prevention and education, after the grant ended. This addition would offer a useful supplement to the information

already included in the framework. The behavioral interventions section provides a thorough discussion of the relevant considerations and program design elements required for behavioral intervention programs, including some of the legal considerations in working with this population.

**Figure 7. PPN Practitioners' Guide**



### **Workshop Read-Ahead Materials, Practice Guides, and PPN Practitioners' Guide Are Widely Shared**

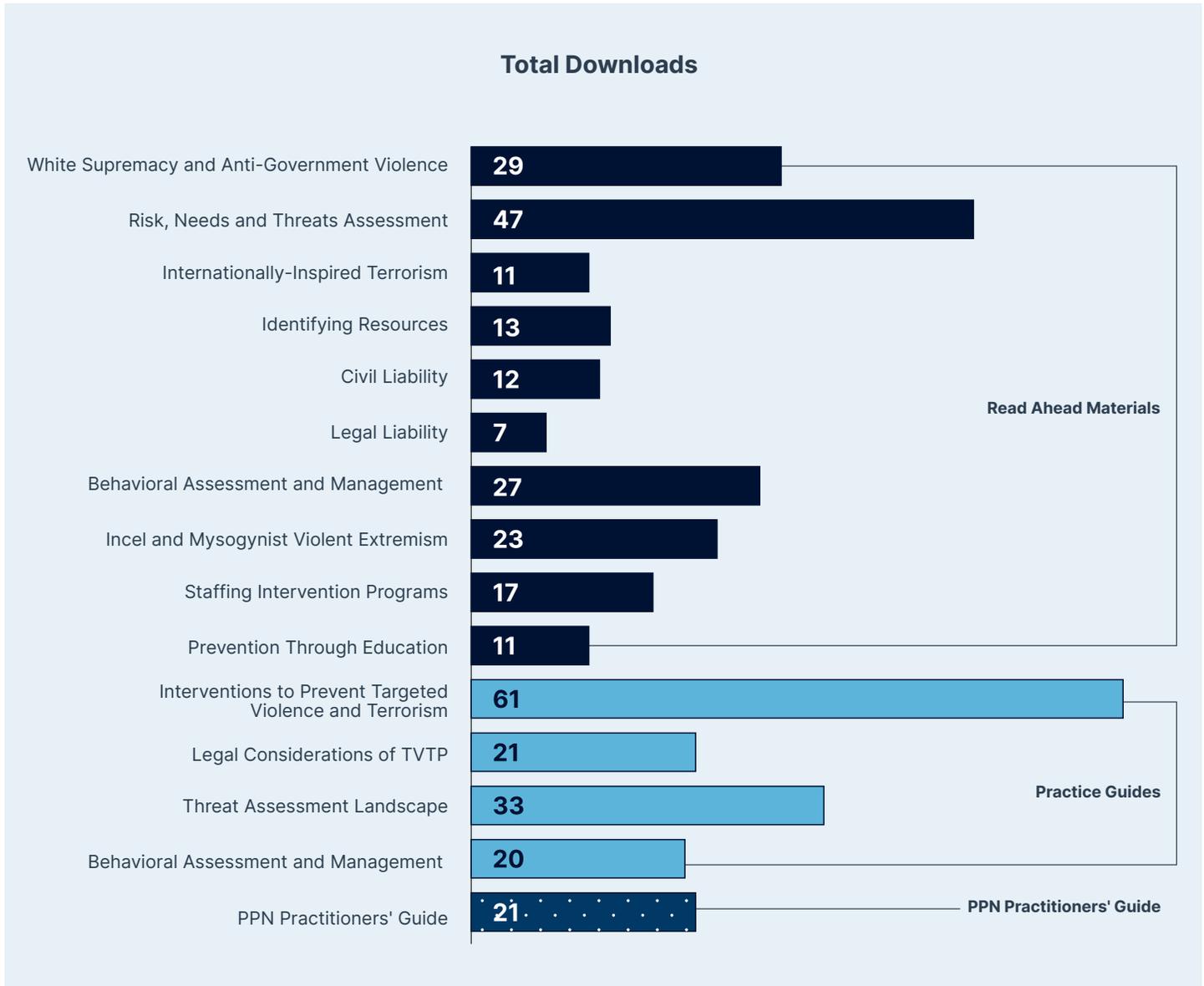
The McCain Institute first shared the PPN Practitioners' Guide with the PPN after the Fall 2022 Symposium. The McCain Institute promoted the framework at the Strong Cities Network gathering in Denver, Colorado in December 2022 to city-, county-, and state-level leaders. It also promoted the framework to states such as Arizona and Virginia; counties; and cities such as Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Aurora, Denver, North Glen, Las Vegas, Tuscaloosa, San Diego, Los Angeles, Boston, Seattle, and Washington, D.C.

From January 21 through December 31, 2022, the workshop read-ahead materials, practice guides, and PPN Practitioners' Guide were downloaded a total of 343 times. The McCain Institute also disseminated 150 printed copies of the PPN Practitioners' Guide at the Eradicate Hate Summit in September 2022. Figure 8 illustrates the breakdown of downloaded materials. Anecdotal evidence suggests that practitioners have



used the resources developed by the McCain Institute and ISD to support program implementation: in an interview with the research team, one participant working in the TVTP field said that their organization has started to use the resources developed by the McCain Institute to educate new hires.

Figure 8. Total Downloads of Workshop Read-Ahead Materials, Practice Guides, and PPN Practitioners' Guide in 2022



### Data Are Needed to Understand Practitioner Use of the PPN Practitioners' Guide

It is unclear how practitioners have used the practice guides or PPN Practitioners' Guide. The McCain Institute originally stated that it would be gathering data on use of the framework from practitioners during technical assistance calls with organizations or individuals reaching out to McCain for support. From February through October 2022, the McCain Institute conducted 34 of these calls. However, data were not collected on the content of these calls, so researchers cannot determine how practitioners used the framework and whether it actually simplifies design stages.



## Network Directory Increases Access to Local Providers and Resources

This section will examine the process evaluation findings regarding the network directory, which corresponds with Goal 3, Objectives 3.1 and 3.2 in the McCain Institute's IMP.

### OBJECTIVES 3.1-3.2:

**3.1 Increase number of mental and behavioral health professionals able and willing to receive referrals.**

**3.2 Government officials locate relevant programs in their regions for referrals.**

The McCain Institute sought to develop a national network directory that would include relevant resources and a list of mental and behavioral health professionals in the PPN who could be accessed for local referrals. This directory is housed on the McCain Institute's website, and the project staff also collaborated with a nonprofit organization, One World Strong Foundation, to create an app to host it. The One World Strong Foundation was founded to connect victims of terrorist attacks, hate crimes, and traumatic events with resources and support through the Resilience Network, an app it developed to share terrorism prevention and mental health resources. The foundation also worked with Parents for Peace and DEEP in New York to help design the directory function on the Resilience Network app and test it to ensure usability.

The Advisory Board decided that the criteria for including mental and behavioral health professionals in the directory would be **two years' experience** and **a clinical license**.

The McCain Institute began recruiting for the directory via the PPN survey administered during the Spring 2022 Symposium. The Advisory Board decided that the criteria for including mental and behavioral health professionals in the directory would be two years' experience and a clinical license. The Advisory Board adopted these criteria to strike a balance between competing concerns: the Board wanted to be sure directory members were qualified to accept TVTP referrals; however, the Board was also concerned that adopting stricter criteria could expose Board members to greater liability by implying that the McCain Institute endorsed certain providers.

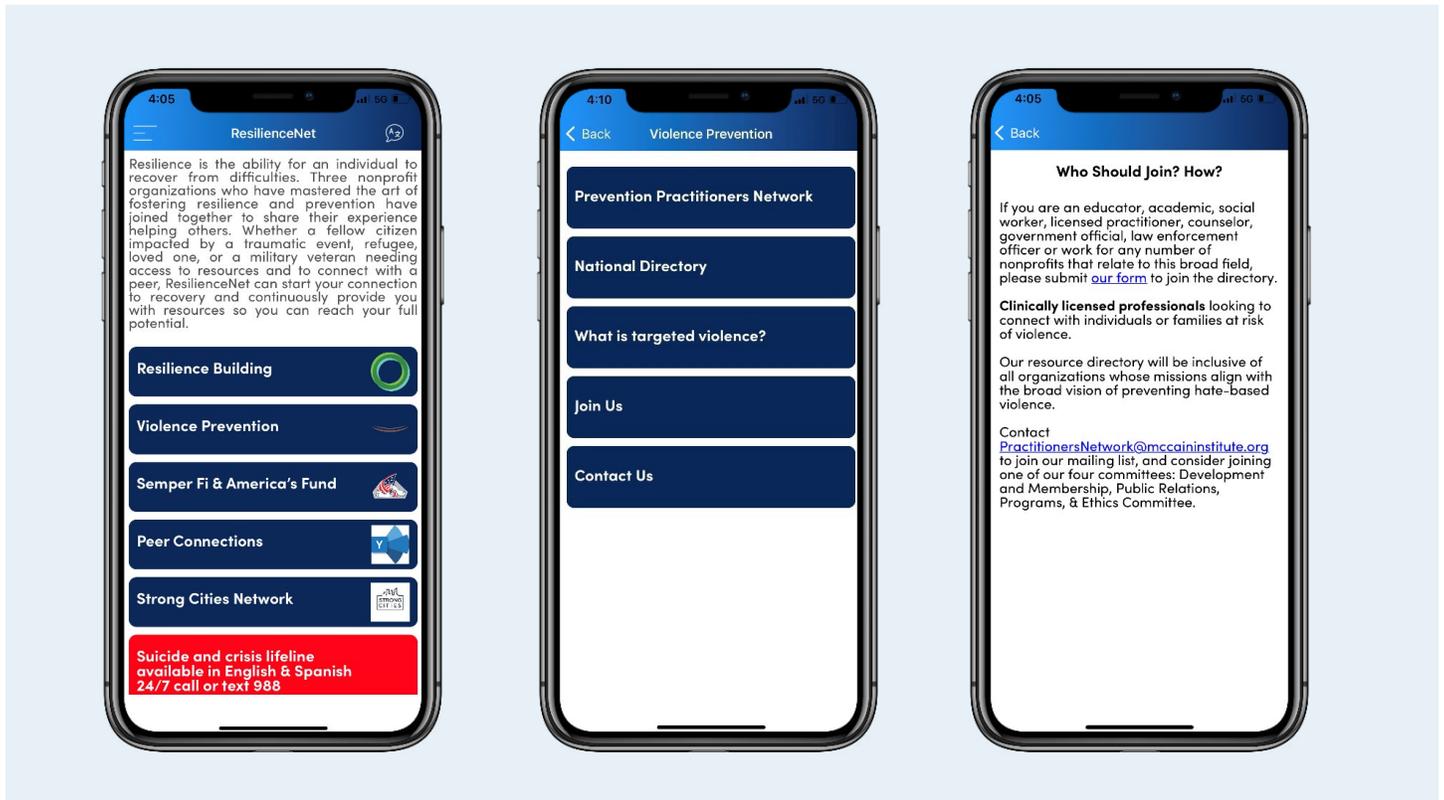
A looser set of criteria would create less of an impression that the McCain Institute supports or recommends the clinicians included in the directory. The McCain Institute has faced some challenges in convincing mental health professionals to join the directory, as many were hesitant to work on TVTP cases for liability reasons.

The McCain Institute advertised the network directory and app at the Eradicate Hate Global Summit in August 2022. The app version of the network directory went live the next month, hosted on One World Strong's ResilienceNet app. Information about the PPN can be found under "Violence Prevention". Users can then access the providers and resources on the National Directory by selecting "National Directory"; or join the PPN by selecting "Join Us". Screenshots of these pages are displayed in Figure 9. The directory is programmed so that providers can update their own information. Users of the app can view providers' location, licensure, and specialty. One World Strong plans to continue improving the app as user experience data accumulate.

The McCain Institute has continued to recruit new members to the directory since the completion of the app, conducting outreach to local and state government offices; religious, cultural, and democracy nonprofits; university centers; and the California Prevention Practitioners' Network. The McCain Institute has also conducted outreach to national organizations directly and through LinkedIn. At the end of the period of performance, the network directory included 22 licensed clinicians and 109 resources.

Because Objectives 3.1 and 3.2 were framed around provider activity and directory use, as opposed to outcomes generated by the McCain Institute, the research team could not conclude whether these objectives were met using the data available. Without a baseline number of professionals, it is unclear whether the creation of the network directory or other grant activities increased the number of mental and behavioral health professionals who were able or willing to receive referrals. Similarly, there are no data to indicate whether local officials have used the directory. Despite these data challenges, the creation of the directory constitutes a crucial first step toward building a national resource for local TVTP providers. Future efforts to assess providers' willingness to accept TVTP referrals or government officials' use of the national directory could include data collection such as surveys or interviews with providers and government officials, respectively, on those topics to more precisely measure results.

Figure 9. ResilienceNet's PPN and Network Directory Pages



## Challenges

The process evaluation revealed five challenges to project implementation.

**COVID-19 Pandemic.** The COVID-19 pandemic and related public health emergency forced the McCain Institute to revise its plan to host all the symposia in person; the first two symposia were hosted virtually. While these events were successful, the opportunities for networking at these events were diminished compared with those at the hybrid symposia.

**Inconsistent Data Collection.** Pre-/post-surveys were administered during the workshops via Zoom polls; however, these data are not available for four of the nine workshops. When the staff member in charge of administering the Zoom polls left the organization, their Zoom account was shut down and all associated poll data were lost. The McCain Institute made every effort to recover the lost data, including reaching out to Zoom, but ultimately the data could not be saved. Before the second symposium in March 2022, the McCain Institute created a survey to collect information about collaboration and networking during and after the events. Follow-up surveys

were administered at the subsequent symposia; however, the surveys were not consistent in their method of collecting information. The first survey was administered around the time of the second symposium and was intended to be a three-month follow-up to the Fall 2021 Symposium. A staff transition resulted in a miscommunication about the purpose of these surveys; therefore, the second survey asked about the Summer 2022 Symposium, rather than the Spring 2022 Symposium. Thus, data on the Spring 2022 Symposium were omitted and data on the Summer 2022 Symposium were collected three months earlier than data for the Fall 2021 Symposium.

**Demonstrating Project Success.** Staff at the McCain Institute said that they did not believe that the data they had collected throughout the project adequately represented the full dimensions of the success of their grant project or the contribution the PPN had made to the field. They found it difficult to design pre- and posttests for the workshops given the range of attendees' expertise and knowledge bases.



**Pacing of Events.** One of the challenges the McCain Institute faced during the grant period was following the event schedule it had established in its IMP. The McCain Institute had planned to host an event (i.e., workshop or symposium) every three months. When it began implementing, it found that this pace was too rapid to give enough thought to topic selection and that it was difficult to create the content and materials in time.

**Self-identification by Practitioners.** The McCain Institute found that a major challenge to recruiting to the PPN and directory was getting buy-in from practitioners who did not see themselves as working in the TVTP field, such as school psychologists. Practitioners hesitated to self-identify as being in TVTP for several reasons; most often, they either did not believe that they could help or did not understand the scope of prevention efforts. McCain Institute staff also related that some practitioners in the mental health space were hesitant to self-identify as TVTP practitioners for liability reasons.

## IMP Accomplishments

Through the PPN, the McCain Institute achieved its goal of recruiting prevention and intervention practitioners to participate in a practitioners' network (Objective 1.1). The McCain Institute's original goal was to recruit 75 members to the PPN. During the grant period, the Advisory Board made the decision to remove criteria for membership and shift from recruiting "members" to including everyone who had participated in a PPN event as a "participant." Due in part to this shift, the McCain Institute far surpassed its original goal: by the end of the grant period, the PPN included 910 participants.

The McCain Institute successfully hosted nine workshops and four symposia through the PPN, therefore achieving its second objective (Objective 1.2). Data are not available to assess knowledge gain from these events; however, interview data gathered from the Fall 2022 Symposium suggest that participants used these events to create connections with others in this field for the purpose of future collaboration. Though there were some inconsistencies in how attendance was tracked, it appears an average of 62 people attended each workshop and an average of 106 people participated in each symposium. Recordings of the workshops and symposia were also viewed hundreds of times, suggesting that these events led to knowledge sharing.

The McCain Institute partnered with ISD to create the PPN Practitioners' Guide, which outlines the basics of primary prevention and offers a thorough discussion of the design considerations for intervention initiatives. It remains unclear whether practitioners believe this framework has simplified program design stages; thus, we are unable to confirm whether the McCain Institute met Objective 2.1.

The fourth component of the McCain Institute's program was the creation of a network directory to allow practitioners to locate providers and resources across the country. By the end of the grant, the directory included 22 licensed clinicians and 109 resources. Data were not available to determine whether the McCain Institute achieved the two objectives related to this component (Objective 3.1: Increase number of mental and behavioral health professionals able and willing to receive referrals; Objective 3.2: Government officials locate relevant programs in their regions for referrals).

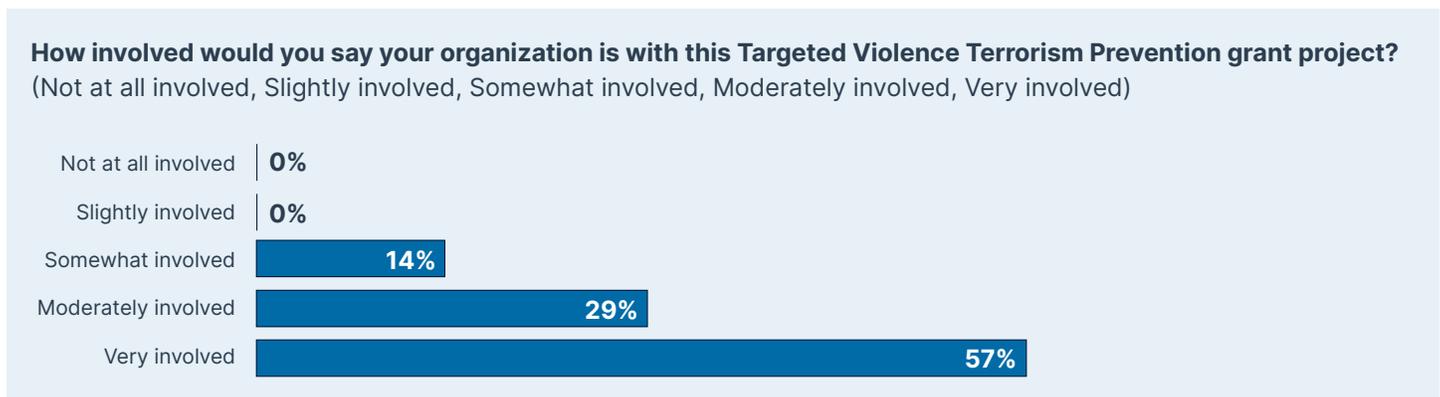
# The McCain Institute Partner Survey Findings

The McCain Institute engaged a variety of partners to support its FY2020 grant. Two organizations—ISD and One World Strong—were closely involved in program implementation, as they led the development of key products. In addition, the McCain Institute solicited support and feedback from several other subject matter experts in the fields of TVTP and disengagement through its Advisory Board. In total, seven partners participated in a survey administered by the research team to better understand their collaboration with the McCain Institute and the challenges the grant program faced. This section discusses the findings from that survey.

## Nature of Partnerships

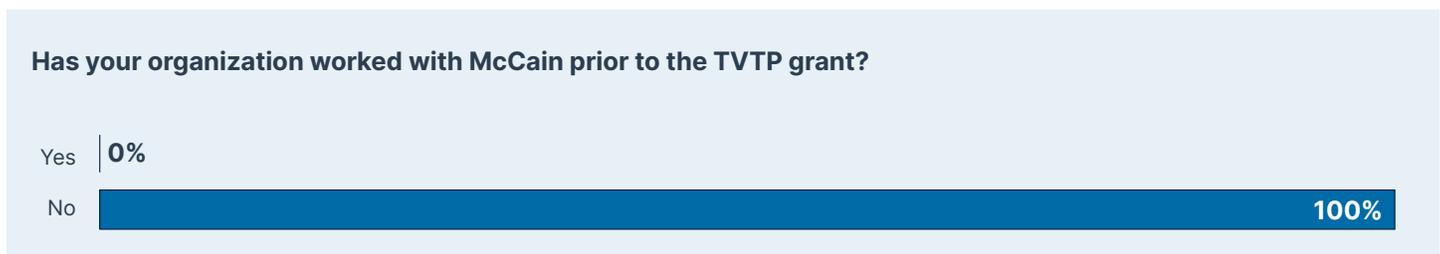
The survey revealed that collaboration between the McCain Institute and its partners was consistent across each partner, although they had varying levels of involvement in the grant. All seven partners stated that they were at least somewhat involved in the grant; a majority said they were “very involved” (Figure 10).

**Figure 10. Partner Organization Involvement**



None of the seven partners had worked with the McCain Institute before their partnership on the TVTP grant (Figure 11).

**Figure 11. Prior Partner Collaboration**



Although two of the seven respondents described their relationship as “new,” the majority of partners described their relationship as “developing” or “established” (Figure 12). When asked about the strength of their relationship with the McCain Institute, two described their relationship as “good;” the rest described it as “excellent” (Figure 13). Given that none of the partners we interviewed had worked with the McCain Institute before the TVTP grant, the relative strength of these relationships is notable. Through surveys and interviews, partners conveyed a strong support for the grant project’s mission, which likely contributed to their buy-in to the project. Staff at the McCain Institute built on this support to cultivate strong partnerships through frequent and clear communication.

Overall, these survey results indicate that the McCain Institute was able to establish new relationships during its grant program and build them up through consistent involvement in program implementation, such as including partners in monthly Advisory Board and committee meetings. One partner highlighted the emphasis that the McCain Institute placed on building relationships and the effort it has made to do so: “[The McCain Institute] has been extraordinary in conducting consultations, listening to advice, and remaining highly focused on developing a meaningful product, not just checking the boxes.”

**Figure 12. Partner Organization Relationships**



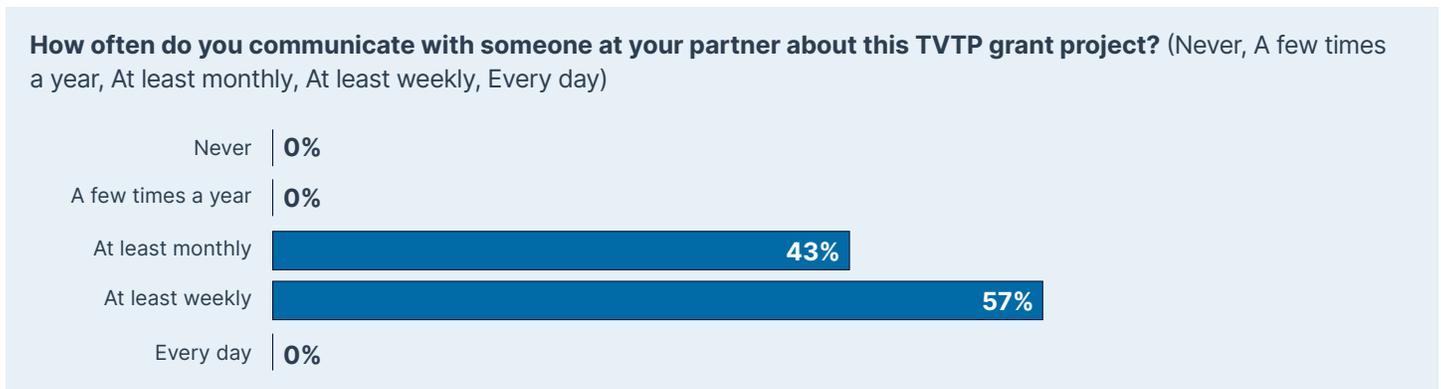
**Figure 13. Strength of Partnership**



## Communication

The McCain Institute communicated with its partners frequently. Four of the seven partners indicated that they communicated with McCain at least weekly; the rest communicated at least monthly (Figure 14). Significantly, most partners said that this communication was consistent and all partners agreed that communication with the McCain Institute was transparent (7 of 7, or 100%).

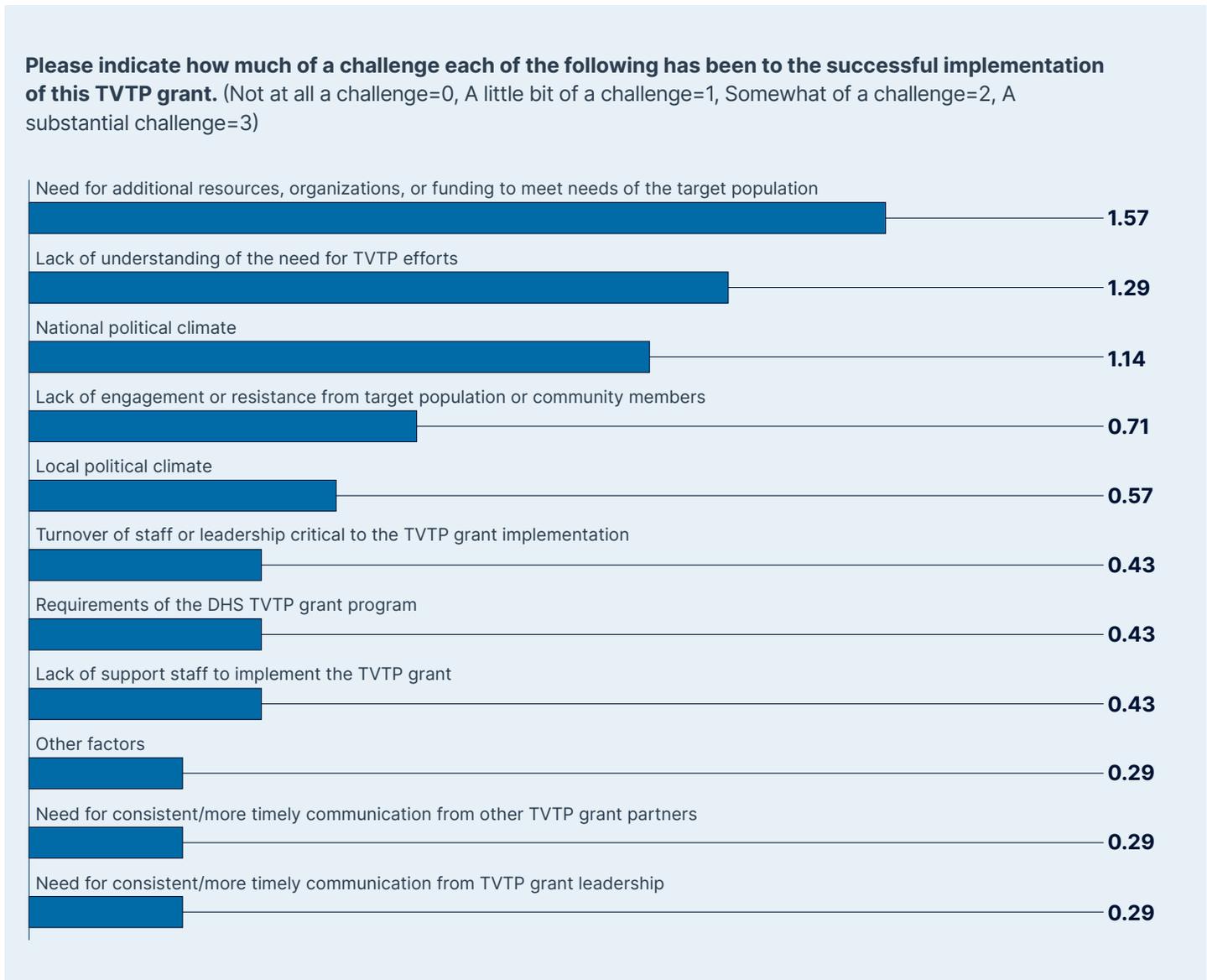
**Figure 14. Communication With Partner Organizations: Frequency**



## Challenges

The McCain Institute's partners were asked to consider various factors that could present challenges to implementation, based on a four-point scale ranging from zero ("not a challenge at all") to three ("a substantial challenge"). The partners identified the need for additional resources, organizations, or funding as the biggest challenge (1.57), followed by the lack of understanding of the need for TVTP efforts (1.29) and the national political climate (1.14). Figure 15 illustrates the partners' perceptions of challenges to grant implementation.

**Figure 15. Perceived Challenges to Successful Implementation of TVTP Grant**

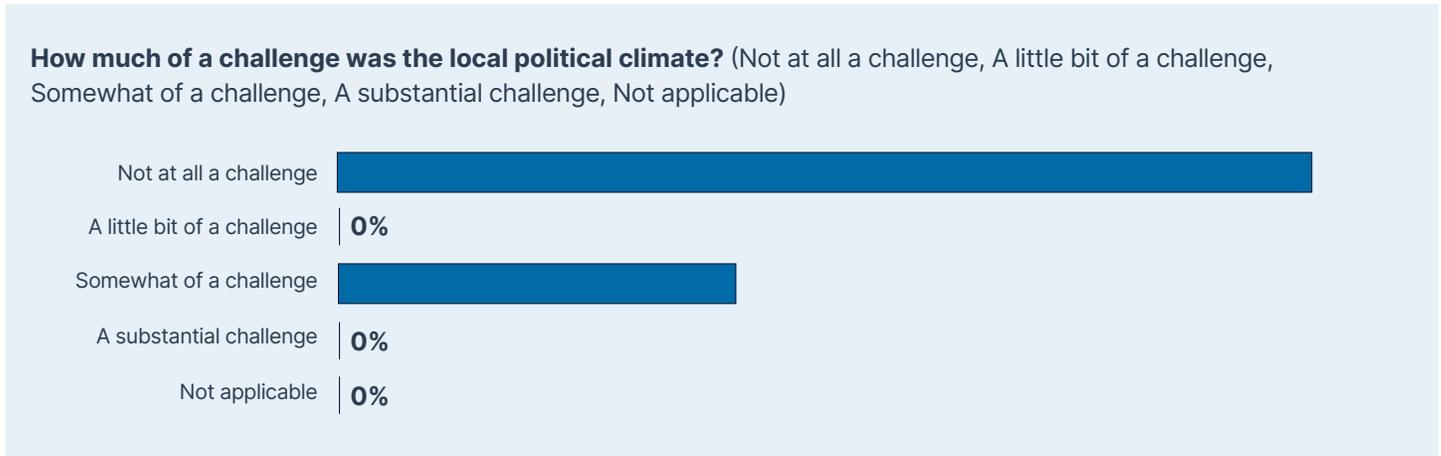


Notably, on the three-point scale, none of these challenges surpassed two ("somewhat of a challenge"). Rather, most challenges averaged below one—between "not at all a challenge" and "a little bit of a challenge." These lesser challenges included the local political climate and a lack of engagement or resistance from the target population. Most organizational factors, such as staff turnover, lack of support staff, and communication all averaged below one; the exception was the need for additional resources. This result suggests that, although staff turnover affected data collection, the McCain Institute was able to maintain consistent communication with partners and programming during these transitions.

## Local and National Political Climate

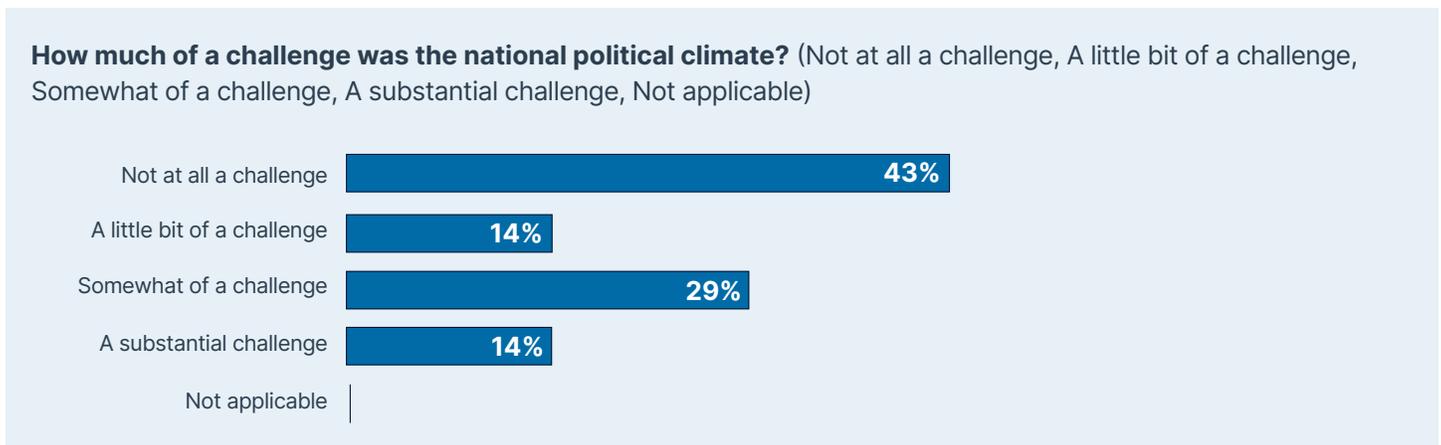
Although two partners (29%) indicated the local political climate to be “somewhat of a challenge,” most partners said that they did not believe the local political climate to be a challenge (71%; Figure 16). This outcome is not surprising, as the McCain Institute provides programs at the national level.

**Figure 16. Local Political Climate**



The McCain Institute’s partners were more divided in their perceptions of the challenges posed by the national political climate (Figure 17). Three of the seven (43%) did not find the national political climate to be a challenge; the rest indicated it was at least “a little bit of a challenge.” When asked for detail, two of these four partners said that the challenge from the national political climate was due to polarization and the potential for a change in leadership to affect sustained federal support in the future. The other partners pointed to a lack of understanding between the federal government and local communities, saying that the federal government does not understand local issues, and community actors are suspicious of federal TVTP efforts.

**Figure 17. National Political Climate**



# Discussion

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The McCain Institute made substantial progress toward achieving its overarching goal of building a national network that both increases the efficacy of locally based prevention frameworks and programs and expands referrals to qualified programs throughout the country. One of the most lasting accomplishments of the McCain Institute's TVTP grant program was the creation of a national community of practice. When asked about the outcomes associated with the McCain Institute's grant program, one partner shared,

[The McCain Institute] has developed a strong collaborative process that has brought, under one roof, diverse professionals [who] work in this space. This, in and of itself, has engendered not just a sense of community in a diverse group, but also substantial learning and [resource] availability. This was not anticipated. Additionally, the public-facing educational work that has been done in a very short time is very beneficial.

The PPN brought providers and practitioners together from a wide array of disciplines and facilitated knowledge sharing and collaboration. By the end of the grant period, the total number of PPN participants reached 910, far above the original goal. Participants included individuals from across the United States and Canada working in a variety of fields.

The workshops and symposia hosted by the McCain Institute created opportunities for knowledge sharing and collaboration. Asking PPN members to serve as presenters and discussants at these events showcased the expertise available within the network. The COVID-19 pandemic meant that all the workshops and the first two symposia had to be virtual, which may have limited opportunities for participants to network. Still, several participants in the Fall 2022 Symposium said that they had created new connections that they believed could lead to future collaboration. Data were not available to evaluate the extent to which these events led to knowledge gain. Analysis of pre- and posttests could provide a greater understanding of event outcomes in the future.

The McCain Institute worked with ISD to develop read-ahead materials and practice guides and compile these resources into the PPN Practitioners' Guide, which offers an accessible source of information on the current violent extremist threat landscape as well as design considerations for primary prevention and behavioral intervention programs. The McCain Institute has stated that it plans to continue adding to this framework in the future. Adding more information on prevention programs would address the current imbalance between the framework's treatment of prevention and intervention programs.

Since March 2022, the McCain Institute has worked to recruit providers and resources to its network directory. It is unclear whether project activities have resulted in an increase in the number of providers able or willing to accept referrals or whether government officials have used the directory to locate referrals. However, the creation of the directory offers policymakers a new and valuable resource. The McCain Institute continues to conduct outreach to expand the network directory and increase the number of referrals available throughout the country. Hesitation by providers to list themselves in the directory posed a challenge for the McCain Institute throughout the grant period.

## Sustainability

The McCain Institute has taken active steps to ensure the sustainability of this project, including diversifying its funding sources to include private foundations and philanthropic organizations as well as government agencies. The PPN Advisory Board and committees continue to meet monthly to set future goals for the network and design programming for future PPN events. Interviews with these partners revealed a high level of support for the network; most said that they were interested in continuing to serve on their committees into the future, an important aspect of sustainability. The PPN will continue to exist for as long the McCain Institute continues to host workshops, symposia, or other TVTP-related events. At the end of the grant period, the McCain Institute was already planning its next symposium, to be held in April 2023 (i.e., the Spring 2023 Symposium on "Reporting Process and Referral

Channels”). The McCain Institute additionally established the resource directory, published nine reading materials, four practice guides, and the PPN Practitioners’ Guide. It posted seven of its nine workshop recordings on YouTube, as well as recordings of the sessions from the Spring, Summer, and Winter 2022 Symposia. These materials will be available to practitioners and others working in the TVTP field after the grant’s end.

## Recommendations for the TVTP Grant Program

### ✓ **Develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to Facilitate Staff Transitions.**

As mentioned above, there was a significant amount of data loss and inconsistencies in the data collection processes due to staff turnover and lack of communication between staff taking over vacated positions. Future grantees would benefit from creating SOPs for specific data processes (e.g., data collection and management) or roles (e.g., program manager) and updating them as new procedures or processes are implemented. Additionally, grantees should consider a data storage solution that ensures that data are saved in a secure location that all staff can access and that will not be lost if a staff member leaves the organization. Better documentation would facilitate smoother staff transitions and ensure that data are saved in a central secure location.

### ✓ **Incorporate Timing Considerations for the Pacing of Events.**

McCain Institute staff noted that they struggled with the pacing of the workshops and symposia. They felt that they did not have enough time between events to crowdsource topics for the next event or give themselves enough of a planning period. Future TVTP grantees that are also seeking to host symposia or similar large events build time into implementation timelines for this planning and preparation. This consideration is particularly important if event planning involves grant partners who may have limited time available between events. Based on the experience of the McCain Institute, grantees should consider hosting large events at least four months apart to allow time to gather information on what topics practitioners would like to cover next and develop materials.

### ✓ **Use Qualitative Data to Share Successes.**

The McCain Institute staff felt that it was difficult to measure and quantify their success using pre-/ posttest questions about knowledge gain because of the wide variety of expertise and experience of PPN participants. Future TVTP grantees that seek to host events with a wide range in participant experience can mitigate this challenge by using more qualitative approaches to demonstrate the impact of their work, such as incorporating interviews or open-ended survey questions. Grantees can also use insights from these qualitative data to demonstrate the importance of having a wide variety of professionals participate. Sharing positive impact stories from these varying professionals could help gain buy-in from others in professional fields that may be hesitant to get into TVTP work.

### ✓ **Design IMPs Around Measurable Objectives.**

The research team was unable to assess three of the McCain Institute’s objectives because of the way these objectives were framed. The McCain Institute achieved several successes through its FY2020 grant program, as documented in the process evaluation. These successes could have been better captured by the McCain Institute’s IMP if the objectives had been measurable with the data collected. For example, Objective 3.1 (Increase number of mental and behavioral health professionals able and willing to receive referrals) is impossible to measure without wide-scale data collection from providers. Reframing this objective to focus on the creation of the national directory or the number of providers listed in it would have allowed the McCain Institute to track its progress toward the objective. We recommend that future grantees design their IMPs to include objectives that can be measured using available data sources to facilitate evaluation.

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