

What We Talk About When We Talk About Prevention: A Scoping Review of the Literature on Prevention-Oriented Strategic Communication

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Abstract

In recent years, scholars and practitioners have increasingly turned to the example of the public health community to inform efforts to prevent targeted violence and terrorism. Building on these efforts, this scoping review explores the state of the literature as it relates to the role of strategic communication in a public health-informed approach to prevention. More specifically, this review examines how strategic communication can support primordial prevention initiatives—especially efforts to normalize prevention-oriented approaches to dealing with the challenge of targeted violence and terrorism. To that end, this scoping review examines both the terrorism studies literature, as well as the cognate field of public health, to help identify potential models to further develop prevention-oriented strategic communication. Following the PRISMA framework for literature reviews, I sought out relevant scholarship through searches of the Scopus database, the gray literature, and field-specific journals. This process generated a total of 135 studies that met the inclusion criteria, which fell within five categories. The first category captures the nascent literature on the role of strategic communication specifically as it relates to targeted violence prevention. The remaining four categories capture themes within the broader public health literature, namely the importance of Establishing Baselines, Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability, Engaging Stakeholders, and Evaluation and Sustainability.

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Introduction

For more than a decade, scholars, practitioners, and community advocates have explored opportunities to apply insights from public health to the mission of preventing targeted violence and terrorism (National Academies of Sciences et al., 2017). These efforts have helped to inform community-based prevention programming, a growing body of academic literature (McBride et al., 2022), and significant strategic shifts at the national and sub-national levels (Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, 2025; Public Safety Canada,

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2018). This progress, however, remains uneven. In the face of federal-level setbacks in the United States, state, local, and private sector actors have assumed an increasingly important role in the targeted violence prevention ecosystem (Allam, 2025).

This shift creates new difficulties for practitioners, especially as it relates to coordination across a decentralized policy landscape. These challenges exacerbate existing gaps related to the implementation of a public health-informed prevention approach at scale. Indeed, as DeGue et al. (2026) note, “there remains limited agreement on the ways in which public health data, research, practice, and systems can best inform the development and implementation of effective approaches to prevent targeted violence.”²

As scholars and practitioners seek to institutionalize a public health-informed prevention architecture, they must communicate effectively across several core constituencies. The targeted violence prevention community, for example, must convince private funders and government officials that prevention is not only possible, but also a more effective long-term investment than traditional, disruption-focused programs (Warner & Braniff, 2025). From there, prevention practitioners must convey to frontline stakeholders that targeted violence is not inevitable, empowering these communities to play a part in prevention (Hummel & Bowles, 2024). And finally, practitioners must communicate directly with communities to improve the uptake of preventative measures and help-seeking behavior. In short, a range of relevant actors need to understand their role in bringing targeted violence prevention programs to scale.

How might the targeted violence prevention community formulate an evidence-based strategic communication campaign targeting these constituencies? To help answer this question, this scoping review draws on findings from cognate fields within the realm of public health—especially as it relates to suicide prevention, child safety, and interpersonal violence prevention. Notably, scholars within the public health community have already sought to translate findings across fields, including by considering lessons from suicide prevention to inform strategic communication related to preventing opioid use disorder (Karras et al., 2018;

² DeGue et al. (2026) define targeted violence as “intentional violent acts against a preidentified individual or property based on the target’s perceived identity or affiliation, and which are intended to intimidate or coerce the broader population and/or generate publicity for the perpetrator and their grievance.” See: DeGue, S., Liu, G. S., Frederique, N., Le, V. D., & Simon, T. R. (2026). Applying the public health approach to prevent targeted violence in the United States. *Psychology of Violence*, 16(2), 172–189. <https://doi.org/10.1037/vio0000622>

Schalkwyk et al., 2019). In line with this precedent, this review pays particular attention to the role of strategic communication in two areas:

- a. Institutionalizing prevention programming within the public, private, and non-profit sectors; and
- b. Improving the uptake of preventative measures, especially among at-risk communities.

Ultimately, this literature review yields several key lessons for enhancing perceptions of preventability, engaging key stakeholders, and building a sustained communications infrastructure. Perhaps most importantly, the public health literature demonstrates that scholars—with the support of relevant stakeholders—can help to develop, design, and evaluate strategic communication plans to help the public recognize seemingly endemic challenges as preventable. This messaging can play a role in shifting public support away from deterrent-focused approaches towards a prevention-oriented posture.

Methodology, Scope, and Limitations

Though less exhaustive than a systematic review, scoping reviews allow for valuable preliminary assessment, particularly as it relates to establishing key concepts, identifying research gaps, and setting the stage for further analysis (Munn et al., 2018). Following established guidance for scoping reviews, this paper establishes an *a priori* review protocol, explicitly states its scope of analysis, and presents findings in a structured manner (Munn et al., 2018). Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 provide further detail related to the scope and nature of this research process. Appendix 3 provides a descriptive table for all sources included within this study, the core themes of which are reflected in the broader discussion below. Even as this study serves as a scoping review, rather than a systematic review, I nonetheless opted to follow a structured process for identifying, screening, and including relevant literature. More specifically, in Table 1, I develop a flow diagram in line with a template from

the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 statement (Page et al., 2021).

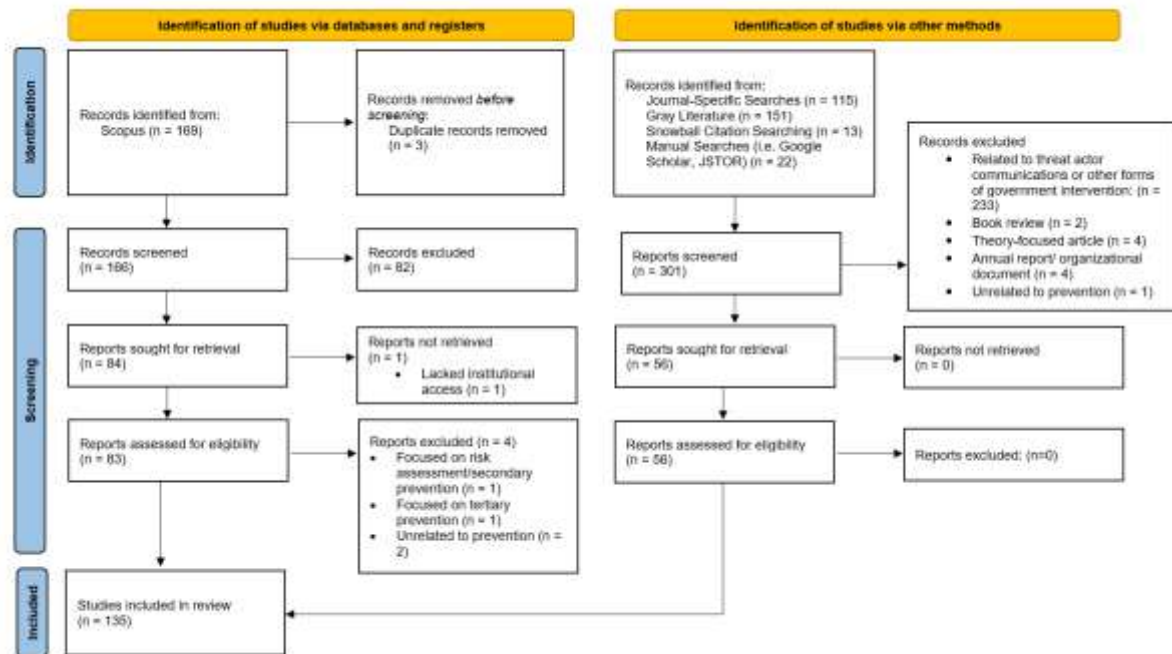
As the PRISMA flow diagram notes, I relied on a combination of database searches and other sources, including field-specific journals and an examination of the gray literature. The latter sources drew from key organizations that bridge scholar-practitioner divides, including the Centre for Research and Evidence on Security Threats (CREST), the National Counterterrorism Innovation, Technology, and Education Center (NCITE), the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism — The Hague (ICCT), and the European Union Knowledge Hub on Prevention of Radicalisation. The use of these additional search methods helps to mitigate any coverage gaps resulting from this study's reliance on a single database—Scopus. This approach is appropriate for a scoping review, which serves more of an exploratory purpose than its systematic counterpart. And while the terrorism-related literature does rely heavily on research related to North America and Europe, the review of the cognate literature draws on a much more international body of work, allowing terrorism scholars to draw lessons from as wide a range of scholarship as possible. Once I identified the body of studies to be included in the review (see Table 1), I inductively developed a series of key themes to categorize each of the included studies. This inductive process, conducted independently and manually, is appropriate given the preliminary and exploratory nature of the scoping review. I assigned each study to only one theme, and have provided a complete alignment of studies to themes (along with theme definitions) in Appendix 3.

Before exploring the major themes revealed through this review in more depth, the remainder of this section briefly clarifies the scope and limitations of this project. Firstly, this project examines strategic communication that aims to strengthen support for prevention or improve uptake of prevention programming. It focuses on efforts within the realm of primordial prevention, particularly the normalization and institutionalization of prevention as a field (Hummel & Bowles, 2024). As such, this scoping review excludes studies related to the strategic communication of terrorist groups and other threat actors. Given the focus on primordial, as opposed to primary, prevention, it also does *not* include research on the efficacy of specific inoculation initiatives or counter-narrative campaigns—topics which have generated a growing body of scholarship (Hassan et al., 2025; Koehler et al., 2025; Saleh et

al., 2024). Moreover, it excludes studies related to tertiary prevention, which focuses on individuals who have already begun to engage in harmful behavior. For example, although this review would *exclude* a study about strategic communication to promote smoking cessation among individuals with existing dependences, it would *include* a study related to risk perception and social norms among the overall population. Finally, this literature review does not include research related to crisis communication, post-incident messaging, military conflict, or diplomatic initiatives—other topics that require a separate set of scholarly considerations (Reed & Ingram, 2019). Instead, the review focuses on longer-term efforts to build a culture of prevention, shift institutional norms, and promote help-seeking behavior.

In short, this review focuses on higher-level messaging to promote public health-informed prevention as a legitimate and necessary component of public policy to mitigate the threat of targeted violence. To paraphrase a definition from Hallahan et al., this scoping review conceptualizes strategic communication as *the purposeful use of communication by the targeted violence prevention community to fulfill its mission* (Hallahan et al., 2007). Moreover, when discussing targeted violence, this paper draws on a conceptual model from DeGue et al. (2026), which defines targeted violence as “intentional violent acts against a preidentified individual or property based on the target’s perceived identity or affiliation, and which are intended to intimidate or coerce the broader population and/or generate publicity for the perpetrator and their grievance.” This broader terminology, therefore, includes issues such as terrorism, violent extremism, school- and workplace-based violence, as well as some hate crimes (DeGue et al., 2026).

Table 1: PRISMA 2020 Flow Diagram



Source: Page MJ, et al. BMJ 2021;372:n71. doi: 10.1136/bmj.n71.

Communication and Targeted Violence Prevention: Findings and Gaps

Before examining the cognate literature for relevant insights, this initial section surveys existing research related to strategic communication and the prevention of targeted violence and terrorism. Though this literature is somewhat limited—particularly as it relates to a public health-informed approach—it is nonetheless important to recognize how scholars conceptualize the role of strategic communication in establishing support for prevention. Again, this section focuses on high-level communications to champion and institutionalize prevention, rather than specific inoculation or counter-narrative campaigns.

Trust and Transparency

Perhaps more than any other sub-topic in this literature, scholars of terrorism and targeted violence prevention stress the importance of using strategic communication to build strong relationships with key stakeholders. These relationships are particularly important for

building support for prevention programming among the policymakers responsible for setting interagency priorities, as well as the communities in which prevention takes place.

Trust and credibility play an important role in these relationships (Mutton et al., 2023). To that end, Gielen and van Leeuwen (2023) emphasize that prevention practitioners can build trust with policy officials by “embracing transparency and proactive communication with the public and stakeholders,” particularly as it relates to monitoring and evaluation. Clubb et al. (2022) similarly argue that both state actors and non-governmental organizations engaged in prevention have a responsibility to commit to robust and transparent communications. Chalk (2024), meanwhile, urges the development of “unifying and inclusive” narratives to avoid contributing to polarization in the process of implementing prevention-related strategic communication. This conclusion aligns with similar research that recommends the use of strategic communication to foster social cohesion and build resilience against external shocks (Wrigley, 2024).

When it comes to credibility, scholars of terrorism and targeted violence have also scrutinized the role of various messengers involved in the delivery of prevention programming. Building on an earlier study, for example, Koehler et al. (2025b) found that institutional messengers such as police officers are perceived as consistently credible messengers. And while this line of scholarship’s focus on primary and secondary P/CVE campaigns falls slightly beyond the scope of this article, these findings offer an important reminder that credibility can vary significantly—and sometimes counterintuitively—across messenger types.

Beyond this discussion of messengers, the transparent communication of design and methodological decisions may help mitigate the risk of unintended consequences associated with prevention-related messaging. Especially as it relates to preventing terrorism and targeted violence, scholars warn that strategic communication, if improperly conceived, risks exacerbating fear, intolerance, and division (Rice et al., 2024; Veil & Mitchell, 2010). To that end, Gielen and Van Leeuwen (2023) suggest that prevention practitioners should focus on communicating “the rationale and methodology” behind prevention evaluations.

Even as several scholars stress the importance of transparency, it is also worth noting that Clubb et al. (2025) convey a more complicated story in a recent follow-on study—one

that challenges a “positive, linear assumption on the relationship between transparency, trust and support.” That said, we should use caution when extrapolating these findings beyond the context of the United Kingdom, especially considering the Prevent program’s controversial history and alleged role in securitizing British communities (C. Allen, 2023). When it comes to strategic communication, scholars note that social histories, contexts, and circumstances play a key role in shaping trust (Rice & Innes, 2025). This study should therefore prompt targeted violence prevention practitioners to interrogate the medium, message, and messenger associated with strategic communication campaigns. Nevertheless, the broader literature points to the importance of strong and sustained communication to policy, community, and public stakeholders.

Design and Delivery

Scholars of targeted violence also tend to conceptualize strategic communication efforts as multi-faceted campaigns that engage stakeholders across a range of platforms. Effective programs, in this consensus view, must pay attention to the unique process-related requirements of each step of a communication campaign. Scholars have also noted frequent overlap between strategic communication campaigns themselves and the public relations efforts that aim to promote these programs (Clubb et al., 2021). These campaigns consequently involve complex financial, organizational, and political incentives, underscoring the importance of rigorously evaluating their impact (Clubb et al., 2021).

In the face of these complex dynamics, early guidance from Ingram and Reed recommended a focus on credibility, coherence, and communication across multiple mediums (Ingram & Reed, 2016). Ingram also concludes that strategic communication campaigns should be “multidimensional, integrated, adaptable, and crosscutting” (Ingram, 2023). To implement these recommendations, he urges practitioners to embrace partnerships and coordinate “message, rollout, and evaluation activities into a coherent” campaign (Ingram, 2023). A review of radicalization-related strategic communication in the United Kingdom (UK) reached similar conclusions. Though focused on messaging campaigns from UK law enforcement agencies, this review notably emphasized the importance of outlining a

“[d]etailed exploration of theories of change” and of collaborating with community partners “at the design and delivery stage” (Collier et al., 2023).

Other studies have examined the issue of campaign design from a more substantive perspective. Communications scholars such as Ćosić et al. (2018), for example, have drawn on emotional psychology to propose a framework for strategic communication in the context of primordial prevention. Others have explored how countries such as the United Kingdom have deployed gender-informed strategic communication to improve awareness of prevention programming among British women (Andrews, 2020).

Outside of the academic literature, it is also worth recognizing practical efforts to test and scale strategic communication related to targeted violence prevention. In the early 2020s, for example, the Department of Homeland Security’s Center for Prevention Programs and Partnerships (CP3) collaborated with a communications firm to craft public-facing content on CP3’s website (Dabney, 2024). These efforts focused on improving accessibility for everyday consumers and highlighting the availability of CP3’s targeted violence prevention resources. CP3’s recent interest in strategic communication is likewise reflected in a multi-year evaluation conducted by the National Counterterrorism Innovation, Technology, and Education Center (NCITE). Writing specifically about CP3’s prevention grant program, NCITE noted that “Participants across populations suggested the need for improved communication and amplification of grantee successes” (M. Allen et al., 2024). By communicating the positive impact of CP3-funded programs, in this view, the organization could build further support for the prevention mission among key stakeholders. While acknowledging the importance of these efforts in the early 2020s, it is also essential to note the recent dismantling of CP3 by the current government, along with the broader elimination of the United States’ federal prevention infrastructure (Allam, 2025). The efforts pursued between 2021 and 2024 nonetheless provides a useful reference point for scholars and practitioners alike.

Beyond the United States, the European Union Knowledge Hub on Prevention of Radicalisation has also developed a dedicated line of effort for prevention-related strategic communication (European Commission, 2024). Through this initiative, the Knowledge Hub provides training to frontline practitioners and has published a series of conclusion papers

highlighting key takeaways from these events. Among other themes, these guidance documents stress communication, coordination, and integration with community-level partners (O’Keeffe & Pérez, 2025; O’Keeffe & Ruipérez, 2026). The joint Australia-New Zealand Counter-Terrorism Committee has funded the development of similar guidance for prevention-related strategic communication, including a checklist that aims to promote consistent messaging while managing risks (Cherney et al., 2018).

Remaining Gaps

The above analysis, from both targeted violence prevention scholars and practitioners, provides a strong foundation to continue working towards evidence-based strategic communication campaigns. Nevertheless, the literature remains relatively nascent, especially as it relates to public health-informed approaches, and the evidence base arguably remains in the “emerging” stage (Spencer et al., 2013). Scholars have provided helpful high-level frameworks to inform practitioner-led efforts, but the targeted violence literature lacks specific recommendations for optimal messages, campaign planning processes, and communication channels. With further refinement, scholars can help the field work towards promising, leading, and best practices (Spencer et al., 2013). To support this maturation process, the remainder of the scoping review draws on robust findings from the scholars of public health, violence prevention, and public safety.

Learning from Cognate Disciplines

Since at least the mid-2010s, the targeted violence prevention community has consulted the public health literature as a model for building a more robust, whole-of-society approach to prevention (National Academies of Sciences et al., 2017). In an early example of this work, Weine et al. explicitly drew on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s framework for public health functions as a model for guiding efforts to prevent violent extremism (Weine et al., 2017). Proponents of a public health-informed approach to targeted violence and terrorism prevention highlight the benefits of moving beyond a law enforcement-centric approach and towards an approach centered on risk and protective factors (Eisenman et al.,

2020; Weine et al., 2017). And while cognate fields cannot provide an exact blueprint for targeted violence prevention, they can provide valuable insights based on a large body of research covering both the successes—and shortcomings—of prevention programs over the course of several decades (Hureau et al., 2023). The model of the public health literature, therefore, provides a helpful path forward for the targeted violence prevention community while also reinforcing the importance of evaluation as the field continues to mature.

Building on this foundation, the following sections explore the public health literature with the explicit goal of drawing lessons for preventing terrorism and targeted violence. To that end, these sections outline four key themes derived from an inductive review of the scoping literature: *Establishing Baselines*, *Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability*, *Engaging with Stakeholders*, and *Promoting Evaluation and Sustainability*.

Establishing Baselines

The first theme to emerge from this scoping review relates to the importance of building foundational knowledge related to risk awareness and risk perception. Even prior to the development of strategic communication campaigns, these baselining efforts help to inform the scope of the problem, the target audience, and the platforms that are most likely to reach these audiences. Scholarship from the public health literature provides a useful model to conduct these baselining efforts, including by identifying barriers to help-seeking behavior and mapping disparities in access to prevention-related information.

Given the importance of design within a given strategic communication campaign, baselining studies can help to clarify which platforms and messengers are most likely to resonate with a given target audience (Halperin et al., 2025). Public health scholars, for example, have leveraged survey data to explore the social media sites and communicator types best equipped to deliver credible nutrition-related information (Z. P. Anderson & Gersten, 2024). Others have explored the bases for prevention-related communication gaps, including structural factors such as illiteracy, as well as media consumption differences among rural and urban populations (Ekhuaguer et al., 2019; Matovelo et al., 2021; Owens & Hubach, 2023). In exploring the drivers of vaccine hesitancy among marginalized communities, Richman et al. (2025) also stress the importance of multi-faceted strategic

communications that simultaneously rely on peer and expert messengers. They note the distinct benefits of a multistakeholder communications approach, concluding that “community-based interventions can effectively engage communities and reduce stigma, while provider-led messaging ensures the delivery of accurate and authoritative health information” (Richman et al., 2025).

In addition to these findings, the scoping review also highlights the diversity of research methods available to study disparities in risk awareness and uptake of help-seeking behavior. For example, public health scholars have drawn on the Health Belief Model (HBM)—a framework for guiding “the design of interventions to enhance compliance with preventive procedures”—to develop protocols for strengthening understanding of behavioral risks for cancer (Hussien et al., 2021). Another study examined the relationship between patient–provider communication and the adoption of preventive measures for cervical cancer (Dean et al., 2025). This research explored the relative impact of various communication methods, and also illuminated opportunities to overcome demographic disparities in patient awareness. And whereas Dean et al. (2025) relied on large-N survey data, another study of cervical cancer prevention leveraged in-depth interviews to explore how capabilities, opportunities, and motivations helped to inform individual-level engagement with preventative measures (Oketch et al., 2019). With these baselines established, scholars can begin to support efforts to institutionalize a prevention-oriented approach.

Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability

Practitioners of targeted violence prevention have stressed the importance of normalizing a culture of prevention in order to build support for sustained investment in this field (Hummel & Bowles, 2024). Strategic communication plays a key role in the development of this culture. As the public health literature suggests, even small shifts in framing and messaging can significantly alter public support for prevention programming (Barry et al., 2018). Other analyses demonstrate how corporate policies and media messaging can play a role in the normalization of prevention-oriented approaches to public health crises (Bordelon et al., 2026; Doshi et al., 2026). In 2022, for example, gun violence prevention scholars concluded that certain strategic communications approaches—including “messaging

that portrays gun violence as preventable...and statements that are grounded in data and community wisdom”—may help contribute to the passage of extreme risk protection order laws (Aubel et al., 2022). Other research stresses the role of strategic communications in embedding efforts to prevent human trafficking within the everyday operations of airline companies (Rister, 2025). Overdose prevention experts, meanwhile, have explored how social and material incentives can work together to institutionalize a culture of drug testing—a harm reduction strategy that can help prevent overdose deaths stemming from the adulteration of illicit drug supplies with synthetic opioids (Aronson et al., 2024).

But how might targeted violence prevention scholarship help contribute to a prevention-focused culture shift? The cognate field of child sexual abuse (CSA) prevention provides a particularly useful model for exploring strategic communications as a mechanism to shift public perceptions of prevention. More specifically, a series of studies from scholars at Johns Hopkins University illustrates how a discipline can build a prevention-related evidence base over time, with the ultimate goal of moving away from an overreliance on reactive law enforcement responses.

First, in 2021, Fix et al. warned that “gaps between experts and the public in recognizing CSA as preventable likely impede support for prevention policy” (Fix et al., 2021). To remedy this issue, these scholars recommended a three-pronged approach to frame CSA as a preventable public health problem: mapping public-expert gaps; developing and testing communications strategies; and disseminating validated communication strategies (Fix et al., 2021). Two years later, Fix et al. (2023) published results from a nationally representative survey exploring the public's perceptions of whether child sexual abuse is preventable. This survey provided novel insights into how sociodemographic factors such as age, race, ethnicity, and economic status shape people's views about whether CSA is preventable (Fix et al., 2023). Informed by these results, a similar team of scholars conducted an additional follow-on study to develop and evaluate twenty-two communication frames related to the prevention of CSA. Though still a preliminary effort, the research team found that certain communication frames can prompt a statistically significant shift in public perception of CSA as preventable (Fix et al., 2025). Among the twenty-two narratives tested, Fix et al. found that the most impactful frame revolved around the real-world efforts of a

program called “Help Wanted” and “centered the role of effective systems and the proactive steps individuals at risk can take” to prevent child sexual abuse (Fix et al., 2025).

Beyond the discipline of child sexual abuse prevention, several other sub-fields within the public health literature have explored how variations in knowledge and personal experience can shape the public’s perception of the “preventability” of certain public health concerns (Han et al., 2006). More than twenty years ago, an interdisciplinary community of scholars and practitioners convened for a workshop to address a lack of guidance for creating “effective public messages that increase awareness that suicide is preventable” (Chambers et al., 2005). Decades after these experts set out to establish a research agenda on this topic, the literature has matured considerably, particularly as it relates to the promotion of help-seeking behavior (Gould et al., 2024; Karras et al., 2022; Klimes-Dougan et al., 2009). This more recent literature shows more promise in promoting help-seeking behavior than scholarship from the late 20th century and early 2000s (Klimes-Dougan et al., 2009, 2013; Langford et al., 2013).

Similar to the three-part investigation described above, the broader literature tends to use large-N survey data to unpack the sociodemographic factors that can influence individuals’ understanding of prevention (Carmack et al., 2024). Drawing on these data, some studies stress that the adoption of help-seeking behavior requires a knowledge of risk factors and an understanding of how individuals can take action to mitigate these risks (Mosca et al., 2000). Others note that healthcare providers should recognize the factors that shape public perceptions of preventability and tailor their communications with patients to overcome “potential barriers to preventive health behaviors” (Lee et al., 2022). What these studies have in common, though, is that strategic communication plays an essential role in shifting from a reactive strategy to a public health-informed, prevention-focused posture (D. M. Clubb, 2022).

Engaging with Stakeholders

A third theme that emerged in the public health literature relates to the importance of engagement with external partners at all stages of the strategic communication campaign. Indeed, the United States Preventive Services Task Force, an independent panel funded by the

Department of Health and Human Services, specifically highlights the role of partner engagement as a key principle of strategic communications (Weinstein et al., 2023). This finding mirrors the nascent literature related to targeted violence prevention, which, as noted above, also stresses the importance of robust stakeholder engagement (Ingram, 2023).

As it relates specifically to suicide prevention, the literature provides tangible models for developing stakeholder relationships and incorporating these perspectives into prevention-related strategic communications. One study, for example, explores the role of military spouses to help test and validate effective messaging for US service members related to the secure storage of personal firearms (Baker et al., 2024). Recognizing the stigma associated with discussing mental health and personal safety practices, these scholars conducted a series of focus groups and semi-structured interviews to assess the credibility of messengers such as peers, chaplains, and clinicians. Given similar challenges associated with reaching populations at risk for targeted violence, this scholarship carries valuable lessons for engaging with relevant family stakeholders to test and validate strategic communication plans.

Nevertheless, scholars stress the importance of “involving those with lived experience to identify factors that may improve or hinder message effectiveness,” whenever possible (Karras et al., 2021). To that end, some studies have undertaken the difficult work of interviewing a nationwide sample of veterans who had recently experienced a non-fatal suicide attempt (Karras et al., 2022). Others have considered the specific needs and perspectives of children when developing programs to promote handwashing in Faridabad district, India (Gupta & Anand, 2021). Moreover, scholars have also employed the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Social Vulnerability Index to better understand trust and influence as it relates to prevention-oriented messaging campaigns (Shen et al., 2023). These studies align in their engagement with relevant communities to help inform strategic communications aimed at promoting help-seeking behavior among high-risk populations (Berger et al., 2024).

Public health scholars have used similar methodologies to develop strategic communications related to the prevention of obesity and substance use disorders (Gonzalez-Nahm et al., 2020; Waitz-Kudla et al., 2023; Weitzman et al., 2024). These studies combined information from families, community members, and subject matter experts to inform

messaging that promotes help-seeking behavior. Importantly, however, the literature notes that trusted partnerships, social networks, and credible messengers all complement efforts to expand access to prevention-oriented resources. Indeed, these two components can work together to enable the implementation of a prevention-focused approach (Khatri et al., 2025).

This literature also serves as a reminder that while interviews and focus groups can help develop consensus approaches to prevention-related strategic communications, they can also help identify points of disagreement across stakeholder communities (Gonzalez-Nahm et al., 2020; Weitzman et al., 2024). Importantly, these engagements can illuminate messages that risk alienating audiences or unintentionally generating resistance to a messaging campaign (Gollust et al., 2025). These findings also serve as a reminder that strategic communications may resonate differently across age, gender, and socioeconomic divides (Davidson et al., 2026; Keller et al., 2022). Strategic communication campaigns should, therefore, tap into “the unique strengths and resources” available within particular communities of interest (Chung-Do et al., 2016). These resources might also include emerging technologies, which have been used in tandem with participatory design processes to help normalize conversations related to sexual consent and sexual violence prevention (Furlo et al., 2021).

Broadly speaking, though, this scholarship points to the importance of engaging with a diverse set of stakeholders while developing prevention-related strategic communications. Scholars of targeted violence and terrorism might also consider this literature alongside studies of messenger credibility within the realm of P/CVE programming. As noted in previous sections, Koehler et al. (2025a, 2025b) have demonstrated that analyses of messenger credibility may yield surprising or counterintuitive results. Taken together, these distinct lines of scholarship point to the importance of continued investment in evaluation and engagement with diverse audiences.

Evaluation and Sustainability

Given the long-term nature of efforts to normalize and institutionalize prevention, practitioners must build sustainable strategic communication campaigns. Fortunately, scholarship from the public health literature indicates how investment in evaluation can help

to ensure the long-term viability of such campaigns. As noted above, evaluation plays a key role in securing long-term support for prevention programming. To aid in these efforts, scholars with the RAND Corporation similarly developed a checklist of best practices for suicide prevention communication campaigns, allowing them to assess the efficacy of specific communication-related initiatives (Acosta et al., 2017). Other studies have deployed randomized controlled trials and quasi-experimental research designs to evaluate the attitudinal impact of campaigns related to topics such as domestic violence and suicide prevention (D'Atri et al., 2026; Karras et al., 2019; Pryor et al., 2025). In addition to these individual-level evaluations, the public health literature includes systematic reviews to examine the evidence base as it relates to the uptake of preventative measures such as immunization (Jacobson Vann et al., 2018; Olson et al., 2020). Regardless of the specific evaluation approach, strategic communication campaigns should be able to demonstrate a return on investment to increase the likelihood of long-term success.

Beyond the importance of evaluation, the literature also suggests that sustainability and effective strategic communication campaigns can be mutually reinforcing concepts. Indeed, in a study examining sustainability in community-based public health interventions, the Cochrane Collaboration emphasized the importance of “leadership, advocacy, and strategic communications” from relevant organizational stakeholders (Whelan et al., 2014). Moreover, literature from the field of child welfare suggests that sustained external engagement requires an investment in professionalization, including through the retention of internal communications staff. Though the hiring and training of such staff requires additional resources in a budget-scarce environment, experts suggest that investment in communications may create openings for new funding avenues. Indeed, one study notes, communications initiatives “may be of interest to donors outside an agency’s normal funding streams,” including local foundations, corporations, and media-related organizations (Blake et al., 2013).

Conclusion

When reviewed alongside nascent scholarship on the role of strategic communications for targeted violence prevention, the cognate literature from the field of public health yields several actionable insights for prevention practitioners. Firstly, this review reveals several common themes, even as the public health literature benefits from a more mature evidence base. Both the targeted violence literature and the broader public health literature highlight the central role of external engagements as a means to gain community-level trust, but also as a key component of building resonant messaging. Beyond these similarities, though, the public health community has conducted far more research to establish foundational knowledge about their target audiences. Scholars in this field have also more thoroughly explored opportunities to shift public perception about the potential for prevention programs to address endemic social challenges. The targeted violence prevention community can and should learn from this line of scholarship. Finally, the public health literature also emphasizes the importance of establishing a strategic communications posture that reflects the field's ongoing commitment to prevention. Importantly, this focus on sustainability aligns with the longer time horizon on which population-level change occurs (Farnham et al., 2020).

In the face of waning national-level support for prevention programming in Europe and the United States (Allam, 2025; Van Ginkel, 2025), the prevention community faces significant barriers to institutionalizing and scaling their work. As this scoping review demonstrates, though, scholars can build a multi-step research agenda to bolster baseline knowledge, encourage buy-in, inform multistakeholder collaboration, and ensure long-term sustainability. To realize the promise of a prevention-focused posture, scholars and practitioners must work together to communicate the value of this approach.

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Appendix 1: Scopus Search String

- ("strategic communications" OR "messaging") AND ("preventable" OR "not inevitable" OR (institutionaliz* OR "fieldbuild*" OR normaliz*)) AND ("public safety" OR "gang violence" OR "public health" OR "violence prevention" OR "suicide prevention" OR "bullying prevention")

Appendix 2: Journal- and Outlet-Specific Search Strings

- [All: "strategic communication*"] OR [All: "public messaging"] AND [in Journal: *Journal for Deradicalization, Terrorism and Political Violence, Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*]
- [All: "terrorism"] OR [All: "targeted violence"] OR [All: "extremism"] AND [in Journal: *International Journal of Strategic Communication*]
- "strategic communication*" OR "public messaging" within the websites of the Centre for Research and Evidence on Security Threats (<https://crestresearch.ac.uk/>) and the National Counterterrorism Innovation, Technology, and Education Center (<https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/ncitereportsresearch/>)
- All publications with a "Strategic Communications" topic tag on the website of the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism — The Hague (<https://icct.nl/publications>)
- All PCVE & Strategic Communications outputs within the EU Knowledge Hub on Prevention of Radicalisation (https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/networks/eu-knowledge-hub-prevention-radicalisation/pcve-strategic-communications_en)

Appendix 3: Descriptive table of all included publications

Author(s)	Title	Year	Publication/ Publisher	Theme
Julie Cerel et al.	Suicide exposure, awareness and attitudes in college students	2013	Advances in Mental Health	Establishing Baselines
Deydre S. Teyhen et al.	Key enablers to facilitate healthy behavior change: Workshop summary	2014	Journal of Orthopaedic and Sports Physical Therapy	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability
Michael	Empowering consumers with	2016	Health and	Enhancing

Popovich et al.	improved immunization intelligence through technology and social frameworks		Technology	Perceptions of Preventability
William D. Evans and Darren Mays	Design and feasibility of a text messaging intervention to prevent indoor tanning among young adult women: A pilot study	2016	JMIR mHealth and uHealth	Evaluation
Erin Casey et al.	Getting men in the room: perceptions of effective strategies to initiate men's involvement in gender-based violence prevention in a global sample	2017	Culture, Health and Sexuality	Establishing Baselines
Elizabeth Rogers et al.	Engaging Minority Youth in Diabetes Prevention Efforts Through a Participatory, Spoken-Word Social Marketing Campaign	2017	American Journal of Health Promotion	Evaluation
Joie Acosta et al.	Best practices for suicide prevention messaging and evaluating California's "Know the Signs" media campaign	2017	Crisis	Evaluation
Kasidet Manakongtreecheep	SMS-reminder for vaccination in Africa: research from published, unpublished and grey literature	2017	Pan African Medical Journal	Evaluation
Abdul Kazi et al.	Effect of mobile phone text message reminders on routine immunization uptake in Pakistan: Randomized controlled trial	2018	JMIR Public Health and Surveillance	Evaluation
Julie Jacobson Vann et al.	Patient reminder and recall interventions to improve immunization rates	2018	Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews	Evaluation
Maria Ftanou et al.	Crafting safe and effective suicide prevention media	2018	International Journal of	Enhancing Perceptions of

	messages: Outcomes from a workshop in Australia		Mental Health Systems	Preventability
Maria Pyra et al.	Global implementation of PrEP for HIV prevention: setting expectations for impact	2019	Journal of the International AIDS Society	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability
L Freebairn et al.	“Stopping before you start”: Reducing and preventing initiation of tobacco use in the act	2019	23rd International Congress on Modelling and Simulation - Supporting Evidence-Based Decision Making: The Role of Modelling and Simulation, MODSIM 2019	Evaluation
Angela Kelly-Hanku et al.	Health communication messaging about HPV vaccine in Papua New Guinea	2019	Health Education Journal	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability
Jing Zhao et al.	A baby formula designed for Chinese babies: Content analysis of milk formula advertisements on Chinese parenting apps	2019	JMIR mHealth and uHealth	Evaluation
Sandra Oketch et al.	Perspectives of women participating in a cervical cancer screening campaign with community-based HPV self-sampling in rural western Kenya: A qualitative study	2019	BMC Women's Health	Establishing Baselines
Osayame Ekhaguere et al.	Automated phone call and text reminders for childhood immunisations (PRIMM): A randomised controlled trial in Nigeria	2019	BMJ Global Health	Establishing Baselines
Waridibo Allison et al.	Knowledge and acceptability of human papillomavirus	2020	Open Access Emergency	Establishing Baselines

	vaccination and text message reminders for adolescents in urban emergency departments: A pilot study		Medicine	
Carol Camlin et al.	Pathways for reduction of HIV-related stigma: a model derived from longitudinal qualitative research in Kenya and Uganda	2020	Journal of the International AIDS Society	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability
Rebecca Roth et al.	Evaluating News Media Reports on the 'Blue Whale Challenge' for Adherence to Suicide Prevention Safe Messaging Guidelines	2020	Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability
Alex Bennett et al.	Reasons people who use opioids do not accept or carry no-cost naloxone: Qualitative interview study	2020	JMIR Formative Research	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability
Emma-Pascale Chevalier-Cottin et al.	Communicating Benefits from Vaccines Beyond Preventing Infectious Diseases	2020	Infectious Diseases and Therapy	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability
Olivia Olson et al.	Addressing parental vaccine hesitancy towards childhood vaccines in the United States: A systematic literature review of communication interventions and strategies	2020	Vaccines	Evaluation
Victoria Shelus et al.	Motivations and barriers for the use of face coverings during the COVID-19 pandemic: Messaging insights from focus groups	2020	International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health	Establishing Baselines
Foziya Mohammed Hussien et al.	The effect of mobile text messages on knowledge and perception towards cancer and behavioral risks among college students, Northeast Ethiopia: A randomized controlled trial protocol	2021	PLoS ONE	Establishing Baselines

Rebecca Fix et al.	Changing the paradigm: Using strategic communications to promote recognition of child sexual abuse as a preventable public health problem	2021	Child Abuse and Neglect	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability
Nikitra Batra et al.	Using social media for the prevention of pediatric burn injuries: Pilot design and usability study	2021	JMIR Formative Research	Evaluation
Umar Yunusa et al.	Mobile phone reminders for enhancing uptake, completeness and timeliness of routine childhood immunization in low and middle income countries: A systematic review and meta-analysis	2021	Vaccine	Evaluation
Anna Victoria Sangster et al.	Towards ending immunization inequity	2021	Vaccines	Establishing Baselines
Jessica Charlesworth et al.	Evaluating the impact of a pilot safe food-handling media campaign among consumers in Western Australia: Implications for public health messaging	2021	Food Control	Evaluation
Gavin Robert Walker	“Out there it’s YOLO”: Youth perspectives on a mass media HIV- and gender-based violence campaign in South Africa	2021	African Journal of AIDS Research	Evaluation
Dismas Matovelo et al.	Why don’t illiterate women in rural, Northern Tanzania, access maternal healthcare?	2021	BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth	Establishing Baselines
Osayande Agbonlahor et al.	Cardiovascular disease risk perceptions and tobacco use among Appalachian youth	2021	Population Medicine	Establishing Baselines
J. Jaiswal et al.	Correlates of PrEP Uptake Among Young Sexual Minority Men and Transgender Women in New York City: The Need to Reframe “Risk” Messaging and	2021	AIDS and Behavior	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability

	Normalize Preventative Health			
Abdul Momin Kazi et al.	Usability and acceptability of a mobile app for behavior change and to improve immunization coverage among children in Pakistan: A mixed-methods study	2021	International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health	Establishing Baselines
V. Gupta and S. Anand	Why don't they do it? Handwashing barriers and influencer study in Faridabad district, India	2021	Perspectives in Public Health	Stakeholder Engagement
Nicholas Furlo et al.	Rethinking Dating Apps as Sexual Consent Apps: A New Use Case for AI-Mediated Communication	2021	Proceedings of the ACM Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work, CSCW	Stakeholder Engagement
Patricia Zhu et al.	The Efficacy of a Brief, Altruism-Eliciting Video Intervention in Enhancing COVID-19 Vaccination Intentions among a Population-Based Sample of Younger Adults: Randomized Controlled Trial	2022	JMIR Public Health and Surveillance	Evaluation
Nell Marshall et al.	Influence of Digital Intervention Messaging on Influenza Vaccination Rates Among Adults With Cardiovascular Disease in the United States: Decentralized Randomized Controlled Trial	2022	Journal of Medical Internet Research	Evaluation
Rose Weeks et al.	COVID-19 Messaging on Social Media for American Indian and Alaska Native Communities: Thematic Analysis of Audience Reach and Web Behavior	2022	JMIR Infodemiology	Evaluation
Amanda Aubel	A comparative content analysis	2022	BMC Public	Enhancing

et al.	of newspaper coverage about extreme risk protection order policies in passing and non-passing US states		Health	Perceptions of Preventability
Sharifah Fazlinda Syed Nor et al.	A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Mobile Phone Messaging Intervention on Vaccine Preventable Diseases	2022	Infektsionnye Bolezni	Evaluation
Zaid Khan et al.	Vaccine hesitancy and coronavirus disease-19: Where do we stand?	2022	Journal of Education and Health Promotion	Establishing Baselines
Suraj Arshanapally et al.	The Use of Travel as an Appeal to Motivate Millennial Parents on Facebook to Get Vaccinated Against COVID-19: Message Framing Evaluation	2023	JMIR Formative Research	Evaluation
Chakema Carmack et al.	Concept mapping sociocultural aspects of cervical cancer prevention among African American women	2023	Frontiers in Public Health	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability
Christopher Owens and Randolph Hubach	Rural-urban differences in monkeypox behaviors and attitudes among men who have sex with men in the United States	2023	Journal of Rural Health	Establishing Baselines
Maya Adam et al.	Effect of Short, Animated Video Storytelling on Maternal Knowledge and Satisfaction in the Perinatal Period in South Africa: Randomized Controlled Trial	2023	Journal of Medical Internet Research	Evaluation
Ymke Evers et al.	Using a theoretical framework of Intervention Mapping to inform public health communication messages designed to increase vaccination uptake; the example of mpox in the Netherlands	2023	BMC Public Health	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability

Angela Shen et al.	Trusted messengers and trusted messages: The role for community-based organizations in promoting COVID-19 and routine immunizations	2023	Vaccine	Stakeholder Engagement
Kimberly Bonner et al.	What motivates adults to accept influenza vaccine? An assessment of incentives, ease of access, messaging, and sources of information using a discrete choice experiment	2023	SSM - Population Health	Evaluation
David Kalwicz et al.	‘There are people like me who will see that, and it will just wash over them’: Black sexual minority men’s perspectives on messaging in PrEP visual advertisements	2023	Culture, Health and Sexuality	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability
Meg Small et al.	College students’ COVID-19 vaccine beliefs and intentions: Implications for interventions	2024	Journal of American College Health	Establishing Baselines
Alok Kapoor et al.	Comparing the Efficacy of Targeted and Blast Portal Messaging in Message Opening Rate and Anticoagulation Initiation in Patients With Atrial Fibrillation in the Preventing Preventable Strokes Study II: Prospective Cohort Study	2024	JMIR Cardio	Evaluation
Ian David Aronson et al.	Barriers to, and Facilitators of, Checking Drugs for Adulterants in the Era of Fentanyl and Xylazine: Qualitative Study	2024	JMIR Formative Research	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability
Will Kocur et al.	Improving digital partner notification for sexually transmitted infections and HIV through a systematic review and application of the Behaviour Change Wheel approach	2024	Sexual Health	Evaluation
Christopher	Assessment of the delivery and	2024	Sport in Society	Evaluation

Else et al.	implementation of the Football Association's Heads Up mental health promotion campaign			
Emily Altman et al.	De-normalizing sugar-sweetened beverage consumption: effects of tax measures on social norms and attitudes in the California Bay Area	2024	BMC Public Health	Evaluation
Rebecca Fix et al.	Messaging to promote the public's understanding of child sexual violence as preventable, not inevitable	2025	Child Abuse and Neglect	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability
Sonali Kar et al.	Reinforced Media Communication Improves Turnout in Pulse Polio National Immunization Days: "Findings from a Grounded Theory Approach" from an Immunization Clinic in Odisha, India	2025	Indian Journal of Community Health	Evaluation
Godwin Pancras et al.	COVID-19 vaccination advocacy among Tanzanian rural communities: lessons for future pandemics	2025	Rural and Remote Health	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability
Manoj Sharma et al.	Theory-Based Antecedents of Stopping Texting While Driving Among College Students for Injury Prevention: A Cross-Sectional Study	2025	International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health	Establishing Baselines
Resham Khatri et al.	A scoping review of the levels, implementation strategies, enablers, and barriers to cervical, breast, and colorectal cancer screening among migrant populations in selected English-speaking high-income countries	2025	PLOS ONE	Stakeholder Engagement
Zachary Gersten and	Hungry for nutrition information: Undergraduate	2025	Nutrition and Health	Establishing Baselines

Olivia Anderson	students' engagement with nutrition social media nutrition content			
Alice Richman et al.	Exploring Vaccine Hesitancy, Structural Barriers, and Trust in Vaccine Information Among Populations Living in the Rural Southern United States	2025	Vaccines	Establishing Baselines
Donna Halperin et al.	The impact of two-year community-wide pharmacy interventions on the public's knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors about pharmacists as immunizers	2025	BMC Public Health	Establishing Baselines
Girma Gilano et al.	The effect of mHealth on childhood vaccination and its associated factors among South Ethiopian mothers: a cluster randomized controlled trial	2025	Scientific Reports	Evaluation
Steven Fuller et al.	Assessing Perspectives of Montana High School Students on Antitobacco Messaging: Antitobacco Messaging Among Rural Youth	2025	Psychology in the Schools	Evaluation
Arne Meeldijk et al.	How text message reminders increase COVID-19 booster vaccine uptake: Two randomized controlled trials	2025	Vaccine	Evaluation
Annette Regan and Sheena Sullivan	Building the global evidence on text message reminders to increase timely childhood vaccination	2025	International Journal of Epidemiology	Evaluation
Julia Mary Alber et al.	AI Awareness and Tobacco Policy Messaging Among US Adults: Electronic Experimental Study	2025	JMIR AI	Establishing Baselines
Adrienne Dean et al.	HPV-Related Knowledge and Impact of Patient–Provider	2025	Cancers	Establishing Baselines

	Communication on HPV-Associated Cervical Cancer Awareness and Pap Smear Completion in US Women Aged 21–65 Years			
Alyson Nunez et al.	Change targets, messaging, and content delivery for a community-engaged social media campaign addressing HIV-related stigma in Peru: a qualitative study	2025	AIDS Care - Psychological and Socio-Medical Aspects of AIDS/HIV	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability
Noah Doucette and Audrey Steenbeek	Improving Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine Uptake in Canada: A Call for Equity and Inclusivity	2025	Community Health Equity Research and Policy	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability
Tracy Rosebrock et al.	Using Artificial Intelligence Methods to Evaluate the Effect of the National Cytomegalovirus Awareness Month on the Content and Sentiment of Social Media Posts: Infodemiology Study	2026	JMIR Infodemiology	Evaluation
Joshua Trigg et al.	“In My Social Circle, We Don’t Discuss Health risks”: A Qualitative Study of the Role of Uncertainty in Adolescent and Young Adults’ Perceptions of Nicotine Vaping Risks	2026	Substance Use and Misuse	Establishing Baselines
Abigail Bordelon et al.	Promoting secure Firearm storage: The role of the media in reporting on unintentional Firearm deaths among children	2026	Journal of Public Health Research	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability
Keosha Bond et al.	Designing Pleasure-Centered, Culturally Relevant PrEP Messaging for Black Gay, Bisexual, Queer, Same-Gender-Loving, and Other Men Who have Sex with Men (SGL/MSM) in New York City	2026	AIDS and Behavior	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability

Rushabh Doshi et al.	Responsible Public Health Risk Communication: A New Framework for Consumer Safety	2026	American Journal of Health Promotion	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability
M. Vijayasimha and M. Srikanth	From PrEP-Related Mistrust to Trusted Prevention Ecosystems: Implementation Priorities Following Simon et al. and Jaiswal et al.	2026	AIDS and Behavior	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability
L. Mosca et al.	Awareness, Perception, and Knowledge of Heart Disease Risk and Prevention among Women in the United States. American Heart Association Women's Heart Disease and Stroke Campaign Task Force	2000	Archives of Family Medicine	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability
David Chambers et al.	The science of public messages for suicide prevention: A workshop summary	2005	Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability
Paul K. J. Han et al.	Perceived Ambiguity About Cancer Prevention Recommendations: Relationship to Perceptions of Cancer Preventability, Risk, and Worry	2006	Journal of Health Communication	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability
Bonnie Klimes-Dougan et al.	Suicide Prevention with Adolescents	2009	Crisis	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability
Shari Veil and Kelly Mitchell	Terror Management Theory: Promoting Tolerance in Campus Safety Campaigns	2010	International Journal of Strategic Communication	Strategic Communication and Targeted Violence Prevention
Allison Blake et al.	Effective Communications Strategies: Engaging the Media, Policymakers, and the Public	2013	Child Welfare	Evaluation
Bonnie Klimes-Dougan et al.	The Impact of Universal Suicide-Prevention Programs on the Help-Seeking Attitudes and	2013	Crisis	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability

	Behaviors of Youths			
Linda Langford et al.	Using Science to Improve Communications About Suicide Among Military and Veteran Populations: Looking for a Few Good Messages	2013	American Journal of Public Health	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability
Jillian Whelan et al.	Cochrane Update: Predicting Sustainability of Intervention Effects in Public Health Evidence: Identifying Key Elements to Provide Guidance	2014	Journal of Public Health	Evaluation
Jane Chung-Do et al.	Insights in public health: safe messaging for youth-led suicide prevention awareness: examples from Hawai'i	2016	Hawai'i Journal of Medicine & Public Health	Stakeholder Engagement
Bonnie Klimes-Dougan et al.	Suicide Prevention Public Service Announcements Impact Help-Seeking Attitudes: The Message Makes a Difference	2016	Frontiers in Psychiatry	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability
Haroro J. Ingram and Alastair Reed	Lessons from History for Counter-Terrorism Strategic Communications	2016	ICCT	Strategic Communication and Targeted Violence Prevention
Cherney et al.	Countering Violent Extremism Evaluation Indicator Document	2018	Australian and New Zealand Counter-Terrorism Committee	Strategic Communication and Targeted Violence Prevention
Colleen L. Barry et al.	Language Matters in Combatting the Opioid Epidemic: Safe Consumption Sites Versus Overdose Prevention Sites	2018	American Journal of Public Health	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability
Krešimir Čosić et al.	Emotionally Based Strategic Communications in the Process of Societal Deradicalization	2018	International Journal of Strategic Communication	Strategic Communication and Targeted Violence

				Prevention
Elizabeth Karras et al.	A randomized controlled trial of public messaging to promote safe firearm storage among US military veterans	2019	Social Science & Medicine	Evaluation
Joe Whittaker and Lilah Elsayed	Linkages as a Lens: An Exploration of Strategic Communications in P/CVE	2019	Journal for Deradicalization	Strategic Communication and Targeted Violence Prevention
Sarah Gonzalez-Nahm et al.	A Public Health Messaging Campaign to Reduce Caloric Intake: Feedback From Expert Stakeholders	2020	Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior	Stakeholder Engagement
Sam Andrews	Prevent Tragedies: A case study in female-targeted strategic communications in the United Kingdom's Prevent counter-terrorism policy	2020	Journal for Deradicalization	Strategic Communication and Targeted Violence Prevention
Elizabeth Karras et al.	Veteran Perspectives of Barriers and Facilitators to Campaigns Promoting Help Seeking During Crisis	2021	Community Mental Health Journal	Stakeholder Engagement
Kimberly Keller et al.	Adults' reaction to public health messaging: recall, media type, and behavior change motivation	2022	Journal of Prevention	Stakeholder Engagement
Woojung Lee et al.	Association between Having a Family Member with Dementia and Perceptions of Dementia Preventability	2022	Aging & Mental Health	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability
Deborah M. Clubb	Memphis Works to Envision a Better Public Health Response to Sexual Assault: Community Engagement, Prevention, and Awareness Messaging to Change Attitudes and Behavior	2022	Sexual Assault Kits and Reforming the Response to Rape	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability
Elizabeth	Perceptions of Public Messaging	2022	Archives of	Stakeholder

Karras et al.	to Facilitate Help Seeking during Crisis among U.S. Veterans at Risk for Suicide		Suicide Research	Engagement
Gordon Clubb et al.	The Importance of Public Relations in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism	2022	ICCT	Strategic Communication and Targeted Violence Prevention
Rachel Weinstein et al.	Establishing and Maintaining Trust: How the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force Uses Strategic Communications to Build Confidence in and Disseminate Its Evidence-Based Recommendations	2023	Journal of Health Communication	Stakeholder Engagement
Sydney N. Waitz-Kudla et al.	Securing Lethal Means for Suicide: A Focus Group Study Exploring Perceptions and Barriers among Practicing Veterinarians	2023	Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association	Stakeholder Engagement
Rebecca Fix et al.	The Public's Knowledge about Child Sexual Abuse Influences Its Perceptions of Prevention and Associated Policies	2023	Child Abuse & Neglect	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability
Chris Allen	The Independent Review of Prevent: Controversial, Contentious and Counter-Productive	2023	Political Insight	Strategic Communication and Targeted Violence Prevention
Haroro J. Ingram	Strategic Communications in FTF Repatriation & Reintegration: Guiding Principles for Policymakers & Practitioners	2023	Journal for Deradicalization	Strategic Communication and Targeted Violence Prevention
Amy-Jane Gielen and Aileen Van Leeuwen	Debunking Prevailing Assumptions About Monitoring and Evaluation for P/CVE Programmes and Policies	2023	ICCT	Strategic Communication and Targeted Violence Prevention

Rosie Mutton, et al.	Public Mitigation of Terrorism Risk: A Rapid Review of the Literature	2023	CREST	Strategic Communication and Targeted Violence Prevention
Ben Collier et al.	Influence Policing: Strategic Communications, Digital Nudges, and Behaviour Change Marketing in Scottish and UK Preventative Policing	2023	Scottish Institute for Policing Research	Strategic Communication and Targeted Violence Prevention
Justin C. Baker et al.	Military Spouse and Key Stakeholder Perspectives of Effective Messaging for US Service Members on Secure Storage of Personal Firearms: A Qualitative Study	2024	Injury Prevention	Stakeholder Engagement
Bertrand D. Berger et al.	Effect of Veteran-Focused Suicide Prevention Public Messaging on Help-Seeking Behavior and Secure Firearm Storage	2024	OMEGA - Journal of Death and Dying	Stakeholder Engagement
Elissa R. Weitzman et al.	Need for Strategic Communications and Stakeholder Engagement to Advance Acceptability of an Overdose Preventing Vaccine Targeting Fentanyl	2024	Vaccine	Stakeholder Engagement
Charis Rice et al.	Frame, Fame and Fear Traps: The Dialectic of Counter-Terrorism Strategic Communication	2024	Studies in Conflict & Terrorism	Strategic Communication and Targeted Violence Prevention
Jodie Wrigley	The Exploitation of Climate Chaos, Confusion, and Change – a New Frontier for P/CVE Strategic Communication	2024	ICCT	Strategic Communication and Targeted Violence Prevention
Richard Chalk	A Strategic Communications Approach to Tackling Current,	2024	ICCT	Strategic Communication

	Emerging and New Violent Extremist Threats in Europe			and Targeted Violence Prevention
Matt Allen et al.	TVTP Grant Program Formative and Outcome Evaluation Report	2024	NCITE	Strategic Communication and Targeted Violence Prevention
Daniel Pérez et al.	Strengthening Strategic Communications on the local level	2024	European Commission	Strategic Communication and Targeted Violence Prevention
Sarah E. Gollust et al.	Strategies for and Barriers to Communicating About Health Equity in Challenging Times: Qualitative Interviews With Public Health Communicators	2025	The Milbank Quarterly	Stakeholder Engagement
Reima Pryor et al.	No Excuse for Abuse: Evaluation of a Public Health Campaign To Increase Awareness and Change Attitudes Toward Non-Physical Domestic Violence	2025	Journal of Family Violence	Evaluation
Gordon Clubb et al.	Transparent Communication in Counter-Terrorism Policy: Does Transparency Increase Public Support and Trust in Terrorism Prevention Programmes?	2025	Terrorism and Political Violence	Strategic Communication and Targeted Violence Prevention
Charis Rice and Martin Innes	Counter-Terrorism Strategic Communication Campaigns and the Generative Nature of Trust	2025	International Journal of Strategic Communication	Strategic Communication and Targeted Violence Prevention
Stéphanie O'Keeffe and Isabel Pérez	Strategic Communications Training for Local Authorities	2025	European Commission	Strategic Communication and Targeted Violence Prevention

Arije Antinori and Javier Ruipérez	Digital P/CVE for first-line practitioners	2025	European Commission	Strategic Communication and Targeted Violence Prevention
Gordon Clubb	Transparency, Evaluation and Standards: avoiding pitfalls	2025	CREST	Strategic Communication and Targeted Violence Prevention
Alex Rister	Navigating the Skies: The Aviation Industry's Corporate Social Responsibility Communication for Human Trafficking Awareness	2025	International Journal of Strategic Communication	Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability
Daniel Koehler et al.	Lived Experience and Messenger Credibility: A Replication Study on P/CVE Messenger Credibility in Germany	2025	Studies in Conflict & Terrorism	Strategic Communication and Targeted Violence Prevention
Daniel Koehler et al.	Don't Kill the Messenger: Perceived Credibility of Far-Right Former Extremists and Police Officers in P/CVE Communication	2025	Studies in Conflict & Terrorism	Strategic Communication and Targeted Violence Prevention
Gordon Clubb et al.	Selling De-Radicalisation: Managing the Media Framing of Countering Violent Extremism	2021	Routledge	Strategic Communication and Targeted Violence Prevention
Myles Davidson et al.	Examining the Effect of Message Framing and Demographic Traits on Public Support for a Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Program	2026	Sexual Abuse	Stakeholder Engagement
Megan D'Atri et al.	Effectiveness of Tailored Public Health Messages for Vulnerable Populations: A Randomised Controlled Trial	2026	Public Health	Evaluation

Stéphanie O'Keeffe and Javier Ruipérez	Developing Effective Strategic Communications Campaigns and Strengthening International Collaboration	2026	European Commission	Strategic Communication and Targeted Violence Prevention
Arije Antinori and Javier Ruipérez	Digital P/CVE for Policy-Makers	2026	European Commission	Strategic Communication and Targeted Violence Prevention

Theme Definitions

Strategic Communication and Targeted Violence Prevention

This section focuses specifically on scholarship related to targeted violence and terrorism prevention, drawing on the definition used in this paper from DeGue et al., 2026. Studies in this section are drawn from field-specific academic journals, as well as the “gray literature” that bridges scholar-practitioner divides. As with the remainder of the paper, studies included in this section primarily revolve around high-level communications to champion and institutionalize prevention, rather than specific inoculation or counter-narrative campaigns

Enhancing Perceptions of Preventability

This theme includes scholarship that examines efforts to normalize prevention-oriented approaches as a legitimate form of public policy intervention. Studies included in this category may seek to develop specific messages to enhance audiences’ belief that a given public health problem is preventable, explore barriers related to help-seeking behavior, or examine broader cultural shifts related to prevention.

Establishing Baselines

Studies included in this section focus specifically on building the evidence base as it relates to prevention and strategic communication. This theme, therefore, consists of scholarship that creates the foundational knowledge related to risk awareness and risk perception necessary to inform future scholarship and bring programs to scale. Studies may include large-N survey data or more narrowly-tailored research to improve scholars’ understanding of key communities and target demographics for communication campaigns.

Evaluation and Sustainability

This section includes scholarship oriented towards the long-term viability of prevention programming. Examples include experimental research that aims to measure the impact of specific prevention programs, as well as field-level analyses such as systematic reviews. Beyond just evaluation, though, this category also includes studies more focused on the organizational aspect of prevention programs, including efforts to professionalize the field to enable long-term viability.

Stakeholder Engagement

This theme includes any scholarship that is primarily focused on the relationship between prevention programs and relevant participants, parties, contributors, or collaborations. Stakeholders may include recipients of prevention programming and their families/peers, as well as policy experts, practitioners, and broader support networks.

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