

The National Governors Association



Developed for:



Science and
Technology

Developed by RTI International

List of Abbreviations

| | |
|-------------|--|
| DHS | Department of Homeland Security |
| IMP | Implementation and Measurement Plan |
| NGA | National Governors Association |
| SME | Subject Matter Expert |
| TAM | Threat Assessment and Management |
| TVP | Targeted Violence Prevention |
| TVTP | Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention |

Executive Summary

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 provided to the National Governors Association (NGA) to bolster state governments' responses to targeted violence through a Policy Academy.

The research team conducted a process evaluation of NGA's grant, which comprised three main components. Researchers reviewed state-developed documents, vendor-developed toolkits, and survey data collected by NGA; observed the April 2022 virtual convening and the in-person January 2023 convening; and interviewed state representatives and grant partners. Table ES-A summarizes findings from this evaluation.

NGA successfully executed a Policy Academy with three of the four participating states completing a State Prevention Strategy with emphasis on communication and Threat Assessment Management (TAM) Teams for each state. Each state developed a core team of stakeholders which opened lines of communication across state governments. NGA also connected states to federal stakeholders such as DHS, the Secret Service, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, creating new relationships that states will benefit from throughout the implementation of their strategies and beyond. In support of the State Prevention Strategies development, NGA conducted multiple webinars and a multi-state learning

lab to discuss salient topics and presentations from subject matter experts (SMEs). The association also hosted two "all-state convenings" for all four participating states: one virtually and one in person. These convenings allowed states to share their strategies with each other including their successes and challenges, receive presentations on the use of the Programming and Key Performance Indicators library created for this project, learn about communication guides created for this project, and discuss challenges related to implementation. These events facilitated peer-to-peer learning and included peers outside of the Policy Academy from states who have statewide strategies already in place. NGA disseminated lessons learned from the Policy Academy by updating its "Governor's Roadmap to Preventing Targeted Violence."

Toward the end of the grant, NGA used remaining funds to provide technical assistance to three other states working outside of the Policy Academy to prevent targeted violence. The association also provided stipends to Hawai'i and Illinois to assist with implementation of their strategies after the grant had ended. Hawai'i and Illinois plan to use that money to develop buy-in and participation from key stakeholders around each state. Finally, the states that completed their State Prevention Strategies all provided evidence of intentions to implement and sustain their state strategies. Some states have either enacted or are working on legislation to solidify this commitment.

Table ES-A. Summary of Findings

| | |
|--|---|
|  Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four selected states establish and implement policy and program changes through prevention strategies and frameworks, leverage threat assessments and management services, and establish a platform to communicate best practices and peer-to-peer learning and improve messaging to the general public. • Increase the ability of the four state participants to develop and implement targeted, evidence-based programming to govern prevention activities • Enhance the four state participants' ability to use data to inform policymakers' decision-making across all levels of government. • Four state participants strengthen relationships between government, private, and nonprofit partners. |
|  Outputs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fostered the development of three State Prevention Strategies • Held monthly meetings with states • Held at least one workshop with each state individually • Conducted seven webinars with a total attendance of 70 people • Held two all-state convenings • Developed a toolkit of key performance indicators for state strategies • Developed two communication toolkits • Updated the Governor's Roadmap to Preventing Targeted Violence • Provided stipends to two states to support implementation of Prevention Strategies |
|  Challenges | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pivoting delivery methods because of COVID-19 restrictions • Changes in NGA leadership throughout the final year brought disruptions to states • Need clearer messaging on expectations of states from the onset • Changes within state leadership caused delays and changing priorities |
|  Recommendations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enact a co-lead model for teams for continuity • Provide clear expectations from the beginning • Budget stipends to facilitate strategy implementation |

Site Profile: The National Governors Association

The National Governors Association (NGA) was awarded a 2-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 NGA's grant design, implementation, accomplishments, and challenges in targeted violence prevention (TVP). It concludes with relevant recommendations for future programming. The research team conducted an evaluability assessment of NGA's Fiscal Year 2020 (FY2020) Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention (TVTP) grant and, on the basis of the project goals and objectives, 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 National Governors Association (NGA)

NGA works nationally in collaboration with governors' offices and state governments to improve citizens' lives through better policy and implementation practices. NGA works on a variety of issue areas, providing both supportive management and technical assistance to states. Furthermore, NGA endeavors to share best practices for state governance and facilitate partnerships that encourage ongoing collaboration among state governments.

NGA's FY2020 Grant Program

Grant Summary

For its FY2020 TVTP grant, NGA sought to bolster state governments' TVP efforts by providing technical assistance to build a comprehensive approach and implementation resources for turning this approach into action. To facilitate these efforts, the association developed a Policy Academy on Preventing Targeted Violence (hereafter Policy Academy) that ultimately assisted three states in developing State Prevention Strategies to address and reduce targeted violence by adopting comprehensive, data-driven approaches. The project was guided by three goals in NGA's Implementation and Measurement Plan (IMP), all of which centered around the Policy Academy.

The Policy Academy involved NGA facilitating in-person and online workshops for the state teams. NGA also held an online final convening (April 2022) as well as an in-person final convening (January 2023) for the state teams to come together and discuss their work. Additionally, NGA provided a

live webinar series for state teams to attend, which convened various researchers and practitioners to speak on TVP topics. To ensure that the states had the necessary tools at their disposal, NGA contracted Kivvit to develop messaging materials and guidelines, as well as RAND Corporation for a Programming and Key Performance Indicators library. Once each state had developed its State Prevention Strategy, the ultimate goal of the Policy Academy was that each state would present it to their governor's office for implementation. Toward the end of the grant, NGA additionally repurposed some of its remaining funds to provide technical assistance on TVP strategies to states outside of the Policy Academy and dispersed stipends to two of the Policy Academy states.

NGA went through multiple staff changes during the grant period of performance, which caused there to be four different project leads in the last year of the grant. The sections below describe the overall project as well as each state's experience going through the Policy Academy with NGA.

For NGA's full IMP—which outlines its goals, target audiences, objectives, activities, inputs, time frame, anticipated outputs, performance measures, and data collection plan, please contact DHS.

Process Evaluation Design and Methods

RTI conducted a process evaluation of NGA's grant project. In this process evaluation, researchers delved deeply into understanding the structure of the Policy Academy and how it provided resources and technical assistance to organize government bodies developing State Prevention Strategies. Not all of NGA's objectives were measurable with the data collected. In these cases, the team identified successes that could be measured through the various elements of the evaluation.

The research team observed the April 2022 virtual all-state convening and attended the January 2023 in-person all-state convening. After the in-person convening, the team

conducted interviews with representatives from each of the states in attendance. It should be noted that Wisconsin did not attend the in-person convening and did not respond to requests for an interview. Researchers also interviewed representatives from RAND Corporation and Kivvit. In addition, researchers reviewed and analyzed a variety of program documents, including strategic action plans, toolkits developed by RAND Corporation and Kivvit, State Prevention Strategies, and findings from the end-of-project survey each state was asked to complete. Webinar attendance data, workshops, and all-state convening attendance were also obtained. 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. Using these methods, researchers were able to discover successes that could not be measured in numbers, such as the forging of new relationships and the unexpected influence of a high-profile mass shooting.

Findings

Three Out of Four States Complete State Prevention Strategies

First, this section will examine the process evaluation findings regarding the focal point of the project, the development of the Policy Academy and State Prevention Strategies, which corresponds with Goal 1, Objectives 1.1 and 1.2 in the NGA IMP.

Objective 1.1: Objective 1.1: Four selected states establish and implement program changes through prevention strategies and frameworks that enable unity of effort between all layers of government and community partners.
Objective 1.2: Four selected states leverage threat assessments and management services to improve prevention frameworks.

NGA Selected Four States for the Policy Academy

Using its networks, NGA sent a Request for Applications to all 55 U.S. states and territories and held an open call prior to the application due date. The association received applications from five states, all of which were scored independently by a small team of project staff. Ultimately, it was decided based on the strength of their applications that the following four states should participate in the Policy Academy: Illinois, Hawai'i, Wisconsin, and New York. Each participating state was required to have a multidisciplinary core team of stakeholders and officials, guided by a team lead.



States Develop Strategic Action Plans to Facilitate State Prevention Strategy Development

The first deliverable for participating states was a Strategic Action Plan, which focused on the states’ specific policy issues. To aid states in creating their action plans, which were due in March 2022, NGA held a Multi-State Learning Lab in August 2021. Between the Multi-State Learning Lab and the due date for the Strategic Action Plans, NGA held a workshop with each state, either in-person or virtually, and led the state teams through exercises including a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis.

Figure 1 Strategic Action Plan Template

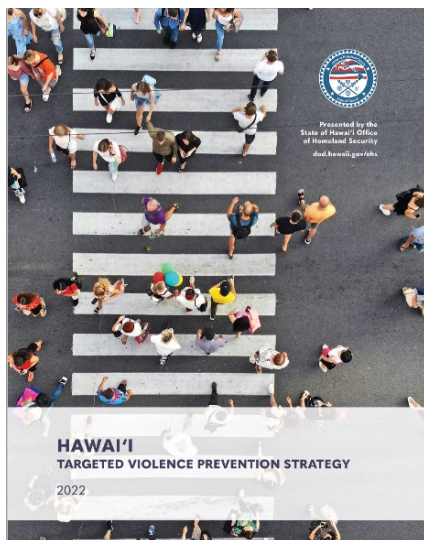
| Action Plan Framework | | | |
|-----------------------|--|-------------------|----------|
| Priority/Objective | Action Steps | Responsible Party | Timeline |
| Objective 1: | Action 1: | | |
| Key Results: | Additional Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> | | |
| Objective 2: | Action 1: | | |
| Key Results: | Additional Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> | | |

State teams were provided with a template to follow as they developed their Strategic Action Plans, as shown in Figure 1. The Strategic Action Plans consisted of a matrix where state teams identified objectives and key results, action steps needed, and a responsible party and a timeline for each action step. All states provided a variety of objectives and actions in their plans. Some examples of the objectives were implementing standard operation procedures, collaborating with Threat Assessment Management (TAM) Teams, engaging members of the community, and educating stakeholders. Action steps often involved identifying and reaching out to other groups as well as identifying gaps. Message development and communication were also listed as actions. All four states completed Strategic Action Plans and submitted them to NGA.

Three States Publish and Adopt Their Prevention Strategies

The State Prevention Strategies were due to NGA in August of 2022. Of the four states that completed the Strategic Action Plans, three out of four of —Hawai’i, Illinois, and New York—were able to develop a State Prevention Strategy. Each state contended with its own challenges and situational contexts that impacted its strategy. Below describes each state’s journey through the Policy Academy and discusses its State Prevention Strategy.

Hawai'i



NGA held its first in-person workshop in Hawai'i in October of 2021. During the initial meeting, NGA guided the state team through activities to identify their goals, establish planned steps for implementation, and distribute responsibilities. When Hawai'i entered the NGA Policy Academy, their state government had already implemented significant programming around TVP and had built substantial professional networks in the practice area. As NGA began engaging on a monthly basis with the Hawai'i state team, the association noted the broad, ongoing political support that the team received and how that contributed to their ability to make consistent progress toward their Strategic Action Plan and State Prevention Strategy. Members of the Hawai'i team attended both the virtual All-State convening in April of 2022 as well as the in-person All State convening in January of 2023.

Hawai'i's State Prevention Strategy

Hawai'i published its State Prevention Strategy¹ in October of 2022. Hawai'i framed its strategy through a public health and "whole of community" approach, paying special attention to specific contextual factors in Hawai'i such as the state's racial and ethnic makeup, status as a cultural melting pot, and various geographic challenges. The State Prevention Strategy heavily emphasized the importance of collaboration, communication, TAM Teams, and resourcing as pillars of Hawai'i's approach to TVP. The Collaboration and Communication pillar targeted communicating with the community on risk factors and prevention as well as collaboration between Behavior Intervention (BI) TAM Teams across the states and communicating awareness of these teams to communities. The pillar Behavioral TAM Teams focused entirely on institutional- and county-level team development, training, and ensuring all counties had coverage. The pillar Resourcing and Governance Teams identified implementation partners anticipated for implementation of the strategy. They noted that this pillar was the "less-visible structural elements that will underpin the strategy's two other pillars."

In Hawai'i's State Prevention Strategy, the description of each pillar was followed by goals and objectives. Some notable objectives were to develop action plans for community resilience in the aftermath of a targeted violence event, support disengagement and reentry programs for incarcerated individuals at risk for or previously engaged in targeted violence, ensure each county has a BI/TAM Team, and facilitate monitoring and evaluation efforts for this strategy. The strategy also acknowledged the need for a civil rights and civil liberties policy to balance the collection of information with citizens' right to privacy.

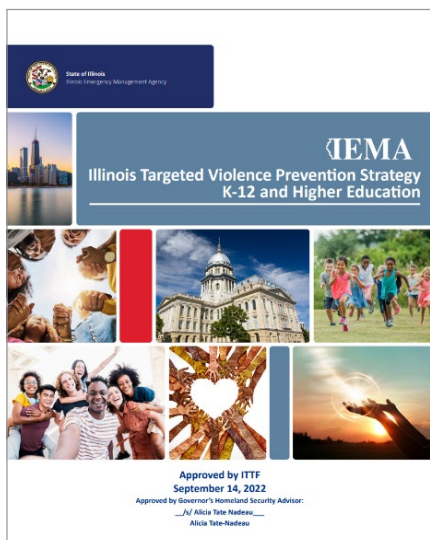
Implementation and Sustainability Efforts for Hawai'i's State Prevention Strategy

The strategy laid out a legislative framework noting that two legislative proposals were currently in development: "One encompasses formal establishment of the HSFC [Hawaii State Fusion Center]. The second mirrors the vision and scope of this [NGA Policy Academy] strategy." The transfer of steps from Hawai'i's State Prevention Strategy to legislative proposal indicates an intention of commitment to implement and sustain the state's TVP strategy.

Hawai'i also provided an Implementation Plan to support implementation of elements of its State Prevention Strategy when NGA announced the opportunity for states to receive stipends. Hawai'i described the need for stakeholder buy-in and the difficulties counties outside of O'ahu face in participating in O'ahu-centric activities. The state proposed using funds to have the Hawai'i Office of Homeland Security travel to neighboring islands to educate less active stakeholders about the strategy and cultivate involvement and buy-in. This is a group of stakeholders that are not already involved in the State Prevention Strategy but whose involvement is nonetheless important to successful implementation. NGA approved Hawai'i's proposed plan which they have not yet implemented as of the publication of this report, but plan to do so in the future.

¹ https://dod.hawaii.gov/ohs/files/2022-HAWAII-TARGETED-VIOLENCE-PREVENTION-STRATEGY_FINAL.pdf

Illinois



Illinois had a delayed start compared with other states because of staffing changes and scheduling challenges, and began engagement with NGA in November 2021. At the outset of the project, the Illinois workshop was meant to be held as an in-person event in Springfield, Illinois, but the workshop was postponed after there was staff turnover at NGA. Before NGA began planning the postponed Illinois event, the leader of the Illinois team changed positions and could no longer participate in the Policy Academy. NGA also went through another staffing change at that time so, ultimately, NGA decided to hold the workshop virtually in January 2022.

The online workshop aimed to build on a framework the state team had created in August of 2021 and guide the state team in drafting their Strategic Action Plan. However, because the Illinois team experienced a change in leadership, they primarily used the online meeting to renegotiate their previously established goals and objectives. Because of the time constraints of the meeting, the Illinois team agreed to schedule another call to follow up on writing their Strategic Action Plan. In between the

two online workshop sessions, NGA met with several smaller groups within the Illinois state team to hone the language of Illinois' goals and objectives. In February of 2022, the Illinois state team convened again and developed concrete actionable steps to work toward their objectives. The second meeting also allowed the team to discuss their organizational structure, including identifying a new team lead, and to establish a timeline for creating their Strategic Action Plan, which they decided would focus on K-12 and higher education specifically.

NGA continued to meet with the Illinois state team throughout the Spring of 2022 on a monthly basis. These meetings served to hold the Illinois state team accountable to their own timeline for developing the Strategic Action Plan and their State Prevention Strategy. Illinois attended the virtual all-state convening in April 2022 and the in-person all-state convening in January 2023 and engaged in fruitful conversation about next steps for the state.

Illinois's State Prevention Strategy

Illinois published its State Prevention Strategy² in October 2022. Its strategy centered on supporting communities' endeavors for primary, secondary, and tertiary TVP in education settings. Guided by its mission, which acknowledged the need to respect civil liberties and civil rights, Illinois identified in its strategy the current efforts already in place related to TVP. The strategy laid out a three-phase approach (see Figure 2) to move forward by strengthening those efforts through training, resource provision, and culturally tailored information for communities.

As evidenced by the phases, the strategy emphasizes a community approach, which was consistent with the Illinois Homeland Security Strategy: Vision 2025³ (IHSS 2025 Vision) and remained particularly focused on students and educators. Illinois identified two goals for its strategy: (1) strengthening community-based TVP resources; and (2) strengthening higher education and K-12 Behavioral TAM Teams and creating and maintaining regional Behavioral TAM Teams. These goals were followed by a table listing objectives for each goal, mapped to IHSS 2025 Vision objectives, as well as data sources and benchmarks. The benchmarks specified actions needed to meet the listed objectives. In some cases, the benchmark involved conducting surveys for various purposes such as feedback on programming, gaps, and effectiveness.

² <https://iemaohs.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/iemaohs/hs/documents/Targeted-Violence-Prevention-Strategy.pdf>

³ <https://iemaohs.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/iemaohs/hs/documents/vision2025.pdf>

Figure 2. Phases of the Illinois State Prevention Strategy

Some notable objectives are training frontline professionals in TVP, facilitating information-sharing between government and nongovernmental stakeholders, establishing a behavioral TAM resource center and providing ongoing training for education- and community-based Behavioral TAM Teams, and promoting coordination of behavioral TAMs and helplines such as 911 and 988.

Implementation and Sustainability Efforts for Illinois's State Prevention Strategy

The document specified that the team intends to review and modify the strategy on an annual basis, logging changes on the final page for memorialization. The intent of annual review along with the Phase 3 directive of assessing sustainability indicate intentions of implementing and maintaining the activities described in the State Prevention Strategy.

Illinois also applied for a stipend from NGA to put toward implementation of its strategy. The state submitted an Implementation Plan stating that it would use the funds to form a community-based prevention working group, convene a Targeted Violence Training Summit in Fall 2023, and help initiate Behavioral TAM Teams in three counties. The state received money from NGA to support these efforts building communication between both government and nongovernment entities and providing TAM services where they were previously missing. As of the writing of this report, the Summit planning is underway and currently scheduled for October 2023.

New York



New York first connected with NGA in October 2021 and determined that its state workshop would be held virtually because of COVID-19. Ultimately, New York completed its virtual Policy Academy workshop in November 2021. NGA noted that the primary purpose the association served for New York was coalescing the members of the state team. When the New York team came together, their project quickly gained momentum and was able to independently organize and work together. Early on in the drafting process, New York was highly motivated and expressed strong interest in the Programming and Key Performance Indicators library that RAND Corporation was developing. NGA continued to meet with New York and noted that it made consistent progress throughout the drafting of the Strategic Action Plan and the Statewide Prevention Strategy.

The State of New York experienced two instances of targeted violence during the period of the Policy Academy, which increased local interest in the project and topic area. These events, particularly the mass shooting in Buffalo in May 2022, spurred the creation of the Domestic Terrorism Unit in the Office of Counter Terrorism within NY State Division of Homeland Security and contributed to the creation of Behavioral TAM Teams. The drafting of the State Prevention Strategy within this environment involved substantial input and contributions from a variety of

parties that were not originally participating in the Policy Academy. The final Statewide Prevention Strategy⁴ was published with joint approval from the governor's office in April 2023.

New York's State Prevention Strategy

The New York strategy began by providing background on targeted violence and sections describing risk factors, indicators, and protective factors. This was immediately followed by an acknowledgement of the importance of civil rights, civil liberties, and privacy. After providing background information on targeted violence in New York, the state's strategy focused on three goals: (1) educating stakeholders and sharing information, (2) using programs and initiatives to disrupt targeted violence, and (3) mitigating the impacts of targeted violence on communities. Beneath each goal were nonexhaustive lists of objectives with more information provided in appendices—specifically, there was a list of more than 40 programs and initiatives either developed or supported by New York State, categorized by which state agency each program belonged to. Some notable objectives included leveraging the state's intelligence offices for information sharing, supporting the development and training of TAM Teams, establishing a new Domestic Terrorism Prevention Unit within NY's Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services, continuing to invest in targeted violence-related training for mental health professionals, and ensuring that active shooter plans are in place and that training is provided to first responders.

Implementation and Sustainability Efforts for New York's State Prevention Strategy

New York already began implementing components of its strategy before it was officially made public. Its strategy included an appendix with Executive Order 18, issued by Governor Hochul in response to the Buffalo shooting in May 2022, requiring all New York counties and New York City to review current domestic terrorism strategies and provide plans by December 2022, all of which met that deadline. The Executive Order also established a TAM program (the Domestic Terrorism Prevention Unit) and a dedicated unit in the New York State Intelligence Center to track domestic extremism and increase social media monitoring. An update on progress as of April 2023 was also provided, which noted the following: almost all jurisdictions expressed interest in creating or continuing a TAM Team; the Domestic Terrorism Prevention Unit was established and currently includes 14 full-time employees; TAM creation guidance documents had been distributed; a TAM summit was convened in August 2022; and the state launched a Domestic Terrorism Prevention grant program that has already disbursed \$10 million to local jurisdictions.

⁴ <https://www.dhses.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2023/04/2023-nys-tvp-strategy.pdf>

Wisconsin

Wisconsin Initiatives Supported by or Intersecting with Participation in the Policy Academy

eLearning module Foundations for Targeted Violence Prevention (<https://media.dpi.wi.gov/foundations-of-targeted-violence-prevention-wi/story.html>) created in collaboration with the National Threat Evaluation and Reporting Program available to the public to raise awareness on threatening behaviors and where to report them either nationally or in Wisconsin. National Threat Assessment Center research was used in creating this training.

Updated content to the Office of School Safety Behavioral TAM course.

OSS provides services through “Speak Up, Speak Out” School Safety Resource Center. This includes 24/7 manned threat reporting, providing schools and law enforcement with behavioral TAM guidance and training, and training of Critical Incident Response Teams (CIRT) to help minimize the psychological impact of a school incident.

Wisconsin began its process with NGA later than expected because of ongoing delays and challenges with developing the state team. Ultimately, NGA hosted a virtual workshop for Wisconsin in February 2022 to formulate the state’s Strategic Action Plan. When NGA began working with Wisconsin, they discussed the state’s ongoing “Speak Up, Speak Now” awareness campaign in response to school violence. Through the NGA process, Wisconsin hoped to maintain the momentum of that project and create a training program to prevent mobilization to violence. Ten participants from Wisconsin attended the NGA Wisconsin workshop, all of whom were regularly meeting leading up to February to discuss their TVP work. During the workshop with NGA, the Wisconsin team spent substantial time reviewing which initiatives were already taking place in the state and were able to put together a Strategic Action Plan.

In April 2022, Wisconsin’s former team lead left their position in the Office of School Safety (OSS). The team wanted to continue to house the project within OSS, but it was not ultimately feasible. NGA engaged more closely with Wisconsin at this point and planned to propose an in-person event prior to the due date for the first draft of its Statewide Prevention Strategy. However, by June 2022, the Wisconsin team was still unable to find a state agency to house the project and was struggling to find leadership. NGA recognized that these extenuating factors would mean Wisconsin would not be able to complete the Statewide Prevention Strategy with the original project timeline and modified deadlines. Wisconsin continued to meet with NGA virtually to discuss its work, but by January 2023 the state determined that it did not want to have an in-person workshop with NGA and would be using its team to focus on expanding ongoing K–12 in-school initiatives. It became clear that Wisconsin did not have the capacity to work toward completing a Statewide Prevention Strategy, so NGA pivoted to connecting Wisconsin with other states that had similar K–12 initiatives and discussing options around other publications at the end of the Policy Academy. Ultimately, instead of a Statewide Prevention Strategy, Wisconsin provided a letter documenting its work with NGA and describing the efforts that were either supported by or intersected with the objectives of the project.

Common Elements Identified Across State Prevention Strategies

There were many commonalities identified across either two or three of the strategies developed (Hawai‘i, Illinois, and New York) during the Policy Academy. Figure 3 shows where some of these common elements were found across sites with some further explanations below.

Figure 3 Common Elements Across State Prevention Strategies

| Common Element | Hawaii | Illinois | New York |
|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Section on Civil Rights/Civil Liberties | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Utilizes TAM Teams | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Implementation/sustainability efforts | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Provision of resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Mentions evaluation/data | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mentions communication plans | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Inclusion of goals | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Inclusion of objectives | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Describes pathways to violence/risk factors | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Civil Rights and Civil Liberties. Both Hawai'i and New York had sections dedicated to acknowledging the need to protect civil rights and civil liberties. Though Illinois did not have a section dedicated to this topic, it was mentioned in the state's introduction and mission statement.

TAM Teams. All three of the states included use of TAM Teams, either training existing ones or implementing new ones where needed.

Codification of Strategies. Each strategy provided evidence of intentionality toward implementing and sustaining the changes described in the strategies through either legislation or documented expectations of reviewing the strategy annually. Two of the states even received stipends to help with implementation.

Additional Resources. All of the states included references or supporting documentation where readers could obtain more information. These resources included federal, state, and local resources.

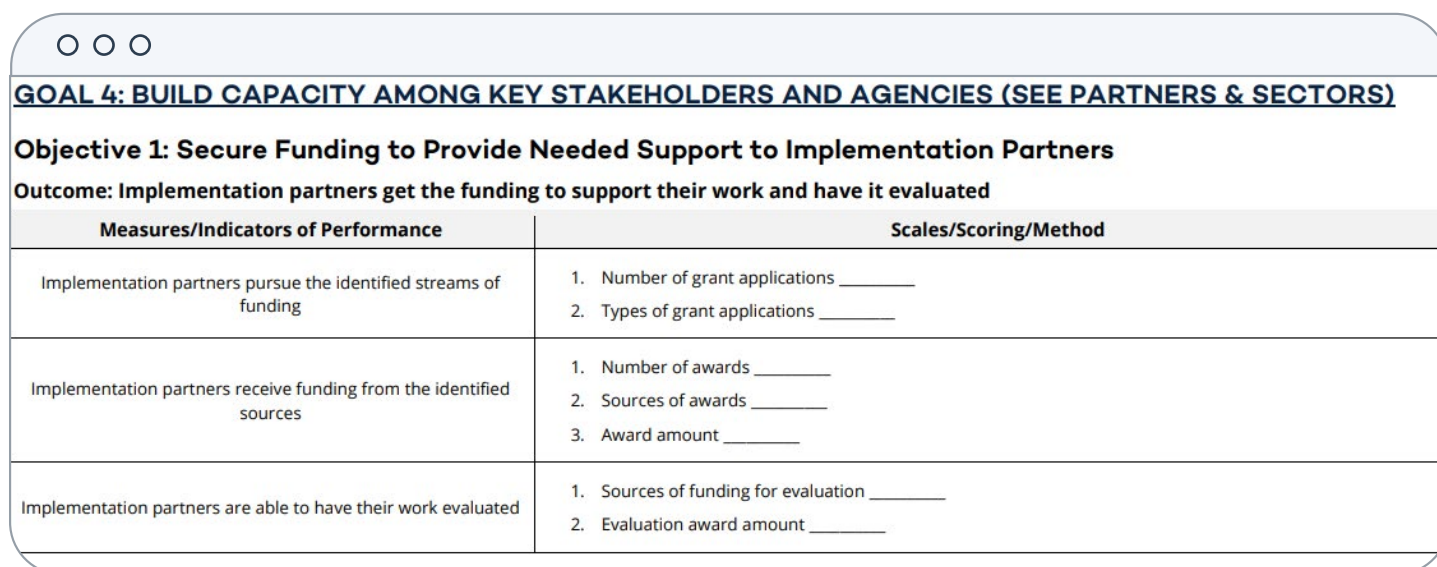
Resources Revised and New Resources Developed for Evidence-Based Research

This section will examine the process evaluation findings regarding the updating of "A Governor's Roadmap to Preventing Targeted Violence" and the creation of the Programming and Key Performance Indicators library, which corresponds with Goal 2, Objectives 2.1 and 2.2 in the NGA IMP.

Objective 2.1: Increase the ability of the four state participants to develop and implement targeted, evidence-based programming to govern prevention activities.

Objective 2.2: Enhance the four state participants' ability to use data to inform policymakers' decision-making across all levels of government.

Figure 4. Screenshot from the State Targeted Violence Prevention: Programming and Key Performance Indicators library



| GOAL 4: BUILD CAPACITY AMONG KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND AGENCIES (SEE PARTNERS & SECTORS) | |
|--|--|
| Objective 1: Secure Funding to Provide Needed Support to Implementation Partners | |
| Outcome: Implementation partners get the funding to support their work and have it evaluated | |
| Measures/Indicators of Performance | Scales/Scoring/Method |
| Implementation partners pursue the identified streams of funding | 1. Number of grant applications _____ 2. Types of grant applications _____ |
| Implementation partners receive funding from the identified sources | 1. Number of awards _____ 2. Sources of awards _____ 3. Award amount _____ |
| Implementation partners are able to have their work evaluated | 1. Sources of funding for evaluation _____ 2. Evaluation award amount _____ |

As part of its grant, NGA took materials and lessons learned from the Policy Academy and updated its “Governor’s Roadmap to Preventing Targeted Violence.”⁵ This Governor’s Roadmap provides a seven-step framework for preventing targeted violence and was developed from research conducted under NGA’s FY 2016 DHS Countering Violent Extremism grant. Though updates were not called out in the guide specifically, it is evident from the inclusion of the Programming and Key Performance Indicators library in Step 3: Developing Evaluation Metrics that updates were made. Updates were also made to incorporate best practices learned in the Policy Academy as well as broader edits to ensure alignment with current guidance. Updating the guide maximizes and sustains the progress made and information learned by sharing it outside of those participating states.

The Programming and Key Performance Indicators library⁶ was developed by RAND Corporation to assist states in evaluating their strategies before and after implementation. Using data to evaluate the policy and process changes described in their strategies can help guide states on what is working well and what should be revised. To construct the library, RAND Corporation began by interviewing state governments about their interests and needs and reviewing any state TVP materials they could share. After learning about state TVP programs and how states were currently evaluating their efforts, RAND Corporation considered indicators of performance and outcome successes. They also interviewed other RAND Corporation staff with knowledge in evaluation and TVP.

The Programming and Key Performance Indicators library first provides a list of all the topics and goals in the library, with each goal having its own objectives, tasks, outputs, and outcomes. For example, one goal provided under the topic of “Preparation” is to “Secure a conducive environment for strategy implementation.” The key performance indicators are then presented in tables under each objective to identify outputs or outcomes, an example of which is seen in Figure 4.

These tables are followed by a section on impact measures and then launch into appendices with definitions, example partners, risk factors, references, methodology, and relevant scales that are alluded to throughout the text. The 140-page library includes more than 230 measures to help states assess their strategies once put in place. However, many of these are survey or interview questions to be asked of certain populations such as implementation partners, policymakers in relevant offices, or the general public. As such, states would need to consider their resource needs when selecting specific questions. In order to analyze the data or obtain a large enough sample, states should employ the skills of a statistician.

5 <https://www.nga.org/preventing-targeted-violence/> 

6 https://www.nga.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/State_Targeted_Violence_Prevention_Programming_KPIs_April2022.pdf 

The State Prevention Strategies did not specifically mention the library or use it as a reference even though there were some elements of data collection or evaluation present in the strategies. State teams were asked during interviews by the research team whether they had used it in their strategy. In response, interviewees indicated either that the library would be used in the future during implementation, that it helped inform evaluation elements included in their strategy, or that they compared it against what was included in their strategy later after the library was released. One state pointed out that the library was under construction at the same time the states were working on their prevention strategies, so the state would have used the library to inform its strategy if it had been available earlier.

Efforts Made to Improve Communication Between Government and the Public

This section will examine the process evaluation findings from the Prevention Messaging Toolkit, which corresponds with Goal 3, Objective 3.2 in the NGA IMP.

Objective 3.2: Improve messaging to the general public about prevention programming within each of the four selected states.

As part of the grant, NGA hired Kivvit, a public relations firm, to assist states in communicating with their constituents about the topic of targeted violence. After conducting focus groups with Policy Academy members to determine communication needs, Kivvit developed two toolkits: a proactive communications toolkit for general messaging and a critical incident communication toolkit for communicating to the public in the event of a targeted violence incident.

The proactive communications toolkit provided general information about the purposes of communication, the target audience, and messaging. The document also covers topics such as engaging with key stakeholders and tips for communicating with the media and developing materials.

The critical incident communication toolkit provides steps for municipalities to take to effectively communicate in the event of a mass casualty incident. Tips include creating a response team

and assigning a spokesperson, then creating a holding statement and core message including specific pertinent information about the event. In addition to providing prompts on the types of communication to consider during a critical incident, the toolkit also suggests having a debrief after the situation has ended to determine what worked well and what did not.

Though each of the states mentions communication in some capacity in its strategy (e.g., communicating bystander awareness reporting, communicating during and after a critical incident), the Kivvit toolkits are not mentioned specifically. However, Illinois and New York named Kivvit in their acknowledgements and Illinois included an objective in its strategy to develop a communications plan which could be reflective of the toolkit. Though the communication toolkits are not called out specifically in the strategies, these resources may still be utilized by these states as they implement their strategies.

NGA Facilitates Peer-to-Peer Learning Through Webinars and All-State Convenings

This section will examine the process evaluation findings regarding the peer-to-peer connections made and learning opportunities present during the Policy Academy, which correspond with Goal 1, Objective 1.3 and Goal 3, Objective 3.1 in the NGA IMP.

Objective 1.3: Establish a platform to communicate and share best practices and enhance peer-to-peer learning between states.

Objective 3.1: Strengthen relationships between government, private, and nonprofit partners within each of the four selected states.

Highly Rated Webinars Assist States in Plan Development

NGA hosted seven webinars for the states in the Policy Academy to discuss and provide presentations on advancing strategies for TVP. NGA informed the research team that there were at least 70 attendees across the seven webinars, with high levels (98%) of positive feedback for the webinar series, collected via post-surveys. NGA also held a Multi-State Learning Lab in August 2021 to assist states with their action plans and strategy development. The Learning Lab included representatives from all four of the Policy Academy states and input from NGA's partners, RAND Corporation and Kivvit.

Peer-to-Peer Learning, Strategizing, and Connections are Created at All-State Convenings

Originally, only one in-person all-state convening was planned, but because of COVID-19 restrictions, two separate convenings took place—one in April 2022, which was virtual, and one in January 2023, which was in person in Chicago, Illinois. The virtual convening began with a presentation by RAND Corporation on the Programming and Key Performance Indicators library and by NGA (on behalf of Kivvit) on the communications toolkits, both of which were created for this project. Subsequently, each site discussed the direction its work was taking toward developing a strategic action plan, followed by time for discussion.

The in-person convening was 1.5 days and included a briefing from DHS CP3, a round table by RAND Corporation on program sustainment and performance metrics, and other

sessions curated to the states' needs for implementation of their strategies. For example, there was a discussion on K-12 TVP programs as some states were focusing their strategies on that demographic. Another session focused on identifying risk factors in individuals during which the states discussed how their strategies worked to identify and educate others in identifying risk behaviors. Two separate sessions focused on protecting their populations' rights, looking at (1) privacy and legal considerations and (2) civil rights and civil liberties. The DHS Privacy Office participated in the discussion on privacy and legal considerations, communicating the need for training and only collecting and keeping necessary data. A representative from the McCain Institute also spoke about these challenges and provided a guide on legal considerations developed for the Prevention Practitioners Network. Another DHS staff member discussed civil rights and civil liberties and emphasized the need to work closely with local agencies.

All of the sessions were very interactive, and questions and discussions were encouraged. NGA also brought in representatives from Colorado and Florida, who are further along in the process of implementing state strategies, to provide peer feedback and assistance. The representative from the Florida Department of Law Enforcement presented on the statewide TVP approach they are implementing, which easily transitioned into the next topic on managing cases and sharing information. Upon closing, it was evident that all in attendance had benefited from the conversations and presentations. Without being prompted, attendees asked when a convening like this could occur again and the desire to do so appeared unanimous.

State Participants Provide Feedback on the Policy Academy

State participants had the opportunity to provide feedback through a survey NGA conducted at the end of the Policy Academy. The research team also conducted interviews with three of the four participating states.

The NGA survey consisted of open-ended questions asking sites to report what was useful to them as they developed their strategies, what their challenges were, recommendations for other states, and what they found to be the important outcomes of their participation in the Policy Academy. Some states reported that executive-level buy-in was key to their success as that helped them get cooperation from other agencies and organizations they likely would not have been able to obtain without senior leadership's involvement. One state identified that subject matter experts (SMEs) provided by NGA and toolkits developed for this project were helpful, and that continued updates over time would be well received. One of the reoccurring themes in the challenges identified was needing more staff or more staff bandwidth. One state reported that some key people needed for strategy development were also a part of the COVID-19 pandemic response. In at least one state, implementation has focused on hiring new staff dedicated to TVP efforts. One state reported that one of the major outcomes of its participation was that the project better positioned the state to justify the need for additional resources and it now has a unit dedicated to this work. Another important outcome reported by states was the development of this network of SMEs and knowledge of what other states are doing.

"I didn't intend to develop these relationships with other states. We're in contact with other states now that need our help after working on this; we're making sure our plans are working together because it's pointless if we're just helping our state."

- Policy Academy Participant

When the research team interviewed Policy Academy participants, similar comments as those from the NGA survey were shared. However, the interviews provided some additional information and context, particularly regarding relationships. Researchers learned that states credited the Policy Academy with facilitating new relationships between them and agencies and organizations such as DHS CP3, National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC), Secret Service, FBI, and the McCain Institute. Peer-to-peer relationships with other states were also mentioned, including states that have already developed strategies and states that are just beginning to develop strategies. Interactions between the states in the Policy Academy seemed to happen naturally and the participating states started reaching out to each other on their own.

WHAT STATES FOUND USEFUL:

- Executive-level buy-in
- Subject matter experts and toolkits

WHAT STATES FOUND CHALLENGING:

- Staffing levels and bandwidth

OUTCOMES IDENTIFIED BY STATES:

- Positioned them to justify need for additional resources, leading to establishment of a dedicated state TVTP unit
- Development of SME network and knowledge of other states' approaches

Outreach Expanded to States Outside of Policy Academy

This section will examine the process evaluation findings from the extended outreach to non-Policy Academy states, which corresponds with Goal 3, Objective 3.3 in the NGA IMP.

Objective 3.3: Provide technical assistance for 3-5 additional states outside the Policy Academy to develop strategies for and/or implement targeted violence prevention programs.

Toward the end of the grant, NGA realized it had remaining funds it could utilize to assist additional states outside of those formally participating in the Policy Academy. NGA sent out a call using its extensive network letting states know the association was available to provide technical assistance for anyone working on a statewide TVP strategy. Ultimately, NGA assisted three other states in various capacities. For example, one state asked for a memo on state laws regarding targeted violence and behavioral threat assessment programs, which NGA delivered. NGA assisted another state that had already completed a previous Policy Academy with implementation of its strategy. The association also hosted a panel on TVP at a meeting of the Governors Homeland Security Advisors.

Challenges

The process evaluation revealed four challenges to project implementation.

COVID-19 Pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic and related public health emergency forced NGA to revise its plan to conduct in-person convenings. State workshops were originally intended to all be held in person, as was the initial convening in April 2022. The in-person convening in January 2023 was later added to the project once travel began resuming and NGA found that there was room in its budget.

Multiple Changes in NGA Leadership. As previously mentioned, four different individuals led the Policy Academy at NGA over the course of the final year of the grant because of staff turnover. This amount of turnover was disruptive to the tempo of the states' strategy development. During evaluation interviews, each of the states brought this up as something that was a challenge encountered during the Policy Academy.

Lack of Clear Messaging on Expectations. States felt that the expectations for the Policy Academy were not clearly stated at the beginning of the project. One state shared that it expected NGA to have answers on what the state needed to do or a template for their State Prevention Strategy, but realized once its participation began that NGA would only

facilitate states' development of their own templates and identification of their own answers. Another state revealed that it was not aware of the expectation to submit a State Prevention Strategy at the end of the Policy Academy. It was not until the state was asked about its progress on this document, months after it had started in the Policy Academy, that it felt it was informed of this expectation. Though this information was included in the request for applications and later on in a timeline, it seems that reminders of this final objective would have been helpful throughout the Policy Academy.

Changes Within State Leadership. One of the biggest challenges for Illinois was a change in leadership when the state's team lead left their position. This caused a shift in the whole project, as the team lead was the main champion for this effort. Upon their departure, questions arose as to where the project would sit within the state government, which caused delays. This change occurred at the same time NGA experienced a change in leadership, so it took a little while for both NGA and Illinois to get up to speed and back on track. Wisconsin also experienced a change in leadership with its core team chair leaving the agency that was championing the project. Many discussions were had on what agency would host the project after that, but the state never came to a resolution, and that is when its participation in the Policy Academy discontinued.

IMP Accomplishments

Each of the objectives in the NGA IMP dictate that four states would complete NGA's activities; however, in many cases, only three states got far enough to be eligible to meet those objectives. As previously mentioned, Wisconsin did not develop a State Prevention Strategy because its leadership departed during the Policy Academy. However, the state did benefit from participating in the Policy Academy as demonstrated by the achievements outlined in its closeout memo. The state also benefited from various networking opportunities both within and outside of the state. It is also important to give credit where the objectives were met by the other three states, especially given the magnitude of impact those achievements could bring about in the forms of legislation and policy change. As such, this report refers to objectives being met if they were met by either three or four states in the Policy Academy, though variations from the IMP will be noted.

The central component of the project was the development and adoption of State Prevention Strategies, which was completed by three states, all of which utilized TAM Teams and services, satisfying Objectives 1.1 and 1.2. The development of these strategies was facilitated by NGA's Policy Academy staff hosting both multi-state and state-specific workshops and connecting state teams with SMEs and other states for peer learning. All four states were provided space to discuss and share with each other and learn from SMEs at the Multi-State Learning Lab and all-state convenings (Objective 1.3). Lessons learned from the Policy Academy were collected and used to update NGA's existing "Governor's Roadmap to Preventing Targeted Violence." During these events, NGA provided panels and discussion sessions on identifying and leveraging data to evaluate TVP practices to address Objective 2.1. Though it is plausible to believe the library would increase abilities on evidence-based programming, there are no baseline or post-Policy Academy data to confirm this.

One element of the gatherings hosted by NGA included the discussion of resources created for the Policy Academy by NGA partners Kivvit and RAND Corporation. Though these toolkits were designed to improve messaging to the general public, there is no data to assess whether Objective 3.2 was met. Kivvit developed two messaging toolkits: one for general communication with the public and one for communication during and after a targeted violence event. RAND Corporation developed a Programming and Key Performance Indicators library and attended both virtual and in-person all-state convenings even though its contract with NGA had finished by that time. This resource was designed to meet Objective 2.2, though this evaluation was unable to determine whether it enhanced states' abilities to use data to inform policymakers' decision-making.

Finally, Objective 3.1 sought to strengthen relationships between government, private, and nonprofit partners. NGA used webinars to discuss prevention activities with Policy Academy participants and to engage stakeholders. States were also encouraged to seek input on their strategies from multidisciplinary teams and involve these teams in their implementation. The available data were insufficient to be able to systematically determine the extent to which relationships were strengthened. However, as previously described on page 16, the participating states did report anecdotally that the Policy Academy strengthened their relationships both with one another as practitioners and with external organizations and entities such as DHS CP3, NTAC, Secret Service, FBI, and the McCain Institute.

NGA's Partner Survey Findings

NGA engaged two partners to support its FY2020 grant. Researchers surveyed these partners to understand their collaboration with NGA and the challenges they faced. However, in the interest of privacy, researchers are unable to report these partner responses because only two partners completed the survey.

Discussion

The Policy Academy was seen as an overall success, with three out of four states developing State Prevention Strategies that had already transitioned into various levels of implementation by the end of the grant. The work completed by the three states that developed State Prevention Strategies was significant. Each of the strategies reflects a “whole of community” approach, is designed to prevent targeted violence from multiple directions, and uses TAM Teams to provide continued collaboration and guidance. States identified and are utilizing preexisting resources and have already begun implementing pieces of their strategies. Beyond the written documents, the relationships forged within each state to develop these strategies will likely continue to benefit the community. States established new relationships facilitated by NGA not only within the states themselves, but also with federal agencies, which should break down barriers to future communication when assistance or guidance is needed. States also remarked upon the peer-to-peer relationships they had made with other states. They plan to continue these relationships and requested opportunities to convene again in the future to continue learning from one another. Many expressed gratitude to NGA for facilitating relationships, providing resources when needed, and keeping them moving forward when they faced challenges within their state. Although Wisconsin did not complete a State Prevention Strategy, it too experienced these benefits throughout its participation.

During the course of the Policy Academy, one of the most high-profile cases of mass violence occurred in Buffalo, New York, where an individual specifically targeted a grocery store with a high African American population for a mass shooting. As expected, after the incident people started asking questions about what New York was doing to prevent these crimes from happening. This event had a direct impact on the rest of the New York team's experience in the Policy Academy. When their government wanted to enact interventions and new policies quickly, they already had many of these in development and were positioned with a team in place to employ them. As a result of this incident, their State Prevention Strategy acceptance and implementation was fast tracked. Had New York not been involved in the Policy Academy and already thinking about prevention needs across the state, they would not have been able to respond as quickly as they did in their prevention efforts.



This grant project created an initial step in building states' data gathering capacity. In particular, the development of the Programming and Key Performance Indicators library, as well as multiple events where the RAND Corporation spoke about the importance of data, likely increased states' abilities to use data and identify and develop evidence-based programming. Optimistically, through the use of this resource and conversations with RAND Corporation, states will be able to collect their own data necessary to measure the outcomes of their State Prevention Strategy objectives.

"We wouldn't have been able to do it without NGA. We didn't have the bandwidth. We didn't have the capacity to take this on."

- Policy Academy Participant

When Policy Academy attendees were asked, the Kivvit Communication toolkits were seen as good and helpful, though it is yet to be determined whether they will be used to improve messaging to the public as stated in Objective 3.2. When asked about implementation, none of the states reported using the guides to date, and the guides were not mentioned outside of the acknowledgements in any state strategies. Both Illinois and Hawai'i plan to develop communication plans as part of their strategies so the toolkits may be more useful at that point.

Sustainability

Each of the states showed evidence of intended sustainability in its State Prevention Strategy. Not only had some states either passed or were working on legislation by the end of the grant period, but one state built in a revision record at the end of its strategy with the expectation that the strategy would be updated annually. The emphasis on creating, training, and supporting TAM Teams also bodes well for sustainability, as those efforts require collaboration and buy-in from various entities, which demonstrates commitment. NGA's stipends to two Policy Academy states – Illinois and Hawaii – to support the implementation of their strategies will also facilitate sustainability. Both states are using some or all of those funds to facilitate in-person interactions and garner buy-in from various stakeholders for continued support and participation in their State Prevention Strategy activities.

Updating the "Governor's Roadmap to Preventing Targeted Violence" with lessons learned from the Policy Academy also supports sustainability as that resource is publicly available. The creation of the Programming and Key Performance Indicators resource is also publicly available on NGA's website and linked within the Governor's Roadmap as part of the update. These are resources that can be used globally and well into the future.

Recommendations for TVTP Grant Program

The following recommendations were identified that can be applied to future TVTP programming doing similar work.

✓ **Enact a Co-lead Model for Teams.**

As mentioned above, two of the states in the Policy Academy experienced a change in leadership during their participation in the project. In Wisconsin's case, the loss of this leader resulted in the state not creating a State Prevention Strategy as the grant program intended. In Illinois, once the leader left, the team had to reimagine what their strategy would look like. Using co-leads as opposed to a single individual when multidisciplinary teams are involved will provide continuity should one person leave their role. This model would also ensure that there are at least two people championing the project so there is less reliance on any one person.

✓ **Provide Clear Expectations of Participants Throughout the Project Period.**

In any kind of endeavor, it is ideal to lay out expectations, anticipated final products, and timelines. Though it was included in the request for applications, some Policy Academy participants were unaware of the expectation to have a final State Prevention Strategy ready to present to their governor until they were well into the Policy Academy. Providing a roadmap of milestones and expectations at completion and continued reiteration of final products will help ensure everyone is of the same understanding. This is especially useful when there is staff turnover at the state level and new staff join the team.

✓ **Budget Stipends for Plan Implementation.**

NGA provided stipends to two states who submitted Implementation Plans, but only because the association had remaining funds in its grant near the conclusion of the project period. States appreciated the assistance from NGA, but it required another level of effort to obtain funds for implementation. Some amount of money to help teams implement newly created plans, or at the very least to support them in obtaining implementation funds, should be included from the beginning for future similar initiatives. This will improve the ability of participants to sustainably implement the plans and resources developed beyond the grant period. Having a dollar amount attached to participation may also help teams gain buy-in from leadership and encourage participation in and completion of all tasks.

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