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How do we prevent mass shootings?
There's a new website to lead the way

[**SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA, 05/14/2021**] – As life begins to return to normal, so has the reality of mass shootings that plague this country. In the wake of Atlanta, Boulder, and Indianapolis, The Violence Project has launched a new online training platform called "Off-Ramp." It's the first website dedicated to *preventing* mass shootings rather than training people to react to them.

The Violence Project (TVP) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan research center dedicated to data-driven violence prevention. Their research on mass shootings, funded by the US Department of Justice, has received global media attention. The Violence Project's research shows the road to mass violence is long, including childhood trauma, an observable crisis, suicidality, radicalization online, and access to firearms. The Off-Ramp platform is designed to build more exits from this pathway by translating findings from TVP's comprehensive mass shooter database into tangible, evidence-based violence prevention strategies for individuals, institutions, and society as a whole.

"We've interviewed families of mass shooting perpetrators, and they often tell us they knew something was wrong, but they didn't know where to go for help. Off-Ramp tries to fill that need," says TVP co-President James Densley. Off-Ramp's resource database is a one-stop centralized list of community mental health and outreach services in all 50 states to support individuals in crisis or individuals worried that someone they know is on the path toward violence. Off-Ramp's public policy platform highlights data-driven policies that will effectively reduce gun violence at the local, state, and national levels.

School teachers, administrators, couselors, social workers, law enforcement and security professionals, human resource managers, and parents can also sign up for online learning modules in crisis intervention, de-escalation, suicide prevention, and social media safety. "We've interviewed several perpetrators of mass shootings, and we always ask if there was something that could have stopped them. They always say yes. It typically comes down to a human connection," explains TVP co-president Jillian Peterson.

Off-Ramp offers guidance and support for schools, workplaces, and organizations to build collaborative Crisis Response Teams. Research shows that one of the best ways to prevent violence is to identify when someone is in crisis and intervene early, but traditional models rely heavily on a criminal justice response. The R-Model (Ready, Respond, Refer, and

Revisit) for schools reimagines behavioral threat assessment by connecting students to long-term resources and services, avoiding exclusionary measures like suspension, expulsion, and criminal charges. To visit the new website, go to www.off-ramp.org.

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