



Frequently Asked Questions

What is the CELL's mission?

The Counterterrorism Education Learning Lab® (the CELL®) is dedicated to preventing terrorism through education, empowerment, and engagement. As a non-profit, non-partisan institution, its one-of-a-kind exhibit, renowned speaker series, and training initiatives provide a comprehensive look at the threat of terrorism and how individuals can play a role in preventing it, ultimately enhancing public safety.

How does the CELL define terrorism?

There is no universally accepted definition of terrorism. The CELL believes it is important to define what terrorism is in order to develop effective strategies to prevent it. The CELL worked with subject matter experts and government entities to create the following definition:

Terrorism is the pre-meditated use of violence or the threat of violence targeting civilians or their property for political, religious, or ideological gain. It is a tactic used to create an environment of fear, chaos, and intimidation in order to further the terrorists' objectives.

What is the CELL's exhibit like?

The only one of its kind, the exhibit is a dynamic, interactive experience with content developed by world-renowned subject matter experts that provides visitors with an in-depth understanding of the history of terrorism, the methods terrorists employ, and the extent to which terrorism impacts societies around the world. The exhibit addresses the most salient issues facing U.S. national security and empowers citizens to help enhance community safety. Additionally, the CELL offers a 30-lesson educational curriculum that adheres to Colorado State Grade Level and National Standards for educators to utilize on tours. A preview of these lessons plans may be found on the Educator page on the CELL website.

Why an exhibit about terrorism?

The CELL's exhibit addresses the most salient global issue of our time – terrorism. From its origins to its presence in today's world, terrorism is a subject difficult to understand. Working with terrorism experts and world-class producers and designers, the exhibit will make available to the public learning tools capable of teaching citizens about the true nature of terrorism and how it affects each and every one of us in our daily lives.

The result is a more engaged public, focused on the need for community involvement and preparedness in response to the current ongoing global terrorism threat.



What is the exhibit trying to say about terrorism?

The CELL's exhibit will convey a true sense of severity and scope behind terrorist threats and the suffering it causes victims, while also providing a positive and important outlet for education, preparedness, and response. The exhibit will illustrate how terrorism has evolved and will explore the range of terrorist motivations globally. Visitors will have the opportunity to explore the threat of terrorism and the affect it has on all facets of society.

Terrorism is complex, driven by ideology for political and social gain. It does not discriminate and recognizes no boundaries. It takes life indiscriminately, purposefully, and without remorse. It exists all over the world and is no limited to any one nationality, ethnicity, or religion. Terrorism is difficult to combat, but with education, individual citizens can empower themselves to take action and become more involved in their communities in a way that can help make the world a better, safer place. The CELL provides the necessary tools to take these important steps.

Does the CELL focus on international or domestic terrorism?

Both. Terrorism is an increasingly grave threat to domestic and international societies – it knows no boundaries. It spans all religious, political, and ideological causes, and targets a wide variety of victims both here at home and around the world.

How does the CELL empower citizens to help prevent terrorism?

The cornerstone of the CELL's training initiatives is the Community Awareness Program® (CAP®). The CAP is an interactive behavior-focused training program taught by members of the public safety community and guided by the principle that every citizen has a role to play in keeping our communities safe. It is designed to empower citizens with some of the tools necessary to recognize suspicious and criminal activity, and properly report it to the authorities while preserving civil liberties protected by the U.S. Constitution. The CAP is SAFETY Act certified through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and has received the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) Outstanding Community Policing Award in Homeland Security. To learn more, and to see a list of upcoming trainings, please visit the CELL's website.

Does the CELL have programming other than the exhibit?

Yes. The CELL hosts a regular speaker series with renowned experts, senior government officials, and foreign dignitaries to address the most salient issues surrounding terrorism and global security. A complete list and videos of these events can be found on the CELL's website.



When was the CELL established?

The CELL opened its doors in 2008 and has been a center for terrorism prevention education ever since. It was founded by Larry A. Mizel, a local business leader and philanthropist, and his wife Carol. Together, they also founded the Mizel Museum, an institution dedicated to promoting multicultural understanding through the arts. Larry is also a founder of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, a leading human rights organization, in Los Angeles.

Why is the CELL headquartered in Denver?

Terrorism knows no boundaries and can originate anywhere. It is not relegated to the coastal cities of the United States, nor a specific country or region in the world. As such, creating an informed and engaged citizenry can provide important assistance in building safer, more resilient communities across the country. As an international travel destination and central location in the United States, Denver is an ideal home for the CELL.

How is the CELL funded?

As a non-profit, the CELL is funded through private contributions, public sector support, grant funding, and exhibit admissions. A full list of supporters can be found on the CELL's website in its Annual Report.

Is the purpose of the CELL to frighten people with the prospect of terrorism?

No, the purpose of the CELL is to translate this complex subject matter so that visitors can build a better understanding of terrorism and how to prevent it.

Is it appropriate to take children through the exhibit?

The CELL recommends visitors to the exhibit be age 14 and older.

Is it true that one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter?

No. Some terror cells and terrorists exist because they believe a people, ideology, or religion is being threatened by outside forces and must be protected or liberated. That, however, is not an excuse nor does it justify targeting innocent civilians and taking their lives. Freedom is not achieved through intimidation, murder, and chaos.

How can I help?

The simple answer is to become better educated regarding the central questions surrounding terrorism, become more aware, more prepared and more active in your local community. Individuals can educate themselves and their communities. Participate in the CELL's Community Awareness Program and be provided with the basic tools needed to recognize and help prevent criminal and terrorist activity in your community. Open dates can be found on the CELL's website.