

# The CARE Program: A Comprehensive Solution to Current Limitations in Bystander Emergency Response Education

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## Introduction

Gun violence is a national public health crisis destroying our communities and our youth. It causes nationwide life-threatening bleeds and lifelong physical debilitations for survivors. In fact, life-threatening bleeding is the leading cause of preventable death in America.

Per the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), Hampton Roads had 14-30 non-fatal gun-related hospitalizations per 100,000 persons in 2017. Similarly, Newport News was the locality with the third-largest number of gun-related homicides in Virginia from 2014-2017 (according to the most recent data from VDH). Our community is disproportionately affected; therefore, our citizens are more likely to be exposed to life-threatening bleeding due to a gun violence incident.

**On average it takes 5 minutes to die from life threatening bleeding!**

## Proposal

Partnering with the Ferguson Fellowship program, Cameron Bertrand, and Violence Intervention and Prevention - V.I.P. LLC, we sought to create a grassroots program that could educate citizens in basic first aid. On average, it takes five minutes to die from life-threatening bleeding. Bystanders are often the first responders to gun violence, and the only ones there in those precious minutes to make a difference. Our efforts to support those who may be exposed to gun violence led to the formation of the Community Active Response Education (CARE) Course.

The CARE course is an evidence-based, outcome-driven bystander emergency response training program that prepares bystanders for the most common life threatening emergencies they may encounter. The training is targeted for bystanders during the critical minutes prior to EMS arrival, where they may be the first line of defense. The course is designed with scalability in mind, has minimal cost in teaching tools, and allows communities to take an active role in their bystander preparedness.

## CPR/AED &



CARE Instructors teaching CPR and AED proper methods followed by CNU Students practicing skills.

## CARE Course and Kits

The CARE course improves current bystander emergency response education, combining content from the American Heart Association, Red Cross, and STOP the Bleed along with pertinent gun violence related training to provide bystanders the information they need in one complete course. Free of charge, the course trains bystanders in CPR/AED use, major hemorrhage control, basic medical assistance, and how to stay safe during an active shooter incident.

Associated with the course are Beyond the Bullet CARE Kits. These kits are compact, effective tools that provide basic bleeding control supplies. Within each kit are multiple tourniquets, gloves, gauze, gauze with a hemostatic agent, a chest seal, emergency blanket, and CPR mask. Each of these medical supplies allow bystanders to utilize their training from the CARE course. A quick-read instruction guide is also within the kit for those who may have not taken the course.

## Bleeding Control



Bleeding control and tourniquet training completed by CNU students as a part of the CARE Course.



Wound packing training completed by CNU students as a part of the CARE Course.

## Next Steps

Currently, the CARE course has been taught to 38 CNU students thanks to our volunteer CARE Course Instructors. With help from V.I.P. LLC, we hope to expand the CARE Course into the Newport News community through public schools, community events, and city employees. The course has been created in such a way that once a bystander has completed the course, they can attend an instructor course to become an official CARE Course Instructor.

The CARE Course is tied to the implementation of the Beyond the Bullet Care Kits. Utilizing funds from both the Ferguson Fellowship and donations, the mass distribution of CARE kits is planned for public spaces in Newport News. Our dream is to see a kit with every AED in the city. We want the tools to combat the detrimental effects of gun violence to be accessible to all who live within its reach.

**Every year approximately 3 million children and teens are exposed to gun violence!**