CORNCON 2026 KEYNOTE • A Vendor-Agnostic Civic Initiative

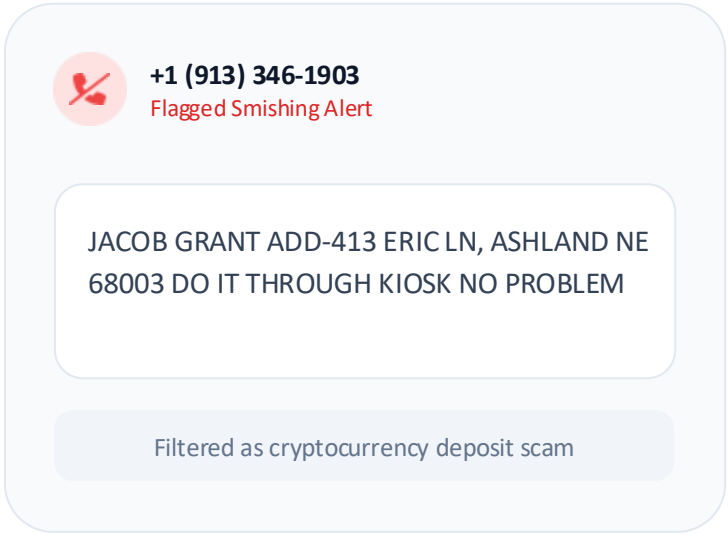
Building Cybersafe Communities

Using Your Technical Superpowers for Grassroots Public Defense

Corey Munson • Community Cyber Defense Advocate

THE FRONTLINE REALITY

The Daily Threat Facing Our Neighbors



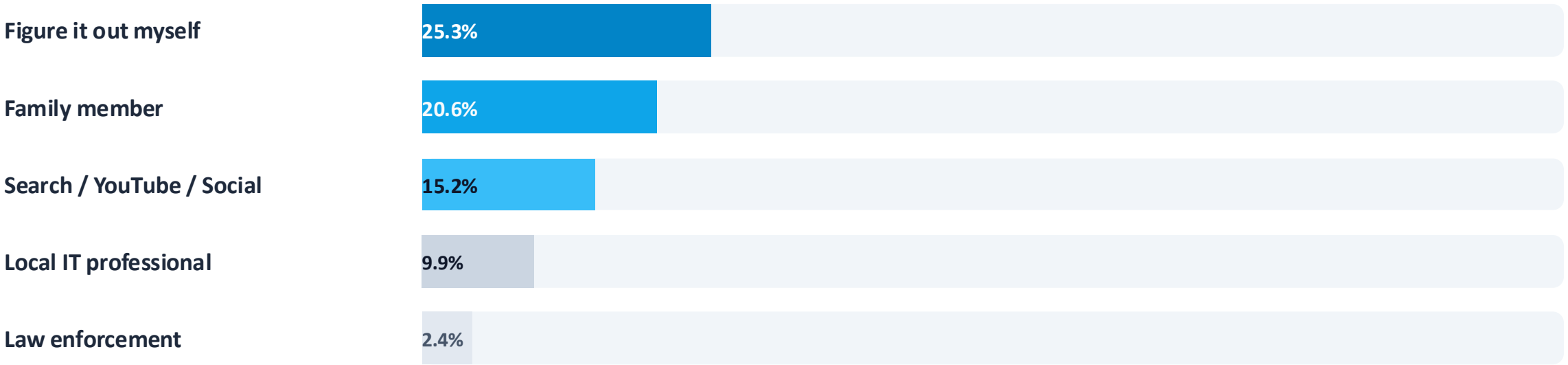
Scams arrive directly on kitchen tables and personal phones every morning.

These threats do not target enterprise perimeters. They target retirees, civic volunteers, and family members.

⚠️ **Most victims navigate these moments in absolute isolation.**

SURVEY ANALYSIS • N=467 CITIZENS

The "Self-Reliance" Gap in Cyber Crisis



Over 61% of citizens attempt to handle cyber incidents completely unassisted.

TRUST VERSUS REACH

The Cyber Paradox: High Trust, Zero Reach

CYBERSECURITY PROFESSIONALS

51.6% Trust Most for Guidance

9.9% Turn to First in Incident

5x Drop from Trust to Consultation

LAW ENFORCEMENT

43.7% Trust Most for Guidance

2.4% Turn to First in Incident

18x Drop from Trust to Actual Reporting

Why the gap? Intimidation, shame of falling for scams, and lack of clear community pathways.

VULNERABLE INFRASTRUCTURE

Who Protects the Places Protecting Us?

Churches

Sensitive volunteer rosters.

Food Pantries

Critical community lifelines.

Senior Centers

High-target populations.

Youth Leagues

Completely unmanaged devices.

Enterprise threats facing dedicated volunteers with zero dedicated IT staff.

HISTORICAL PLAYBOOK 01

Cultural Prevention: The Smokey Bear Model



“Only YOU can prevent forest fires.”

It did not ask citizens to become certified wildland firefighters. It built a memorable, shared civic norm.

The Lesson: Public safety scales through culture, not complex compliance manuals.

HISTORICAL PLAYBOOK 02

Local Preparedness: Neighborhood Watch

Trained Block Captains & Designated Wardens

Preparedness worked because neighbors had designated, trusted advisors right on their street before disaster struck.

The Lesson: In an emergency, proximity and existing personal trust matter most.



HISTORICAL PLAYBOOK 03

Hyper-Local Vigilance: Civil Defense



Looking Out for One Another

Not an armed response unit. Just neighbors sharing warnings about what they observe, protecting the block together.

The Lesson: A vigilant network of everyday people protects the entire collective perimeter.

THE CORE CHALLENGE

What is our generation’s Neighborhood Watch for the digital age?

Every town represented in this room has technical talent. What our hometowns lack is an established civic framework to connect that talent to everyday public safety.

> **The answer isn't another software subscription. It's a civic movement.**

STATEWIDE CIVIC FRAMEWORK

Iowa Cyber Hub Outreach Mission

Cyber Safe Communities

A statewide framework for community cybersecurity awareness, preparedness, activities, and recognition.

Awareness

Help people recognize scams and understand everyday online risks.

Preparedness

Help residents and organizations take basic protective steps and know where to turn.

Activities

Bring people together through local talks, community conversations, and family events.

Recognition

Recognize communities for their commitment and continued effort.

Local partners shape the work around their community's needs.

THE PROVEN CIVIC MODEL

The Tree City USA Playbook

An earned civic standard, not a compliance audit. Mobilizing communities through shared pride.

01

Local Liaison

Designated municipal cyber contact.

02

Annual Clinic

Public community scam workshops.

03

Town Hygiene

Foundational municipal protections.

Active Proving Ground: Testing this civic blueprint in Huxley, Iowa.

OPERATIONAL BACKBONE

Iowa State University • CyIO

What Is the Iowa Cyber Hub?

Based at Iowa State University's Center for Cybersecurity Innovation & Outreach, the Iowa Cyber Hub connects Iowans with cybersecurity education, expertise, and opportunities to get involved.

Connect People

Bring educators, cybersecurity professionals, community organizations, and local leaders together.

Share Useful Resources

Help people find educational materials and existing programs they can use in their communities.

Support Local Participation

Give speakers, ambassadors, and community partners ways to share their knowledge.

Cyber Safe Communities gives this community outreach work a shared statewide framework.

COMMUNITY ENABLEMENT

Local Action

How the Iowa Cyber Hub Helps Your Community

Find people who can help

Connect with speakers, cybersecurity ambassadors, and others involved in community education.

Find materials you can use

Access cybersecurity lessons and resources for local audiences.

Build on existing work

Connect with programs and community partners already reaching the people you want to help.

WHAT THIS CAN LOOK LIKE

A library wants to host a scam-awareness talk. The Hub helps connect it with a speaker and educational materials. Local partners provide the space and invite residents.

The Hub helps communities get started. Local people lead the work.

REGIONAL LEADERSHIP

We Are Not Starting from Scratch

Docent & CornCon

Pioneering K-12 hacker education.

Volunteer Mentors

Coaching local robotics teams.

Collegiate Clinics

Pro-bono security reviews.

The Hub doesn't replace grassroots leaders—it provides the scale to back your work.

LIVE PROVING GROUND • MONDAY, OCTOBER 5

Huxley: A Community Coming Together



Civic Leadership

City of Huxley & Story County leaders committing municipal backing.

Youth & Families

Engaging parents and students on scam awareness.

Frontline Trust

Local police and sheriff removing the shame of reporting.

Heritage Coffeehouse: Morning session for local businesses • Evening session for families.

TURNKEY ENGAGEMENT

Four Ways You Can Plug In Today

01

Family Fair

Host library MFA tune-up bars.

02

Speakers Bureau

Deliver talks to local Rotary clubs.

03

Community Talk

Host open coffeehouse chats.

04

Town Champion

Help your town earn recognition.

Zero liability concerns: Open-source slides and ISU-curated toolkits are fully provided.

THE FINAL QUESTION

Who in your town knows they can call you?

Bring 2–3 local partners together. Let’s build Cybersafe Communities everywhere.

RESOURCES & OPEN PLAYBOOKS

iowacyberhub.org

Direct: **corey@pcmatic.com**

Image Sources



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