

# SAFEGUARDING ADOLESCENTS

## STRATEGY GUIDE

### Theme: Radicalisation and Extremism

#### Introduction

Radicalisation is the process where people are led to adopt extremist or hateful beliefs. Adolescents can be at risk of radicalisation online through forums and social media. Radicalised people are often already vulnerable and disengaged from mainstream society, making them easy targets for recruitment into extremist or terrorist groups.

#### What is extremism?

An extremist is someone who supports an idea, cause, or set of values so adamantly and without compromise that this person will use their views to justify any action or behaviour. Extremism is defined in the [2011 Prevent strategy](#) as:

“... vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.”

#### What is radicalisation?

Radicalisation is a process by which an individual or group comes to adopt increasingly extreme political, social, or religious ideals, especially with regard to support for, or use of, violence.

#### What is terrorism?

Terrorism is the deliberate creation and exploitation of fear in order to advance a political, racial, religious or ideological cause; it uses terror and open violence against civilians to attempt to force people, authorities or governments to change their behaviour.

#### What is the impact on safeguarding adolescents?

Radicalisation does not usually start from a place of hatred. It can often arise when views or beliefs start to change at transitional times for adolescents. Young people may start to look for articles, forums or videos, which reflect more radical positions because they feel isolated, depressed, bullied because of

their religion or race, or worried about politics and the government. Though it usually builds up over time, radicalisation can lead to people:



### **Recruitment and how a child might be at risk**

Radicalisers have three main ways they work; face to face, online and through printed or other material. In face-to-face interactions, a young person may be approached directly by someone who seems trustworthy, perhaps in a club, group or a religious setting. They would not straight away preach a violent ideology, but initially just show interest, praise them and make them feel important. Later, they might stress the young person's significance to the movement, or duty to take part. They might tell of the rewards of belonging, or the excitement.

Skilled radicalisers will find a point of vulnerability, even in young people who are successful at school and who have a secure home life. Indirect radicalisation can occur through peers, i.e., those who have already been conscripted and seek to draw others into their group. Online radicalisation can again be direct or indirect – direct such as a person who is able to contact the young person and who gradually builds up an online relationship; and indirect through the young person looking at extremist material and becoming convinced to take some sort of action. Physical material such as leaflets, books or videos may also be offered – perhaps handed out at demonstrations. It is important to point out that there is no one defined route to radicalising a person. In some cases, people have self-radicalised via the internet.

### **Signs of radicalisation and extremism**

There is no one set of signals that would be a cause for alarm. Behaviours such as increased arguing, dressing in a particular way, being active on social media or becoming more religious or political might be typical of any adolescent. When it becomes worrisome is when there is a combination of some of the following:

- The child cuts off ties with friends and family to keep company with a new circle or group of friends.
- The child suddenly become disinterested in school or activities they previously liked to do.

- When the child expresses hateful views or uses derogatory terms towards other individuals or groups.
- If the child is spending time on their computer researching extremist groups.
- If the child is liking or retweeting posts made by fighters or extremist ideologues on their social media accounts.
- If a child or family member commits or plans violent acts, tries to acquire weapons or plans a trip to a conflict zone, then there is a legal obligation to report concerns to the police.

### What is Channel?

[Channel is part of Prevent](#) and is intended to act as an early intervention. It is a voluntary scheme meant to encourage and support those individuals considered at risk to make positive life choices, steering them away from violent extremism and terrorism. It is a multi-agency approach including the police and local authorities, which make up a Channel Panel. If a person referred is considered by the panel to be vulnerable, and the case accepted, the panel will put interventions in place, for example helping with education, health, housing or employment, or it might involve mentoring.

### Can teachers refer children to Channel without telling parents?

Yes, this is because there have been cases where families have been radicalising and therefore influencing children. However, this is unusual, and professionals such as teachers should take proportionate steps, starting with a conversation with colleagues, safeguarding leads and experts for advice, and involving families wherever possible.

### What is the Government doing about it?

The Government has a national strategy – part of a broader programme - called Prevent, which aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. It addresses all forms of extremism. It is supported by legislation such as the Terrorism Act (2000/2006) and the Counter Terrorism Security Act (2015).

### What about online recruitment?

Online material promoting terrorism, extremism or radicalisation, can be reported anonymously to the [Home Office](#). Material that can be reported includes:

- Articles, images, speeches or videos that promote terrorism or encourage violence.
- Content encouraging people to commit acts of terrorism.
- Websites made by terrorist or extremist organisations.
- Videos of terrorist attacks.



### **What if an adolescent joins an extremist group?**

If you become aware that an adolescent joins a group, or travels to join a group overseas, report the situation and take advice from the police. Former violent extremists suggest that it is important to try to keep contact, and to stress that they will be welcome if they return, even if you do not agree with what they are doing. Being accusatory or angry at any stage may push them further away. Radicalisers often use family tensions to draw young people further into a group.

### **What should I do if I am worried?**

There are many options to explore if a professional is concerned about a young person, including from having an informal conversation to intervention from the authorities. It is important to open up dialogue with a young person without being judgmental but with the intent to find out what is behind the worrying behaviour. Young people often want to explore issues, for example talking about politics or religion, and if they can do this, then this is positive. Former extremists have explained that parents, carers and professionals should try to keep the lines of communication open, try to listen, and tackle the tricky questions together. The idea is to help young people learn and grow, while building resilience to negative ideas and arguments.



### **Parents - what are some of the practical things they can do?**

The website [Educate Against Hate](#) has an excellent section for parents who are worried about extremism, including suggestions on other agencies to contact for advice. It gives real life examples of successful interventions which have stopped young people being radicalised.

### What to do if you are concerned about a child

If concerns are raised about a child or young person in relation to radicalisation/violent extremism, the Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton [HIPS Procedures on Referrals](#) should be followed.

Effective engagement with parents/the family is also important as they are in a key position to spot signs of radicalisation. It is important to assist and advise family members who raise concerns and point them to the right support mechanisms.

Online material related to terrorism or extremism that is being accessed by a child should be reported to [Child protection \(Children and Families\)](#) in Hampshire, and IOW Children's Services [Prevent Counter Terrorism](#). Both sites host the Prevent Referral Form.

As well as making a referral, online material which is illegal or of an extremist nature can be reported anonymously to the [Home Office](#).

### Glossary

**Radicalisation** - refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

**Extremism** is defined in the [2011 Prevent strategy](#) as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. Also included in the definition of extremism are calls for the death of members of the armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.

**Prevent** - is the name given to a national strategy which aims to stop people from becoming violent extremists or supporting terrorism. Section 26 of the [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#) places a [duty](#) on specified authorities to have, "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism".

**Channel** - is the [process](#) that supports people at risk of being drawn towards terrorism or violent extremism. The process is a multi-agency approach to identify and provide support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorism.



## Additional Resources and Information

### Report a concern

#### **Police**

Telephone: 999, if there is an immediate threat to life.

Telephone: 101 for non-emergencies and to be put in touch with a local officer who has a Prevent remit.

#### **Police anti-terrorist hotline**

Telephone: 0800 789 321. This number is available 24/7 for members of the public to report any suspicious activity. Calls are answered by specially trained counter terrorism officers who make some initial enquiries before passing on details to local counter terrorism officers for further investigation where appropriate.

#### **Crimestoppers**

Telephone: 0800 55511 to report information about a crime anonymously.

### **Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and South Southampton (HIPS) safeguarding partners**

[HIPS Safeguarding Children Procedures Manual: Safeguarding children against radicalisation and violent extremism](#)

### **Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP)**

[Hampshire SCP - Learning Management System \(event-booking.org.uk\)](#) - To book training on Prevent.

[HSCP Website](#) - Information on radicalisation and extremism.

### **Isle of Wight Safeguarding Children Partnership (IOWSCP)**

[Foundation Online Learning \(Prevent\)](#) - An online course offered through the IOWSCP.

### **Hampshire Constabulary**

[Hampshire Police's Safe4e](#) - This website provides information and resources for professionals.

### **Resources for schools**

[Educate Against Hate](#) - Government advice and trusted resources for schools to safeguard students from radicalisation, build resilience to all types of extremism and promote shared values.

### **Resources for parents/carers and adolescents**

[Family Lives - Worried about extremism and radicalisation?](#) - Advice for parents who are worried that their teenager is at risk of extremism or radicalisation.

[The Mix - I'm worried about online radicalisation](#) - Information about radicalisation for Under 25s.

### **Additional information**

[Prevent Strategy](#) - This 2011 review evaluated work to date and sets out a strategy for the future.

[Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#) - This act contains a duty on specified authorities to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This is also known as the Prevent duty ([Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales](#)).

[Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#) - Sections 36 to 41 set out the duty on local authorities and partners of local panels to provide support for people vulnerable to being drawn into any form of terrorism. This guidance has been issued under sections 36(7) and 38(6) of the act to support panel members and partners of local panels ([Channel and Prevent Multi-Agency Panel \(PMAP\) guidance](#)).