



FACT SHEET

Young People and Radicalisation

Due to the growth of the world wide web and smartphones, at no time have children had greater access to information or greater ability to communicate or receive communications from others. Whilst this has brought many benefits to children and young people, it also provides opportunities for those who wish to radicalise others or spread extremist viewpoints. Radicalisers target children and young people because they perceive them to be vulnerable to influence, particularly from someone claiming to offer them friendship, love, excitement or a sense of belonging.

The process of radicalisation may include:

- Being groomed online or in person (including by family or friends)
- Exploitation including sexual exploitation
- Psychological manipulation
- Exposure to violent material or other inappropriate information

Often the process is a gradual one so that the young person themselves may not know they are being exploited or radicalised.

All organisations which work with young people have a responsibility to protect them from harm. This includes becoming radicalised or being exposed to extreme views.

Vulnerability Factors

Anyone can be radicalised, but there are factors which may make a young person more vulnerable:

- Being easily influenced or impressionable;
- Having low self-esteem or being socially isolated;
- A perception that they have experienced injustice, bullying, discrimination, or rejection, whether or not this is actually the case;
- Having a strong need for acceptance and belonging;
- A lack of positive role models or lack of sense of security within their family life;
- Experiencing grief such as the loss of a loved one.

The presence of these factors will not necessarily lead to radicalisation, and a young person may still be radicalised even if none of these factors are present.

*All organisations which work
with young people have a
responsibility to protect them
from harm*

What are the possible signs of radicalisation in young people?

The signs of radicalisation in children and young people can be difficult to spot, but they could include:

- Speaking with new friends or being secretive about chats during online gaming or in forums
- Using language you would not expect them to use or know
- Watching, sharing, or creating films online linked to religious, political, or racial hate
- Using or sharing materials or symbols associated with extreme causes

It is important to bear in mind that none of the above are firm indicators that a young person is being radicalised.

Information and Advice for Parents

It is understandable and expected that parents will want to know what they can do to keep their children safe from exploitation by those who wish to radicalise them. There are a number of websites which provide such advice to parents. The most prominent are:

NSPCC: Protecting Children from Radicalisation

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/dedicated-helplines/protecting-children-from-radicalisation/>

Educate Against Hate

<https://educateagainsthate.com/>

Let's Talk About It: Advice to parents about online radicalisation

<https://www.ltai.info/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Parent-Guardian-Online-Radicalisation-Information-and-Support-V.2.pdf>

These websites include a wealth of advice for parents and carers on topics such as how to talk about extremism with children and how to keep children safe from extremism online.

The advice for parents and carers includes:

- Talk to children about what they do and who they befriend online, whilst respecting their boundaries;
- Think about installing parental controls on devices;
- Raise the issue of inappropriate content online. Have they seen any and would they know what to do if they have?;
- Don't be afraid to talk about extremism and what it means. Be honest about your own views and allow them time to ask you questions;
- Don't avoid talking about extremism just because the topic is worrying, embarrassing or difficult. It is possible children will look for answers elsewhere, such as online, if they do not receive them from you.

What to do if you think a child is being radicalised

If you think a child or the people around them are involved in radicalisation and there is an immediate risk of harm, **call 999 straight away.**

If it isn't an emergency, you should consider one of the following options:

Complete a National Prevent Referral Form which can be found here: [Prevent | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/prevent)

Contact your nominated child protection lead or Designated Safeguarding Lead if you work for a school or college

Call the police anti terrorism hotline on 0800 789 321

Call the NSPCC's radicalisation helpline on 0808 800 5000

Call the Department for Education's dedicated telephone helpline for schools in England if there are non-emergency concerns about extremism: **020 7340 7264**



Keeping young people safe

There are a number of websites which can provide advice to parents.

All organisations that work with young people have a responsibility to protect them from harm



PREVENT TEAM

Adults' Health and Care
3rd Floor, Elizabeth II Court West
The Castle, Winchester, SO23 8UQ

Email: prevent@hants.gov.uk