

Practitioner Briefing Radicalisation

Welcome to this briefing aims to help practitioners and their managers understand Radicalisation for children and their families. The messages in this briefing are just as important for those practitioners working with adults who are parents.

What is Radicalisation? The process through which a person comes to support or be involved in extremist ideologies. It can result in a person becoming drawn into terrorism and is a form of harm. There is no one process or indicator of when a person might move to adopt violence in support of extremist ideas. The process is different for each individual and can take place over an extended period or a short time frame. Challenging and tackling extremism a shared effort. A range of agencies have a duty to identify vulnerable children and prevent them from being drawn into terrorism.

Why it Matters? Young people may potentially be vulnerable to online radicalisation through their affinity for the online environment and social media when considered alongside: 1) adolescence is a time of change for young people who may be 'finding their place' in the world; 2) the ability to question the veracity of information may be less developed if it has come from someone in a position of perceived knowledge or authority and 3) young people mature at different stages and may not have broader critical thinking skills that are typically developed through maturity and life experience. Prevent initiatives tackle both the causes & risk factors that can lead someone to become radicalised. It can directly support those who are at risk through early intervention. Prevent works in a similar way to other safeguarding processes, designed to protect individuals whereby the level of intervention increases with the level of risk. Under the Prevent Duty all public sector agencies have a statutory responsibility to ensure staff, service providers and volunteers have a good understanding of risks, that they are trained to recognise radicalisation and associated behaviours and how to report concerns.

Sign and Indicators. Social media platforms can serve to reinforce a viewpoint through a distorted narrative leading to the perception that the extreme narrative is the 'prevailing world view'. Anyone can be radicalised and the following list of indicators (not exhaustive) may make an adolescent more vulnerable and can make it challenging to distinguish from typical adolescent behaviour - becoming increasingly argumentative - secretive or reluctant to discuss online activity - refusing to listen to different points of view - spending increasing amounts of time online - distancing themselves from friends or having more than one online identity - inappropriate language - possession or accessing violent extremist literature/websites - behaviour changes - expression of extremist views - advocating violent actions/means - articulating support for violent extremist causes - association with known extremists - feelings of grievance, injustice or threat - Mental Health Issues - Easily influenced or controlled by a group - Vulnerable to misinformation or fake news - learning needs and disabilities - being at a transitional part of life.

Recently the term 'Incels' ('involuntary celibates') has been in the media. This is a mainly online subculture of predominantly white, heterosexual males who define themselves as unable to find a romantic or sexual partner despite desiring one. Incel ideology has inspired several attacks & whilst not inherently right wing, the hard-line misogyny found amongst certain Incel circles often present within online right-wing communities with notions of white supremacy & absolute male supremacy.

Further Information:

- [Prevent duty training: Learn how to support people susceptible to radicalisation.](#)
- [ACT \(Action Counters Terrorism\) Prevent Radicalisation and Extremism by Acting Early.](#)
- [Government Guidance Get help for radicalisation concerns.](#)
- [Statutory guidance Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales \(2023\)](#)
- [Channel duty guidance: Protecting people susceptible to radicalisation](#)

How does radicalisation happen? The process of radicalisation may involve:

- Being groomed online or in person
 - Exploitation, including sexual exploitation
 - Psychological manipulation
 - Exposure to violent material and inappropriate information
 - Risk of physical harm or death through extremist acts
- The process can be gradual, so children and young people who are affected may not realise what it is that they are being drawn into.

What to do if you have a concern? NOTICE—CHECK—SHARE. If you notice a change in an individual or identify concerns that lead you to suspect that they may be vulnerable to radicalisation, notify your safeguarding/child protection lead and to make a Prevent & 'channel' referral. A referral can come from anyone who is concerned about a person they know who may be at risk of radicalisation, whether a family member, friend, school leader, colleague or from a wide range of partners. Channel addresses all forms of terrorism, including Islamist, extreme right-wing, mixed and unclear ideologies, and others. Channel in Bedfordshire is led by the local authority, where [referrals](#) to Channel are assessed by a multi-agency panel consisting of the local authority, Police, health and education professionals and other meet to discuss support options. These support options include a range of different interventions, addressing ideological, educational, vocational, mental health, and other vulnerabilities. Channel is confidential and voluntary and offers support including mentoring - mental health support such as counselling - education or career development support and online safety training for parents. Following a referral, lots of agencies work together to offer support where they consider it necessary and proportionate to do so. This involves a few steps:

1. The local authority and the police carefully assess all referrals to see if they are suitable for Channel or whether a different type of support is more appropriate, such as mental health support.
 2. If suitable, the referral is discussed with all relevant partners at a meeting called a Channel panel to decide if an intervention is necessary. The individual who has been referred to Prevent is informed and must give their consent (or via a parent or guardian if they are children) before an intervention can take place.
 3. If Channel intervention is required, the panel works with local partners to develop an appropriate tailored support package.
 4. The support package is monitored closely and reviewed regularly by the Channel panel.
- If there is an immediate risk of harm, call 999 straight away.

Questions to consider - Do you know the signs and indicators of online radicalisation? Do your organisation's safeguarding procedures include radicalisation and how to deal with an incident? Does your organisation have measures to prevent access to extremist online content by children, young people and adults at risk? Further information is available at [Safeguarding Individuals Against Radicalisation or Violent Extremism: Practice Guidance](#)

Please access the [Pan Bedfordshire Child Protection Procedures](#) and register for updates.