# Prevent – Radicalisation

# 1 of 19 - Welcome

Welcome to this session on radicalisation.

By the end of this session, you will:

* Understand what radicalisation is
* Understand what makes a person vulnerable to radicalisation
* Know what the signs of radicalisation are
* Know what to do if you spot signs of radicalisation in someone you know

# 2 of 19 - Content warning

This session contains information that you may find uncomfortable or distressing.

We recommend ensuring that you have access to wellbeing support for yourself before proceeding through the session, in case you need it.

If you need to stop and return to this session you can do so at any time.

# 3 of 19 – Radicalisation Radicalisation is the process by which a person comes to support terrorist or extremist ideologies. It is a negative and damaging process to the individuals involved, the UK and the world, and can lead to people being injured or even losing their lives in the name of the cause to which they are radicalised.

# Radicalisation includes:

# People being persuaded to support extreme religious or racist ideas

# Activities that could lead people on a pathway towards terrorism

# The process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies

# When a person’s beliefs move from being quite ‘normal’ to being extreme and they want to see drastic change

# 4 of 19 – Radicalisation or passionate views?

Not everyone who wants to see change in the world is an extremist or a terrorist, so it is important to understand the difference between radicalisation and passionate behaviour.

There are examples throughout history of passionate individuals ‘fighting’ for a positive and inclusive society. They have protested and campaigned to change law and civil liberties for the benefit of those who have been oppressed.

Examples include: Mahatma Gandhi, who encouraged people in India to protest peacefully to get the justice and freedom they deserved, and Martin Luther King Junior, who encouraged people in America to protest peacefully to get the justice and freedom they deserved.

Passionate views are not always negative and harmful to society; they can be an important and powerful agent of necessary change. The key is understanding when passionate views cross the line into extremist and worrying behaviour. The main distinctions between the two are that extremists’ beliefs and actions are general unlawful – they infringe upon people’s human rights and call for violence or force to be used in spreading their message and creating change.

# 5 of 19 – Vulnerability to radicalisation

All terrorist groups need to radicalise and recruit people to their cause in order to group their influence and create the change they want to see. Sometimes they want a few people with specialist skills, other times they want to recruit large numbers of people to create a mass of followers capable of creating pressure, such as overthrowing a legitimate government. Recruiters will target people who are more vulnerable as they are easier to persuade.

There is no definitive list of factors that make a person vulnerable to radicalisation, however some of the more common triggers include:

* Being rejected by peer, faith groups, social groups or family
* Being a victim of or a witness to race or religious hate crime
* Recent religious conversion
* Under-achievement
* Experience of poverty, disadvantage or social exclusion
* Undergoing a series of traumatic events
* Conflict with family over religious beliefs, lifestyle or politics
* Identity confusion

# 6 of 19 – The stages of radicalisation

Everyone who is targeted by extremist recruiters will go through a different series of actions to try and persuade them to join their cause, but there are some broad stages which will be common to most situations.

* Pre-radical – A person becomes aware of, joins or identifies with a group, organisation or individual with extreme beliefs
* Self-identity – The person starts to believe and accept the views and beliefs of the extremists as their own
* Indoctrination – The person is groomed by the extremists, believing increasingly extreme ideas
* Terrorism – The person supports or becomes involved in carrying out terrorist acts

This entire process could happen remotely, such as online through social media and websites, or it could be something that happens in person through meetings, conversations and even arranging travel for the target to journey to another country to be trained in acts of terrorism.

# 7 of 19 - Recruitment tactics

Extremist recruiters will use different tactics for different types of vulnerable people. Below are some examples of how different people could be recruited by extremists.

* Jay likes adventure and excitement. A recruiter offers him the chance to do something thrilling and risky, using language that suggests it will be exciting. This could include travel to another country to learn new ‘cool’ skills such as how to use weapons and explosives.
* Kahlia, who is of mixed heritage, just got turned down for a job that was offered to her friend who is white. An extremist recruiter shares sympathy with her and condemns the actions of the employer. They then offer her a job circulating information leaflets about their cause. The information focusses on the false ‘truth’ that foreigners are not welcome here, and how they must ‘take action’ so their voices are heard.
* Grant is concerned about climate change. He is approached at a peaceful protest he has attended by someone older who claims to be a professor in environmental issues. The ‘professor’ shares information about how the situation is worse than anyone realises and encourages Grant to attend a secret meeting of a group who are planning to ‘do whatever it takes’ to have their voices heard.

# 8 of 19 – Propaganda

One of the main weapons used by terrorist organisations to recruit people is called propaganda.

Propaganda is information, ideas, or rumours deliberately spread widely to influence people, such as being in favour of a government or organisation or against a group of people or an idea. It has been used throughout history to manipulate and control people.

Propaganda can often portray things in a very negative or very positive way, done to generate particular feelings in the people who see or hear it. It is a way of manipulating people, to make them believe something. Sometimes this is done in small ways over a long period of time. Other times it is a small number of very impactful messages.

[Watch this video to learn more about propaganda.](https://youtu.be/qE4bbCfWd14)

# 9 of 19 – Fake news

‘Fake news’ is a term that is being increasingly used in the media. It usually refers to things which are being portrayed as facts when they are not actually true. It can come from many sources, such as people with particular political leanings trying to discredit their opponents or people who are sharing information without really understanding the facts.

Extremist groups share fake news stories to sow fear, hate and mistrust in people so that they are easier to manipulate.

Fake news has power because people find it easier to believe things that they fear to be true, and fake news is usually sensationalist or making things out to be worse than they really are. Extremists rely on people not taking the time to check these stories out first to see if they are true before they share them with their own friends and family, spreading the incorrect information even further.

[To learn more about fake news and how to spot it, watch this video.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AkwWcHekMdo)

# 10 of 19 – The risks of radicalisation

Radicalisation increases the risks of terrorist activity within the UK and around the world, but there are a number of serious risks for the individuals who become radicalised too.

These include:

* Being a member of a proscribed group is illegal, so they could receive a criminal record by joining
* They could be encouraged or forced to commit illegal acts, including hurting or killing people
* They may be convinced to travel to another country for ‘training’ and then imprisoned and prevented from coming home
* They could be subject to mental or physical torture
* They could be hurt or killed when they or someone else carries out an illegal act of terrorism

# 11 of 19 – Preventing recruitment

All of these actions and precautions are things you can do to try to prevent you or any of your friends from being groomed or recruited.

* Tell parents or college staff about any friends who seem to have become isolated or withdrawn
* Report any friends who seem to support the actions of terrorists
* Report anyone who encourages you to have harmful, racist or extreme views or beliefs
* Listen out for friends talking about new friends who give them spiritual or religious advice
* Block and report any extremist content online
* Tell parents or teachers if a friend is talking about moving away without their parents
* Avoid reading articles or websites in support of terrorist organisations

# 12 of 19 – Recognising signs of extremism

Often, there are few or no clear and obvious signs that a person has begun to have extremist beliefs, as many of things which could be evidence of being radicalised also have innocent and normal potential explanations. For example, A legitimate increase in interest in religion or politics is not necessarily evidence of extremist belief.

However, certain behaviours will always be something to worry about. If you see someone you know doing any of these things you should speak to someone such as a teacher or the police as soon as possible.

* Sharing extremist websites or leaflets
* Saying they support extremist views or ideas
* Taking part in homophobic, religion-based or racist bullying
* Taking part in violent ‘protest’ action
* Saying they approve of terrorist activity

# 13 of 19 – Are these signs of extremism?

There are other behaviours that can often be given as examples of signs of extremism that will have normal, lawful explanations. Such as:

* Sudden change in the way people dress – People in their late teens and early twenties will often change their personal style, sometimes quite suddenly.
* Choosing to grow a beard or wear a headscarf for religious reasons – A person can be taking their existing religion more seriously or be making a fashion or style decision.
* Expressing an interest in peaceful protest – An interest in righting legitimate wrongs in a peaceful way is not a concerning behaviour.

If you have concerns about something someone you know is doing, you can speak to a teacher or your college’s safeguarding team. Whilst you should never accuse someone of something without proof and you should always be mindful of cultural other decisions people make, it is always OK to speak to someone for advice if you are not sure what to do. What you have noticed might be normal, but it also might not be, and speaking up about it could help to prevent someone you know from being drawn into extremist or terrorist activity.

# 14 of 19 – Sharing concerns

If you have a concern about someone you know, you should share it with the police. The best way to do this is through their confidential Prevent advice line, which you can reach by calling 0800 011 3764. Your call will be answered by specially trained officers who can talk about your situation and, if necessary, begin the next steps required to get support for the person you are worried about.

You can also contact them if you are worried about yourself.

[You can find out more about contacting the advice line on their website here.](https://actearly.uk/contact/)

If you do not feel comfortable doing this, you could also speak to a teacher you trust, or your college’s safeguarding team. Teaching staff are all trained in Prevent and will be able to help you.

# 15 of 19 – Question 1

Indicate if the following statement is true or false.

Not everyone who wants to see change in the world is an extremist or a terrorist.

The correct answer is:

True - Some people are very passionate about their beliefs, but as long as they go about their lives lawfully and respectful of others then they are not an extremist or a terrorist.

# 16 of 19 – Question 2

Propaganda is…?

1. A group of recruiters working together to target someone for radicalisation
2. Information, ideas, or rumours deliberately spread widely to influence people
3. A process of drawing someone into extremist ideology with intent to cause harm
4. A code word used for people who are taken oversees and imprisoned

The correct answer is b. Propaganda is information, ideas, or rumours deliberately spread widely to influence people.

# 17 of 19 – Question 3

Which of the following are risks of radicalisation? Choose all that apply.

1. Getting a criminal record
2. Being encouraged or forced to commit illegal acts
3. Being convinced to travel to another country and then imprisoned
4. Being subjected to mental or physical torture
5. Being hurt or killed by an act of terrorism

The correct answer is – all the above.

# 18 of 19 – Question 4

If you suspect a friend is being radicalised by an extremist group, what should you do?

1. Tell a teacher or the police
2. Stop being friends with them
3. Go with them to group meetings to keep an eye on them
4. Accuse them of being a traitor to their country

The correct answer is a. If you suspect a friend is being radicalised by an extremist group you should tell a teacher or the police.

# 19 of 19 – End

Well done. You have completed this session on radicalisation.

You should now:

* Understand what radicalisation is
* Understand what makes a person vulnerable to radicalisation
* Know what the signs of radicalisation are
* Know what to do if you spot signs of radicalisation in someone you know

If you are unsure or have any questions about any of these topics, make a note and speak to your tutor for more help.