



Advice to Parents and Carers

Keeping Children and Young People Safe Against Radicalisation and Extremism

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The parent/child relationship is the foundation to keeping children safe and supporting their social development and educational attainment.

Parenting can be a challenging task. Maintaining a positive relationship can sometimes be difficult as children grow and develop and seek an identity that may be different from their own family.

Children and young people have a natural curiosity which as parents we want to encourage. However, as our children grow up we have to take steps to ensure their safety.

Currently a number of young girls and boys have been persuaded to leave the country against the wishes of their families, or in secret, putting themselves in extreme danger.

What is the Prevent Strategy?

- ▶ Prevent is a government strategy designed to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorist or extremist causes.
- ▶ The prevent strategy covers all types of terrorism and extremism, including the extreme right wing, violent Islamist groups and other causes.

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- ▶ Why might a young person be drawn towards extremist ideologies?
- ▶ They may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging.
- ▶ They may be driven by the desire for 'adventure' and excitement.
- ▶ They may be driven by the need to raise their self – esteem and promote their 'street cred'.
- ▶ They may be drawn to a group or individual who can offer identity, a social network or support.
- ▶ They may be influenced by the world events and a sense of grievance resulting in a need to make a difference.

How might this Happen?

▶ On-Line

- ▶ The internet provides entertainment, connectivity and interaction. Children may not spent too much time on the internet while studying and may use other social media and messaging sites such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Vine or Whatsapp.
- ▶ These can all be useful tools, but we need to be aware these are powerful programmes and networks that use social media to reach out to young people and can communicate extremist messages.

▶ TV and Media

- ▶ The media provide a view on world affairs. However, this is often a very simple version of event which, in reality, are very complex. Children may not fully understand the situation and appreciate the dangers involved.

How might this Happen? (cont)

▶ Peer Interaction

- ▶ Young people at risk may display extrovert behaviour, start getting into trouble in school or on the streets and may mix with other children who badly behave, but this is not always the case.
- ▶ There are no typical characteristics of young people who may be more at risk than others. Sudden changes in behaviour could be a potential indicator.
- ▶ Sometimes those at risk may be encouraged, by the people they are in contact with or draw attention to themselves.
- ▶ It is important for parents/carers to keep communication open and listen to your children's views.
- ▶ You may not always agree, but you should convey to them that you've understood their point of view. If you are at all concerned about your child, you may want to speak to a teacher or person of influence.

Recognising Extremism – signs may include:

- ▶ Out of character changes in behaviour and peer relationships
- ▶ Secretive behaviour
- ▶ Losing interest in friends and activities
- ▶ Showing sympathy for extremist causes
- ▶ Glorifying violence
- ▶ Possessing illegal or extremist literature
- ▶ Advocating messages similar to illegal organisations such as ‘Muslims Against Crusades’ or other non-prescribed extremist groups such as the English Defence League.

How can parents support children and young people to stay safe?

- ▶ Know where your child is, who they are with and check this for yourself.
- ▶ Know their friends.
- ▶ Keep communication open, listen to your child and talk to them about their interests.
- ▶ Encourage positivity towards all local groups that you can trust.
- ▶ Talk to them about what they see on TV or on the internet. Explain it may not be the 'big picture'.
- ▶ Allow and encourage debate and questioning about the world and events.

How might parents support children and young people to stay safe? (cont)

- ▶ Encourage interest and support in all faiths and local groups, showing respect.
- ▶ Teach them that expressing strong views and trying to change things for the better is fine but they should never take a violent action against others or support those that do.
- ▶ Be aware of their on-line activity and update your own knowledge.
- ▶ Know which sites your children use.
- ▶ Remind them that people they meet over the internet may be pretending to be someone else or telling them things that are not true.
- ▶ **Explain that anyone who tells them to keep secrets from their family or teachers is likely to be trying to do them harm or put them in danger.**

Key Terms

- ▶ **EXTREMISM** – vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values such as democracy, the rule of law and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.
- ▶ **IDEOLOGY** - a set of beliefs
- ▶ **TERRORISM** – a violent action against people or property, designed to create fear and advance a political, religious or ideological cause
- ▶ **RADICALISATION** – the process by which a person comes to support extremism and terrorism

Concerns

- ▶ If you have any concerns that your child may be influenced by others get help – talk to someone you can trust, this could be your faith leader, family member, teachers or another in authority that you trust.
- ▶ Please contact Norwood Primary for advice or you can contact PREVENT Co-coordinator/Lead PC Darren Taylor in Sefton 0151 777 8311

Useful websites that may help you

- ▶ What is Prevent? Let's Talk About
- ▶ <http://www.itai.info/what-is-prevent/>
- ▶ CEOP - www.ceop.gov.uk
- ▶ Cyber Safety – www.cybersmile.org