JGA
Developing Futures

Spotting Signs of Radicalisation Risks

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Prevent Duty and Spotting Signs of Radicalisation Crib Sheet

Key terminology

Terrorism – the use or threat of action which is designed to influence the government or an international organisation or to intimidate the public or a section of the public; the use or threat is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious, racial or ideological cause.

Violent extremism – the vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for different faiths and beliefs.

Non-violent extremism – Extremism without a violent element, such as creating an atmosphere conducive to terrorism by popularising views that terrorists can exploit.

Radicalisation – The process by which someone comes to support terrorism and the extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

Prevent duty – introduced in 2006 as part of the UK Government's counter-terrorism strategy known as CONTEST. CONTEST has 4 strands –

- **Pursue** – aims to stop terrorist attacks by co-ordinating security services to gather intelligence and stop terrorist plans.
- **PREVENT**– aims to stop people being radicalised by stopping terrorism at its ideological root.
- **Protect** – aims to strengthen the UK's infrastructure, border security and transport system, along with improving security in crowded places to protect the UK.
- **Prepare** – is about mitigating any impact of a terror attack – looks at resilience and preparedness of emergency services.

Notice, Check and Share - guidance aimed at professionals working in sectors subject to the Prevent duty, such as health, education, and local authorities

Martyns Law - The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, also known as Martyn's Law, received Royal Assent on Thursday 3 April 2025 and will be active legislation in Spring 2027.

How does radicalisation happen?

Individuals can be radicalised in various ways. Increasingly it takes place in permissive environments online, where radicalisers can hide their identities. The following are common ways that radicalisation occurs:

Online grooming – involves targeting individuals through online communication apps, building a relationship with the person and then working to isolate them from their family and friends and adopt extremist ideologies.

New Social Groups – can encourage someone to adopt new beliefs in order to become part of a new group. Often, individuals become involved in such groups through careful persuasion and also through fear of becoming ostracised for not adopting the same views or beliefs and preferring to fit in.

Propaganda – can be used to share extremist views and encourage others to adopt the same ideologies. Radicalising content, which can often include graphic images or videos followed by a persuasive speech, can be widely shared on the internet, social media or in new social groups.

Susceptible individuals can be actively sought out with extreme messaging.

Susceptible people

Some people may be considered more susceptible to becoming radicalised. Factors which may make someone more susceptible include:

- Having experienced significant life events such as family breakdown or bereavement
- Having experienced abuse, including familial abuse or bullying
- Experiencing mental health issues or having feelings of isolation
- Being subject to peer or familial pressure or influence from other people (often online)
- Experiencing family tensions
- Displaying anti-social behaviour
- Holding personal or political grievances
- Being a victim or perpetrator of crime, including hate crime

Important to remember – the above factors can make someone susceptible to radicalisation, it can happen to anyone, and the signs that someone is becoming radicalised should never be ignored.

Spotting signs

Spotting extremist influence is often about putting information together and looking for signs. This list is not exhaustive, but when thinking about an individual you are concerned about, ask yourself, are they:

- Seeming withdrawn, isolated or excluded?
- Experiencing family pressure or upheaval?
- Fixated on one new subject, such as immigration?
- Adopting speech that sounds scripted? Have they started using new phrases?
- Changing their friendship groups?
- Showing signs of being influenced or controlled by a group or an individual?
- Showing signs of alcohol or drug misuse?
- Struggling with mental health issues, including showing signs of anger or stress?
- Lying to their family or other trusted adults?
- Handing out literature?
- Appearing to make less effort on their course or experiencing a drop in academic attainment?

Additionally (though it may not always be easy to establish) do they express

- A desire for excitement and adventure?
- A need for identity, meeting and belonging?
- A disregard for differing opinions, being closed to discussion and other views?
- A desire for political or moral change?

What might increase your concerns?

Your concern regarding potential radicalisation may increase for people who:

- Have an association through family, friends, and/or fellow students with members of extremist organisations.
- Have friends or family that have travelled to conflict zones, such as Syria, to support or otherwise be involved in extremist activity. While you may not be certain that this was the reason for their travel, there may be no other convincing reason why they went.
- Appear to have an in-depth knowledge of extremist ideology.
- Refuse to engage or respond negatively when their views are challenged.
- Talk with fixed, scripted ideas and won't accept alternative views.
- Use phrases or soundbites which appear to have been learnt by rote and are not necessarily understood.
- Show changes in behaviour in accordance with the extremist views they espouse, e.g. a change in their dress and/or an objection to associating with people who don't share their views.
- Try to enforce their views on others, e.g. advocating separate spaces on the basis of gender or prioritising space on the basis of ethnicity.
- Have a friendship group who share their views.

- Have age-inappropriate knowledge.
- Have seen violent videos.
- Have parents or family members who seem unconcerned and/or supportive of their views and behaviour.

What might decrease your concerns?

Conversely, your initial concerns may lessen where the person:

- Is open to other views.
- Loses interest quickly.
- Appears to have only superficial knowledge of the issues.
- Does not display any changes in their behaviour.
- Has a range of friends who do not appear to share their views.
- Has their views and/or behaviour challenged by their family.
- Comes from a family which holds sexist, homophobic or otherwise prejudiced views derived from an interpretation of their religion, but they are not hate filled.

Please note that levels of concern can also change over time. This should be taken into account to allow any intervention or support to remain appropriate.

Potential signs - wording, symbols and slang terms used

As well as changes in a person's behaviour or speech, it is also worth being aware that there are certain signs, symbols, acronyms and phrases that may indicate affiliation with an extremist ideology.

You may see these in the form of graffiti, doodles in books, tattoos, stickers or badges.

In relation to extreme right-wing ideologies, you might encounter the following:

- **88 =** this stands for Heil Hitler, where each 8 represents the letter H (being the eighth letter of the alphabet).
- **18 =** as above, but where the 1 (A) and the 8 (H) represent Adolf Hitler's initials.
- **14 =** this refers to 'the 14 Words' of David Lane, who said, "We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children". (These numbers are sometimes used in combination - i.e. 1488.)

The following are examples of acronyms:

- **ORION** = Our Race Is Our Nation.
- **RAHOWA** = Racial Holy War.
- **WPWW** = White Pride World Wide.
- **SWP** = Supreme White Power.

For further information on visual symbols associated with some extremist right-wing groups, please see Extreme Right Wing, the Signs are There.pdf (nypartnerships.org.uk)

A shared vocabulary of slang also plays a large part in incel communication and can be found in online interactions. including on social media, in memes and messages.

Much of this shared language focusses on describing women and their sexual partners in generalised, derogatory and dehumanising ways. It also emphasises the 'us and them' attitudes that categories the community.

The following terms are used commonly within the incel community.

- **Red pill** – referencing the fill The Matrix, to have 'taken the red pill' means to have realised the 'truth' about women and society
- **Blue pill** – people who incels see as being unaware of the 'truth'
- **Black pill** – an extreme, nihilistic expression of realising the 'truth'. Incels who 'take the black pill' resign themselves to the fact that their position in society is predetermined. At its most extreme, this can manifest in the decision to respond with aggression and violence – against themselves and/or others
- **LDAR** – stands for 'lay down and rot', reflecting the hopeless concept of the black pill
- **Chad** - sexually attractive men, usually a young white, muscular man.
- **Stacy** - a sexually attractive woman, unintelligent and promiscuous.
- **Femoid or Foid** - short for the dehumanising 'female humanoid'.
- **Roastie** - a sexually active woman, referring to the concept that much sexual activity has changed the appearance of her genitals.
- **AWALT** - sends for 'all women are like that.
- **ER or 'The Supreme Gentleman'** – *Elliot Rodger*, 'doing an ER', meaning to follow his violent example

Statistics

Currently, 80% of threats come from Islamic Extremism, and 20% is from Far Right Extremism. The threat from the Far Right has been growing, but it has started from a much smaller base.

Key results overview from Government's official statistics – published November 2025

See - https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/individuals-referred-to-prevent-to-march-2025/individuals-referred-to-and-supported-through-the-prevent-programme-april-2024-to-march-2025

In the year ending 31 March 2025, there were 8,517 individuals referred to Prevent, with a total of 8,778 referrals made. This represents a 27% increase compared with the previous year (6,922) and is the highest number of referrals recorded in a single year since the data series began in April 2015.

Of the 8,778 referrals made to Prevent in the year ending 31 March 2025:

- 1,727 individuals (20% of referrals) were discussed at a Channel panel, and 1,472 individuals (17% of referrals) were adopted as a Channel case
- the proportion of referrals discussed at a Channel panel has increased (20% this year versus 13% last year and 16% the year before) and the proportion of referrals that were adopted as a Channel case also increased (17% this year versus 7% last year and 9% the year before); the large increase in adopted cases in the year ending 31 March 2025 is primarily due to a change in methodology (see the user guide for further details); users should therefore exercise caution when comparing these figures with previous years
- the education sector made the highest number of referrals (3,129), accounting for 36% of all referrals this year.
- referrals by the police (2,631; 30%) increased by 37% compared with the previous year (1,921; 28%); referrals from local authorities had the largest percentage increase (54% from 582 to 895); in contrast, referrals from the community and from friends and family were the only groups to show decreases, falling by 25% and 7% respectively
- individuals aged 11 to 15 accounted for the largest proportion (3,192; 36%) of the 8,759 referrals to Prevent where age was known
- 1,472 cases were adopted by Channel, with individuals aged between 11 and 15 accounting for 39% of all cases adopted
- as in previous years, most referrals where sex was specified (8,525), were for males (7,605; 89%)
- 'Extreme Right-Wing' concerns accounted for 21% (1,798) of referrals, higher than those related to 'Islamist Extremism' (10%; 870); compared with the previous year, the proportion of referrals for 'Extreme Right-Wing' concerns increased (up from 19%; 1,314 of 6,921), while the proportion for 'Islamist Extremism' decreased (down from 13%; 913 of 6,921)
- the majority of referrals that went on to be adopted as a Channel case were for 'Extreme Right-Wing concerns' (612 out of 1464 (total specified); 42%); while 226 (15%) were for concerns related to 'Islamist Extremism'
- the 'no ideology' type of concern categories ('no ideology – other susceptibility to radicalisation identified' and 'no ideology identified') accounted for the largest proportion of referrals (4,917; 56

- for those referrals where ethnicity was specified (4,203), 65% (2,747) of referrals were recorded as White, 19% (798) Asian, 8% (320) Black and 8% (338) other
- around one-third of Prevent referrals (2,955 of 8,778) had at least one mental health or neurodiversity (MHND) condition recorded; Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) was the most common condition recorded (14% of all referrals; 1,226 of 8,778); two-thirds of referrals (5,823) had no MHND information recorded, either because no concern was identified or relevant information was not captured
- among adopted Channel cases where consent status was specified, 55% (767) provided consent to receive Channel panel support, while 45% (616) did not consent to support

What to do if you have a Prevent/Radicalisation concern

Raise your concern, as with any other Safeguarding Concern, to your Safeguarding Lead via the JGA Safeguarding email address – safeguarding@jga-group.co.uk.

Notice, Check and Share –

The 'Notice, check, share' is guidance aimed at professionals working in sectors subject to the Prevent duty, such as health, education, and local authorities. Professionals should follow this if they have a concern that someone is at risk of becoming radicalised into terrorism. Link to the Government's guidance site is here - Notice, check, share (accessible) - GOV.UK

More information is also available:

For JGA Staff via the Staffzone page 'What to do if you have a safeguarding concern

For JGA Learners on the Learner Zone - Safeguarding & Prevent - JGA

Report online material promoting terrorism or extremism at gov.uk – a link to reporting online material re Prevent

Further resources

A Channel 4 interview with Jack, a CHANNEL success story: The young man who was radicalised until Prevent prised him away from the far-right extremists

Educate Against Hate - Prevent Radicalisation & Extremism

UK Safer Internet Centre

ACT Early - Act against Counter Terrorism | Prevent radicalisation