

**educate.against.
~~hate~~**

**Parents. Protecting
your children from
~~extremism.~~**

What is the threat from extremism and terrorism in the UK?

The government is determined to defeat extremism and terrorism in all its forms. This includes extremism: violent and non-violent, Islamist and far right.

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The greatest current challenge comes from the global rise of Islamist ~~extremism~~. We see this in the violence of Al Qa'ida (AQ) and Daesh (also referred to as Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), Islamic State or IS).

But Islamist extremism is not the only threat. Today in the UK there are numerous active extreme right-wing groups, sharing an ideology centring on an intense hostility to minorities and a belief that violence between ethnic and religious groups is inevitable. Alongside antisemitism and racism, hostility to Islam has now become a common element of extreme-right ideology.

Why is extremism relevant to me?

As parents, you play an important role in helping to keep your children safe from the risks posed by extremist groups.

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As your children grow and become more independent, it is not unusual for them to take risks, explore new things and push boundaries.

This can mean that they are particularly vulnerable to extremist groups, who may claim to offer answers. There have been a number of tragic examples where young people have been influenced online by extremist groups and have travelled to Syria, or become involved with far-right groups.

How do people become radicalised?

There is no single model to radicalisation. Every person is different and the process is unique for each individual.



Vulnerabilities — personal factors that make an individual susceptible.

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Radicaliser — an individual who encourages others to develop a belief.

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Ideology — an individual is exposed to an idea, ideology or set of beliefs that appears credible and appeals to the person in question.

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Absence of protective factors that intervene in the process of radicalisation.

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Vulnerable to radicalisation.

Is my child vulnerable to radicalisation?

It is possible for any child to be exposed to extremist influences. Children from very different backgrounds have been radicalised, even those from stable homes, who were doing well at school. However, it's important to keep things in perspective and remember that for most young people, the risk that they will become involved with extremist groups is very low.

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To be in the best position to protect your child, you should be aware of the factors that may make them more vulnerable to ~~radicalisation~~. These could include:

- Struggling with their sense of identity**
- Difficult circumstances such as family tensions, low self-esteem or experiencing a traumatic event**
- Troubling external factors such as community tensions, events affecting their region of origin, or having friends or family who have joined extremist groups abroad**
- Involvement with criminal groups, experiences of imprisonment and/or poor reintegration into society**

What are the warning signs?

There is no single route to radicalisation. It can occur quickly, or over a longer period of time. Sometimes there are clear signs, and in other cases changes in attitude or behaviour are less obvious.

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Possible warning signs of radicalisation include:

- Changes in attitudes and opinions, including a susceptibility to conspiracy theories, argumentativeness or aggression and a refusal to engage with peers who are different to themselves**
- Changes in behaviour and peer group, including distancing themselves from friends, conversion to a new religion, a significant change of appearance and rejecting activities they used to enjoy**
- Secretive behaviour, including changes in online identity**
- Support for ~~extremist~~ ideologies and groups**

What should I do if I think my child has been exposed to extremism or radicalisation?

If you believe your child is at risk you should talk to them. There is advice on educateagainsthate.com about how to have that conversation and the NSPCC can also provide free, confidential advice if you would like to talk it through with someone.

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As well as talking to your child, you could raise the issue with their teachers, a friend or family member who knows them well. Explain your worries, and find out if they have noticed anything out of the ordinary. Your local police force or local authority can also provide advice and support.

If you think a child is in immediate danger or see or hear something that may be terrorist related, trust your instincts and call 999 or the confidential Anti-Terrorist Hotline on 0800 789 321.

For more information:

educateagainsthate.com

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