

Radicalisation and Extremism

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Introduction

The Prevent Strategy, published by the Government in 2011, is part of an overall counter terrorism strategy called CONTEST. The aim of the Prevent Strategy is to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

Most individuals, even those who hold extreme radical views, do not become involved in violent extremism and holding extreme views is not illegal. However it is recognised that the current threat from terrorism in the United Kingdom can involve the exploitation of vulnerable people, including children, young people and vulnerable adults to involve them in terrorism or activity in support of terrorism. This exploitation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern and should be approached in the same way as safeguarding children from other risks.

This policy and guidance is designed to support foster carers and adopters to keep children and young people safe against radicalisation and extremism and raise concerns if it is believed that a child or young person is at risk.

Policy statement

Barnardo's support children and young people in foster care and adoption to feel confident and proud of their personal identity, cultural and ethnic background, recognising this as key to becoming confident, well rounded adults. We also encourage children and young people to

develop and express their views and opinions, some of which may be strongly held and potentially radical. We also have a responsibility to safeguard children and young people from radicalisation and violent extremism and need to understand potential vulnerabilities and influences upon them which put them at risk. We are committed to working with children and young people to support them to make safe choices, build resilience and offer protection.

Definition

Violent Extremism is defined by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) as:

- "The demonstration of unacceptable behaviour by using any means or medium to express views, which:
- Encourage, justify or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of particular beliefs;
- Seek to provoke others to terrorist acts;
- Encourage other serious criminal activity or seek to provoke others to serious criminal acts;
- Foster hatred which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK."

There are a number of offences that can be considered when dealing with violent extremism. They include offences arising through spoken words, creation of tapes and videos of speeches, internet entries, chanting, banners and written notes and publications. The main offences employed to date have been soliciting murder and inciting racial hatred.

The Government's position is that Violent Extremism inspired by any organisation or individual, which advocates a distorted version of Islam, is considered to be the greater current threat to the UK by the security services. However, they also seek to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism including, but not limited to, that linked to a Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and that linked to Animal Rights movements.

Legislative and Policy Framework

The following legislation and policies impacting upon this policy and guidance include:

- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015;
- The Children Act 1989; as revised by the Children Act 2004;
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013);
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families, Department of Health 2000;
- Channel: Supporting individuals vulnerable to recruitment by violent extremists: A Guide for Local Partnerships, HM Government with Association of Chief Police Officers, 2010;
- The revised national CONTEST (Counter-Terrorism) Strategy 2011;
- Recognising and responding to radicalisation. Considerations for policy and practice through the eyes of street level workers. (Recora Institute)

Information Sharing and Confidentiality

There is a statutory duty for workers to share information where there are concerns about the safety or well-being of a child or vulnerable adult. Protecting children and young people from radicalisation and extremism requires careful assessment and working collaboratively across agencies as initially concerns may be inconclusive. Sharing information effectively and keeping the child and young person in focus should be the main aim of any interventions and services.

- The Data Protection Act 1998;
- The Human Rights Act 1998;
- The Common Law Duty of Confidence;
- The Crime and Disorder Act 1998;
- The Children Act 2004 Sections 10 and 11;
- The Caldicott Principles.

All information sharing must be conducted in accordance with a relevant legal power of duty, and be proportionate and relevant to the circumstances presented.

Keeping children and young people safe against radicalisation and extremism

Within foster care and adoption it is the carers and parent's relationship with the child or young person that helps keep them safe and supports their social development and educational progress.

Maintaining a positive relationship for carers and parents can sometimes be difficult as children grow and develop and seek an identity that may be different from that of their own family. Foster carers and adopters are in the position of caring for children and young people who may have different ethnic and cultural backgrounds and are who they are based on a range of personal experiences, values and norms developed with their birth families and local communities.

Valuing diversity is at the heart of positive and confident care giving but there is a challenge to respond to perceived vulnerability and be confident to raise concerns when there is concern over a child or young person's safety stemming from the adoption of more extreme or radical views. Currently, a number of children and young people have been persuaded to leave the country against the wishes of their families, or in secret, putting themselves in extreme danger.

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 a need to raise their self- esteem and promote 'street cred'
- They may be drawn to a group or individual who can offer identity, social network and support
- They may be influenced by world events and a sense of grievance resulting in the need to make a difference

How might this happen?

On line

The internet provides entertainment, connectivity and interaction. Children and young people may need to spend a lot of time on the internet while studying, for entertainment or communication such as

messaging sites such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Vine, Whatsapp. These can be useful and positive tools for children and young people but we need to be aware there are powerful programmes and networks that use social media to reach out to children and young people can communicate extremist messages.

Peer interaction

Young people at risk may display extrovert behaviour, start getting into trouble at school or on the streets and mixing with other children who behave badly. However this is not always the case as sometimes those at risk may be encouraged by people they are in contact with, not to draw attention to themselves. Carers and adopters may think a young person's behaviour is improving because they have become quieter or more serious, be dressing more modestly or mixing with better behaved children.

TV and media

The media provide a view on world affairs. However, this is often a very simple version of events which are in reality very complex. Therefore children and young people may not understand the situation fully or appreciate the dangers involved in the views of some groups

Recognising extremism- signs may include:

- Out of character changes in dress, 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- proscribed extremist groups such as the English Defence League

How can foster carers and adopters support children and young people to stay safe?

- Know where your child or young person is, who they are with and check this for yourself.
- Know your child's friends and their families
- Keep lines of communication open, listen to children and young people and talk to them about their interests
- Encourage them to take up positive activities with local groups you trust
- Talk to them about what they see on TV or the internet and explain that what they may see or read may not be the whole picture
- Allow and encourage debate and questioning on local and world events and help them see different points of view
- Encourage children and young people to show an interest in the local community and show respect for people of all faiths and backgrounds
- Help them to understand the dangers of becoming involved in situations about which they may not have the full information
- Teach them that expressing strong views and trying to change things for the better is fine but they should not take violent action against others or support those that do
- Be aware of your child's on line activity and update your own knowledge
- Discuss with young people what social media and messaging sites they are using
- Remind children and young people that people that they contact 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

Action to be taken by foster carers and adopters who have concerns

- Keep records of any concerning and/or changes in behaviour- as you would with any other safeguarding concern
- Discuss with your Supervising Social Worker any concerns, including impressions or suspicions that you might have about

- the child or young person concerning radicalisation and extremism.
- Follow our Missing procedures if a child or young person's whereabouts are not known, they are absent from the family home or they go missing
 - If you believe the child or young person poses an immediate risk to themselves or any other person you should ring the Police

Useful resource:

Educate against hate

This website gives parents, teachers and school leaders practical advice on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation

<http://www.educateagainsthate.com/>

<http://preventforfeandtraining.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Latest-Ofsted-Guidance-on-the-Prevent-duty-and-British-values-from-the-Ofsted-handbook-for-September-2015.docx>

Document History:

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