

Starting a Dialogue



To safeguard vulnerable individuals from extremism, it is important to have a conversation about potentially concerning attitudes and behaviours in the very early stages. This is often a daunting and difficult conversation to have. The aim of this guidance is to give families the tools and the confidence to start an open dialogue with someone whom they may be concerned about that will help them question, challenge and ultimately move away from extremist rhetoric and material.

When is a good time?

- Avoid starting a conversation in the heat of the moment
- Before you try to have a conversation be *clear* in your mind on the issue, so you can *articulate* your concern
- Choose a time that you are both *relaxed* and in a *neutral space*
- Try to ensure that it feels *natural* rather than pre-meditated or forced
- Perhaps ask them when would be a good time to spend some time together

What can I do to maintain a dialogue?

- This is a conversation not an interrogation
- Affirm you are talking to them because you *care*, you are not angry or judging them
- Ask *open* questions that don't have a 'yes' or 'no' answer to gain as much information as possible
- **Listen** to their views and reflect carefully before responding
- Try not to tell them what to think, but rather ask why they think this way and gently offer an alternative way of thinking with reasoned arguments
- Opinions aren't necessarily going to change over-night. This is an *on-going process* for parents to gently encourage individuals to be more critical about the types of material they are engaging with
- Remember, you are trying to model the type of caring and tolerant views and behaviour you want them to replicate

How can I make it relevant?

Rather than a direct approach, ease into the conversation with some leading questions

This might involve asking a question about something you are watching on TV Ask for their *opinion* on the matter to give them a sense of *autonomy* over the conversation

This might take a few attempts over a few different occasions to get the conversation flowing in the direction you want it

