

A guide for staying **SAFE** online

The internet is being increasingly misused for the propagation of extremist views and the demonstration of terror. Young people between the ages of **16-25** are most active on the internet and hence, also the biggest target group of extremist/terrorist groups. It is vital that everyone is equipped with the right information to protect vulnerable individuals from the threat of radicalisation at the earliest stage.



KNOW IT,

Social media is used by extremists and terrorist groups to **organise, propagate** and **recruit** new members.

These platforms enable extremist groups to spread content and form global networks quickly.

Extremists lure people into their ideology through sharing propaganda. It is common for extremist content to romanticise themes of **war, violence, adventure** and **heroism** and offer a sense of **purpose, duty** and **belonging**. Once extremists have secured a relationship with a vulnerable individual on mainstream sites, it is likely that the conversation will move to private/encrypted services for further indoctrination.

Young people exploring ideas and issues around their **identity** and finding a sense

SPOT IT,

of **belonging** may be more vulnerable to extremist influences. Signs that may be a cause for concern, if also accompanied by wider behavioural changes, include:

- Spending an excessive time on the internet and showing an unwillingness to engage in the offline world
- Creating a new online profile with a change in identity
- Switching screens and being secretive about what they are looking at
- Being distrusting of mainstream media channels
- Supporting conspiracy theories both online and offline

STOP IT!

7 SIMPLE STEPS TO HELP SAFEGUARD VULNERABLE PEOPLE ON THE INTERNET:

1. Set up parental controls on the home broadband and on any mobile networks
2. Make use of reporting tools on social media and the government online flagging system for inappropriate material
3. Set up times where internet access is restricted at home and encourage alternative interactive activities with family
4. If you are already on social media, ask to add them as a friend/follower, but affirm that you trust they use it appropriately
5. Remind them that they are accountable for the content they share online and that there are consequences once it is out in the public domain
6. Encourage them to be critical about what they see and share online. For example, analysing and cross-checking sources of information
7. Have an open and on-going conversation about their online activity to ensure that they feel at ease to share concerns about anything they have seen.