

A Message from Counter Terrorism Policing as COVID-19 pandemic is linked to greater risk of radicalisation

Counter Terrorism Policing (CTP) has warned that the impact of Covid-19 and social isolation could make some of society's most vulnerable people more susceptible to radicalisation and other forms of grooming.

But the National Coordinator for Prevent, Chief Superintendent Nik Adams, has emphasised the help and support available for families that may be struggling to cope.

The risk of radicalisation may increase for some vulnerable people, as the pandemic is driving young people to spend more unsupervised time online, where feelings of boredom and isolation may be exploited by negative influences and online groomers of all kinds.

Chief Superintendent Adams commented: *"Isolation may exacerbate grievances that make people more vulnerable to radicalisation – such as financial insecurity or social alienation.*

The extremists and radicalisers know this and, as ever, will look to exploit any opportunity to lead those people into harm, often using topical issues as hooks to lure them in."

Despite safeguarding leads continuing to provide support, the removal of key face-to-face interactions with them through schools, colleges and social work means Counter Terrorism Policing is calling on the public to help identify warning signs and have the confidence to seek help for those who may need it.

Chief Superintendent Adams said: *"Of course, I recognise that these are unsettling times for a lot of people and I know that families are under a lot of strain at the moment, but we're seeing great examples across the country of how communities are pulling together to support each other.*

"It's vital that safeguarding remains at the heart of that support, so we can remain vigilant as a society and make sure the vulnerable people in our communities stay protected from those intent on doing them, and us, harm.

"If you have concerns about someone you live with or are speaking to, we are here to help. Our [Let's Talk About It](#) and [Action Counter Terrorism](#) websites contain information and guidance. If you're worried someone is in immediate danger, you should always call 999."

Chief Superintendent Nik Adams is policing's National Coordinator for the Prevent programme – a multi agency support programme designed to identify those at risk of radicalisation by extremists and provide support towards a better path.