ONLINE RADICALISATION
MYTHS VS FACTS

INFORM
UNDERSTAND
SUPPORT
PREVENT

CLEARER CONVERSATIONS. A SAFER TOMORROW.

People often hear different things about online radicalisation. Separating fact from fiction can help us have informed conversations, challenge harmful narratives and support safer, stronger communities.

MYTH 1
"Radicalisation only happens on extremist websites."

FACT
Radicalising content can appear across a wide range of online spaces, including mainstream social media, video-sharing sites, gaming platforms, forums and messaging apps.

MYTH 2
"Only vulnerable young people are at risk."

FACT
Anyone can be influenced online. Radicalisers often tailor content to a person's interests, identity, concerns or experiences. While some people may be more susceptible, there is no single profile of someone who may become radicalised.

MYTH 3
"If someone is radicalised online, it happens overnight."

FACT
Radicalisation is usually a gradual process. A person may be exposed to increasingly harmful content over time, often through recommendations, repeated messaging or online communities that reinforce particular views. However, in a small number of cases, radicalisation can happen very quickly.

MYTH 4
"Sharing extreme content is just attention seeking."

FACT
People may share concerning material for different reasons, including curiosity, shock, humour or to provoke a reaction. It does not automatically mean they support extremist views, but it should never be ignored as it can be a sign that further conversation or support may be needed.

MYTH 5
"Online radicalisation is only about politics or religion."

FACT
Extremist narratives can come from different ideologies, grievances and causes. They may include political, religious, ideological or grievance-based beliefs. What they have in common is the promotion of hatred, violence or division.

MYTH 6
"You need to be an expert to spot concerns."

FACT
You do not need specialist knowledge. Changes in behaviour, secrecy online, repeated engagement with harmful content, intolerance towards others or a growing interest in extremist narratives can all be reasons to seek advice.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

You don't have to have all the answers. Small actions can make a big difference.

NOTICE
Be aware of changes in online and real-world behaviour, interests, language or attitudes.

CHECK
Consider the wider context and, if appropriate, speak to the person. Discuss concerns with a line manager, safeguarding lead or another appropriate professional.

SHARE
For professionals, follow safeguarding or Prevent procedures where appropriate.

If you are a parent, carer, family member or friend, seek support and advice through local safeguarding services or contact **ACT Early** if you are concerned about someone.

REMEMBER: Most online activity is positive and safe. The aim is not to monitor everything people do online, but to recognise when harmful influences may be affecting someone's wellbeing, safety or behaviour.