

Are you worried about a loved one supporting extremism?



**You are not alone -
We provide lived experience support, without
judgment, because we have been there.**



HANDBOOK

Email us at:
Info@exithate.org

For information please visit:
www.exithate.com/familysupport



Exit Family Support Handbook

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Welcome

Are you worried about a loved one involved in extremism?

You are not alone.



Involvement in extremism is a life lesson, not a life sentence.

At Exit Family Support, part of Exit Hate, we're former members (formers) of the Extreme Right-Wing (ERW) and parents of people who have been involved in extremism, so we get it!

Here to help, we offer support to anyone who has a loved one involved in extremism.

We offer guidance through our lived experiences and provide non directional support, so you can decide what is best for you.

We know it can be hard, so we never judge and have learned people can change, and that families are a vital part of the support needed to help people change and rebuild their lives away from hate and extremism.

Never alone. You can get support from us, or you can call **Act Early on 0800 011 3764** 24 hours a day, so support is always there.

For more information on Act Early, please visit:
www.actearly.uk

In this booklet you'll find facts about extremism, reasons why a loved one might go down this path and advice about how to engage. For more information please visit:
www.exithate.com/familysupport

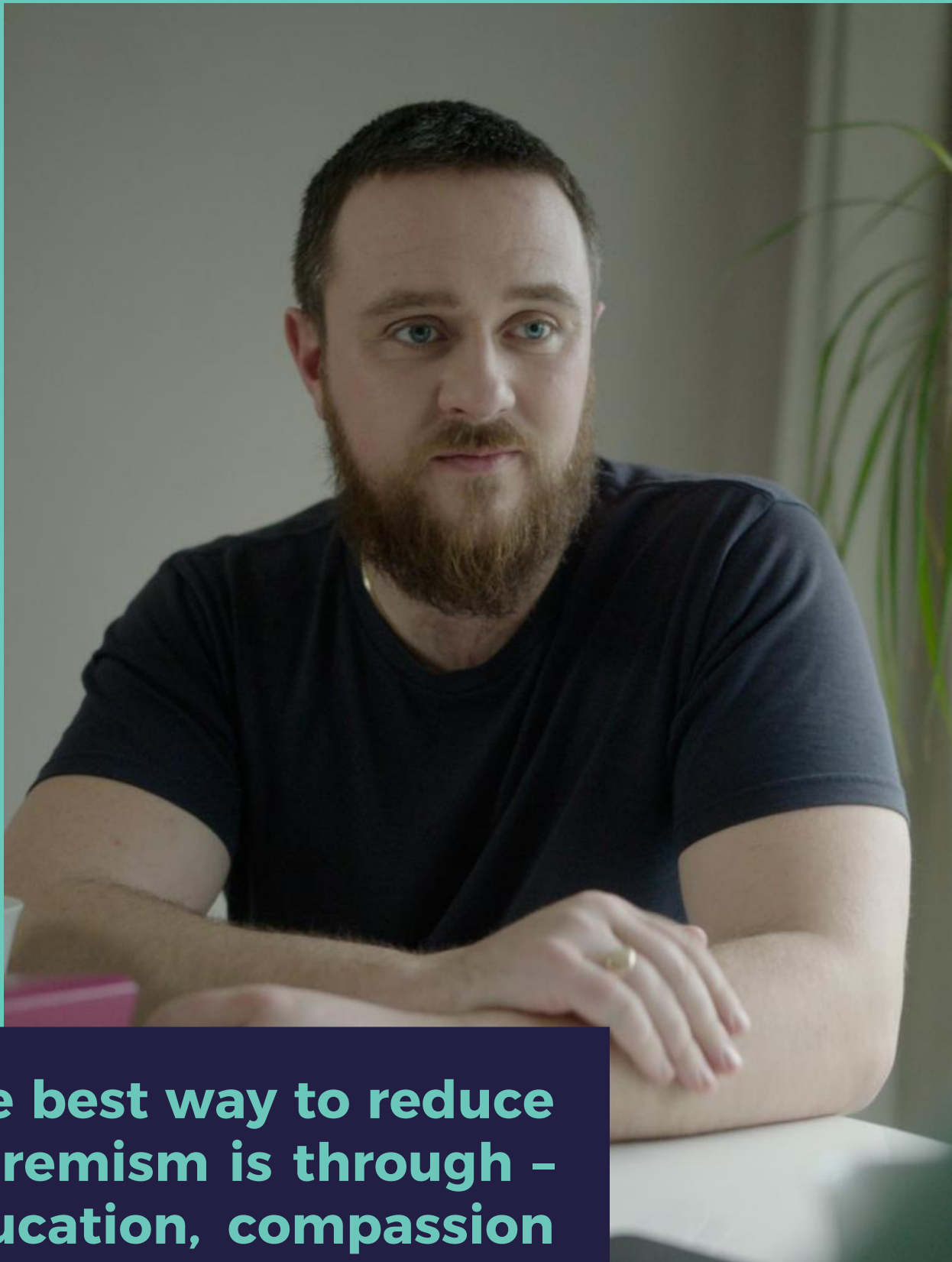
The Exit Hate Family Support Team

Understanding extremism

When you find out a loved one is involved with extremism, it is extremely worrying. It can also be an overwhelming new world, filled with unfamiliar words and ideas.

You'll have heard words like "extremism" and "violent extremism" in the news, but what do they really mean? Any idea can become extreme. It becomes a problem when a person or group's views pose a threat to other groups in society, for example, people of a certain race or nationality.

Just because a person or group has extreme views doesn't mean they will become violent, but the risk is there.



The best way to reduce extremism is through - education, compassion and understanding

So that you have a better understanding of extremism, below are some common types of ERW extremism. For more info, please speak to a member of our team.

Ethno-Nationalism

It's a bit of a mouthful to say, which is why you're more likely to have heard it called "extreme right-wing extremism" or "fascism" in the mainstream media.

This ideology, or set of ideas, has fixed thinking about how a nation should be – often excluding different cultures, races and religions.

Based on race, It's different from patriotism, which is positive, based on Place Not Race and can bring communities (including those born in this country and those who have adopted it as their own) together.

National Socialism

You may be familiar with this one. It's based on the ideology of Nazi Germany, which didn't die out in 1945. In fact, it's still supported by thousands of people all over the world, including the UK.

It advocates the idea that the white race is superior to all others and it sells itself as a "militant" or radical voice for those who feel ignored or left behind by society.

Eco-fascism

Combining neo-Nazi ideas with radical environmentalism, this movement is thriving online and influencing more and more young people. Followers claim to put the wellbeing of the white race and the planet first. They reject people of different ethnicities living together and believe that the only way to prevent climate change is to stop overpopulation.

Exit Hate is receiving more calls from young people about this type of fascist ideology than any other set of ideas and shows how important it is to listen to peoples concerns, so extremists can't manipulate peoples worries.

Religious Extremism

Extremists can use religious concepts to justify criminal activity and violence, for example Al Qaeda distorting Islam or the Ku Klux Klan perverting Christianity. The key thing to take away is that these groups do not represent these faiths. In fact, they operate outside of normal religious practices.

Some people in far-right circles have similarly also distorted a religion called Heathenism, which involves the worship of old Norse Gods, such as Odin, Thor and Sif.

There are many peaceful followers of Heathenism, but far-right worshippers have created racist versions of this religion and often use names like "Odinism" or "Wodenism" Followers believe you must be ancestrally white to embrace this religion.

Violent Extremism

The important thing to understand here is that not all radicals or extremists will become terrorists. But once a person is drawn into extremism (a process known as radicalisation) it becomes more likely, and that's why it's important to step in & act. The earlier you can do this ,the better – "early interventions" are an important part of keeping a loved one safe from the worst consequences of being part of the far-right.

**You're doing the right thing.
Remember, you are not on
your own. We're here to
support you on this journey
every step of the way.**



Why are young people radicalised?

There are many reasons a young person might be drawn into extremism.

Every story is different. In our experience, most get involved not because they hate, but because they care. They are worried about the world we live in and the far-right appears to offer simple answers. They get caught up in this “new worldview”.

The far-right are experts in recruitment. Groups will use different approaches, depending on their aims and ideology. Far-right recruiters may have similar interests, be friendly and appear normal.

We are seeing people recruited from all walks of life, but there are some factors that can increase the likelihood of young people becoming recruited by the far-right.

The issues we list here are things we commonly hear from people we mentor. They're not the last word on why a loved one might have been drawn into the far-right.

Everyone is unique and radicalisation is a complex process.

Grievance or injustice

For a young person to get involved with an extremist group, they need a “trigger”. Often this can be a sense of injustice or grievance.

These feelings can be caused by personal experiences of humiliation among peers or loved ones, feelings of failure, poverty or feeling sidelined and ignored by society. These feelings can cause a young person to look for answers. Extremists can exploit these feelings and offer an “alternative” – new friends, something to fight for and a sense of worth.

Recruiters can manipulate your loved one’s feelings of unhappiness. They’ll slowly isolate them from you and their friends and pull them further into extremism by saying no one else truly cares or understands.

Threat

Your loved one may feel that things they hold dear like family or their culture, identity and values are under threat. They may feel personally threatened, anxious or even that their life is at risk.

Extremist recruiters are masters of manipulating these feelings and concerns. They groom recruits by offering a way for them to articulate their fears and do something to defend them.

Identity, meaning and belonging

Extremist groups can draw in young people who are feeling isolated or alienated from others. These feelings can be as a result of experiencing bereavement, parents divorcing or breaking up or simply the ups and downs of adolescence.

These situations can cause young people to experience low self-esteem and confusion about who they are.

Extremist recruiters exploit this universal need for meaning and belonging to their benefit. They draw in young people by offering a cause or ideology that seems to offer what they are missing – simple answers, something to stand for and ready made relationships.



Other potential motivating factors:

Relationship issues

Struggling to get on with parents or other family members.

Difficult relationship with father/father figure

Finding it hard to get along with a father figure or cope with their absence.

Employment issues

Struggling to find work.

Personal crisis

Personal or family-related issues in the past, for example, addiction or domestic violence in the family home. A traumatic personal event, such as being kicked out of home or relationship break up.

Social interaction

Sadly, many young people we support were drawn into the far-right out of loneliness. A young person's need for social interaction, either online or in real life, and a desire to "fill the void" can make them vulnerable to grooming by extremist recruiters.

Violence

A tendency to want to dominate others.

Mental health issues

Not everyone who has mental health issues is an easy target for radicalisation, but for some young people it can be a factor. Trauma from difficult personal experiences as a child or getting into drugs as an older teenager can contribute to going down an extremist path.

Desire to be part of a group

Gaining a sense of identity, camaraderie and status.

Poor attitudes towards women

This can include violence and feelings of superiority.

You may be shocked to find your loved one holds such beliefs. You can help them by listening and offering alternatives where you can.

We can offer you the advice and support you need to help a loved one turn their lives around.

**For more information visit –
www.exithate.com**

Know the symbols



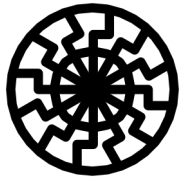
Extreme right-wing activists use lots of symbols. Members of groups use them to identify each other and for group bonding.

To help you know what to look for, we've shared some of the most common symbols. You may have seen some of these in your loved one's bedroom, on their social media profile or as tattoos.



Swastika

The official symbol of Hitler's National Socialist Party – better known as the Nazis. This is now used worldwide to promote National Socialism.



Black Sun

This symbol was originally created by the Nazis, and is today used by many neo-Nazis, who wish to combine Nazism and Paganism.



Celtic Cross

Used by Norwegian Nazis in the 1930s. This version is used worldwide by various far-right extremist groups. It is different from the Christian version of the Celtic Cross but highlights another manipulation by the far-right of a traditional, religious symbol.



SS Symbol

The Nazi symbol for the Schutzstaffel (SS), their paramilitary organisation, led by Heinrich Himmler. This was the symbol worn by those thought to be the elite of German National Socialism.



Odal Rune

Often used in connection with Odinism, a racist manipulation of the worship of the old Norse Gods (see religious extremism above). It's worth remembering that neither the rune, nor the worship of Norse Gods is racist, but their use by the far-right has created this association.



Death's Head

This is the symbol of the SS-Totenkopfverbände, Nazi concentration camp guards. Today, it's most associated with the Nazi group Combat 18 (C18).



Ku Klux Klan

According to the Ku Klux Klan (KKK), the blood drop represents the blood shed by Jesus as a sacrifice for the white Aryan race. The KKK originated as a secret society in the American South after the Civil War to develop white supremacy through terrorism and intimidation.



Life Rune

This is a symbol from the Runic Alphabet that stands for life, creation, birth, rebirth and renewal. It was also used by the Nazis on the graves of SS soldiers next to the soldier's date of birth. A Death Rune, an upside-down Life Rune was used next to the date of death.



Blood & Honour

This is the symbol for the international neo-Nazi and racist music network, which has chapters around the world.

To get a downloadable booklet with more signs and symbols please visit: <https://www.facebook.com/exithatetrust/>

Know the numbers

Numbers are used as codes by ERW groups. The numbers below can be indicators of extremist activity when used as graffiti, in writing or as tattoos.



14

This number represents the phrase “14 words”, the number of words in a rallying slogan for the white supremacist movement: “We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children.”



18

The first letter of the alphabet is A; the eighth letter of the alphabet is H. So, 1 plus 8, or 18, equals AH, an abbreviation for Adolf Hitler. Neo-Nazis use 18 in tattoos. The number is also used by Combat 18, the violent British neo-Nazi group that chose its name in honour of Hitler.



23

The twenty-third letter of the alphabet is W. White supremacists and racist skinheads use 23 in tattoos to represent W, as an abbreviation for the word “white”.



28

This number is used to represent Blood & Honour, the international neo-Nazi and racist music network.



88

The eighth letter of the alphabet is H. Eight plus 8 or 88 signifies HH, which is shorthand for the Nazi greeting, Heil Hitler. 88 is often found on hate group flyers and in both the greetings and closing comments of letters written by neo-Nazis and in their e-mail addresses.



4/20

The anniversary of Adolf Hitler's birthday is also used as a tattoo by racists and neo-Nazis, to affirm their belief in the ideals of National Socialism.



14/88

These two numbers are often used together to indicate a belief both in the ideology of National Socialism and the validity of the "14 words".

How to have difficult conversations



The crucial thing is to avoid arguing and being judgmental – even if you are shocked by some of the things your loved one is saying. Stay calm and keep talking to them.

Avoid arguing

Often what they are saying will be scripted – it isn't personal. Your loved one will have been taught to see anyone who challenges their new ideas as enemies – even family members. The far-right purposefully tries to make its members see the world differently. Groups will often say things like - 'You are either with us or against us.'

But this approach has weaknesses and we can help you challenge them.

Avoid using words like 'extremist', 'racist', 'Nazi', 'groomed' or 'radicalised' as terms like these can often make things worse and lead to confrontation.

Keep things casual

Like any conversation, avoid firing questions at your loved one. They will only get defensive. Instead, keep things friendly and casual. Ask your loved one if they'd mind sitting down for a chat because you want to hear more about their new ideas and would like to understand them. This non-aggressive approach gives your loved one a chance to voice their opinions. Remember, one of the aims of the far-right is to recruit, so they may see this as an opportunity to influence you.

Sit and listen

Try and get as much information from your conversations as possible. The more you know, the better informed you will be to understand what is happening.

Talk in a relaxed atmosphere and at a time that's good for both of you. If things get heated or emotional, take a break and make a cuppa. This will give both of you time to think about what has been said. Remember, you love each other, so take it easy. This is a time to show you care.

Helping your loved one make changes



Here to help you come up with a practical plan to help your loved one turn their life around. We're only an email away and you can also call Act Early for advice any time.

Having been through this ourselves we know it isn't easy and the impact of extremism is devastating on the victim, the individual involved and the family.

To counter this, we provide support from a lived experience perspective, never judging, we offer a listening ear and support from people who get it.

Seeking to offer alternatives, we offer support from a lived experience perspective, but also recommend if you have any safety or well-being concerns, that you contact - <https://actearly.uk>

This is so to get the best possible support from people who really understand. To contact ACT Early you can also call – 0800 111 3764. This line is open 24 hours every day.

Understanding you are not alone, it's important to stay strong and remember that you are seeking support to help them. Opening the door away from extremism isn't easy, but you are not alone, and support is here.

Finally, change is possible and to show you how, here is a simple testimony from a family we helped.

“We are all calmer, not arguing. He is better to live with and now has a good job with prospects and a stable relationship. I think we are getting there, and we will be together now as a family. There is hope for sure and we can't thank Exit Hate enough”.

Father of son supported by Exit Hate.

Recommended Resources

ACT Early

actearly.uk

0800 011 3764

ACT Early provides critical support 24 hours a day, where you can talk about your concerns in confidence. You won't be wasting our time, and you won't ruin lives, but you might just save them.

Understand Hate Symbols

adl.org/hate-symbols

This database provides an overview of many of the symbols most frequently used by a variety of white supremacist groups and movements, as well as some other types of hate groups.

iREPORTit App

apps.apple.com/gb/app/ireportit/id1527456430

iREPORTit by Raven Science is a smartphone app designed to make reporting online content to law enforcement quick, easy and secure. This app allows users to report online content anonymously.

Educate Against Hate

educateagainsthate.com

Educate Against Hate provides government advice and trusted resources for schools to safeguard students from radicalisation, build resilience to all types of extremism and promote shared values.

Families Can Make A Huge Difference

<https://www.facebook.com/exithatetrust/>

Families play a vital role in helping loved ones see the danger in supporting extremism can have on the individual and their families. To help, Exit has set up a dedicated page on Facebook to help people understand extremism better and also provide vital links for support in various areas. To find out more and keep updated, please like the above listed Facebook page and if you find any links that help you, please let us know and we will add them to the page.

Never alone, you can talk to Act Early 24 hours a day, speak to Exit for lived experience support or speak to someone at your loved one's school, college or University. You Are Not Alone.

***Exit Hate is *not* an emergency service. If you are in danger, please call 999 or for advice contact ACT Early.**



No Judgment – Just Support



With support, people can change

Seeking to empower people to create positive change, we listen and offer lived experience support, without judgment. Never alone, you can call Act Early 24 hours a day on 0800 011 3764.

For more information, please visit: actearly.uk

Want to connect with us? Please email us at **info@exithate.org**

To find out more information please visit **exithate.com/familysupport**

*Actors are used in all images displayed in this booklet.