



## SANDWELL PREVENT TEAM NEWSLETTER

### Prevent & COVID-19

Welcome everyone to December's Prevent newsletter! We continue to be available for support and keep you up to date for key information and guidance in relation to Prevent. Please do contact us for any queries.

You will be aware that from 2/12/20 the UK entered a new phase of regional Tier measures to control the spread of COVID-19. Sandwell are currently in Tier 3 and more information on these local measures can be found [here](#) by entering the post-code of your area. Please continue to follow [Government advice](#) to help control the spread of the virus.

### Prevent Project for schools!

This month we are spotlighting another of our project providers, Saltmine Theatre Trust. Saltmine have produced a theatre production named 'In Their Shoes' which looks at two groups who dislike one another, the 'Spots' and the 'Stripes'. Throughout the play, Saltmine sensitively explore issues around British Values, Extremism and getting along with others despite their differences.

The play is suitable for primary school children in years 4-6 and will be touring Sandwell schools in January. We have a [few spaces left](#) so if your school is interested in receiving a free performance and workshops from Saltmine, please contact our Project Coordinator Lauren Bond at [Lauren\\_Bond@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:Lauren_Bond@sandwell.gov.uk) on a first-come first-served basis.

### Key Dates/Updates

**16/11/20** - International day of tolerance

**25th-26th/11/20** - Child Online Safety for Parents & Prevent Webinars

*Thank you to all schools and partners that promoted the sessions to their parents/community. 89 participants were able to attend and benefit from the sessions.*

**18/12/20** - International Migrants Day

### Recent news

**'Islamist' referrals to Prevent rise for first time since 2016** - this is up 6% from the 18-19 reporting period. The largest group taken on by the Channel process, however, were related to Far Right related beliefs at 43%.

Almost 1,600 children under the age of 15 were referred to Prevent in 19-20 amid current warnings over online radicalisation.

Assistant Police Commissioner Neil Basu said that the COVID-19 pandemic had created a 'perfect storm' by leaving young and vulnerable people spending more time isolated and online, as more extremist material circulates than ever before.

### **Less Prevent referrals than expected**

National Prevent Police Coordinator Nik Adams also described the vulnerable being more vulnerable at this time. With this information in mind, we haven't seen as many Prevent referrals as we would expect throughout the pandemic.

On 26/11, BBC news reported on CTP's national message of increased vulnerability to Extremist ideologies due to the restrictions, however, a lack of social interactions is leading to a reduction of reports made to counter-extremism programmes.

Education has been the main referrer into Prevent over the last few years and the Prevent team would like to gently raise this awareness to settings, depending on the circumstance.

**DfE Coronavirus helpline: 0800 046 8687**

Available: Monday – Friday (8am – 6pm)

Email address: [DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk](mailto:DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk)

**The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) have issued [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Staying Safe Online guidance](#).**

### Act Early website

The newly launched Act Early [website](#) provides advice, guidance and support for anyone concerned that someone they know may be at risk/vulnerable to radicalisation.

#### **A message from Counter Terrorism Policing (CTP) (below)**

Dear Sir/Ma'am/all,

Counter Terrorism Policing has today (18/11/20) launched a new safeguarding website [www.actearly.uk](http://www.actearly.uk) to encourage family and friends to share concerns that a friend or loved one might be vulnerable to radicalisation.

#### What will the website aim to do?

Help increase Prevent referrals from family and friends into the police by increasing awareness, trust and understanding of the police's safeguarding role. Specifically by:

- \* Increasing awareness of where to go for further information and support
- \* Increasing awareness of the signs of radicalisation
- \* Increased understanding of and confidence in the Prevent referral process
- \* Encouraging referrals from concerned family and friends at an early stage
- \* Highlighting the police safeguarding role in Prevent

#### Act Early – Partner website

Counter Terrorism Policing have also launched an ACT Early [web-site](#) for partners. The website contains a toolkit (website text, promotional films, posters ect) and supporting materials which can be used by partners to promote the Act Early [website](#) to families / community members.

The ACT Early national police Prevent advice line for sharing concerns in confidence is **0800 011 3764** and is open 9-5pm daily.

### Facts

- **Did you know?** The term 'terrorist' is believed to have originated in France during the Reign of Terror (September 5, 1793 – July 28, 1794).
- **Totalitarianism** is the opposite of Liberal Democracy. These regimes seek to control every aspect of life within the state. Particularly associated with the Fascist, Nazi and Communist dictatorships of Hitler and Stalin.



**[We are live on Twitter!](#)**



**Please follow us @preventsandwell for our latest updates and news.**

### Conspiracy Theories

Throughout COVID-19, we've reported on a number of conspiracy theories which have also showed their hand within the recent UK approval of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccination, with some messaging and posting anti-vaccination narrative online. According to research by Kings College London and Ipsos MORI (Market and Opinion Research International) 34% of people interviewed had seen anti-vaccination messages on WhatsApp. In addition to this 40% of people who use WhatsApp or YouTube as a source of getting information, were more likely to believe in the conspiracy theories being perpetuated about COVID vaccines. Turning our attention to young people, 15% of young people who were a part of the study believed the vaccination was being developed and created so that pharmaceutical companies could make money. This further rose to 39% for young people who got their information from WhatsApp and 37% who utilised YouTube as an information source. Such information on social networking sites could undermine the effort to vaccinate the UK population. Professor Bobby Duffy, director of the Policy Institute at King's College London, holds the view that social networking sites need to do more to stamp out disinformation.

### ONLINE SAFETY

- The **BBC bitesize website**: 'How false information spreads' has a step by step guide to spot false information.
- **LGfL** are hosting some **parent online safety sessions** on Facebook in December. You can watch them again [here](#).

### Report Suspicious Activity

Counter Terrorism Policing's [ACT campaign](#) is for reporting anything you've seen or heard that could potentially be related to terrorism.

**Your actions could save lives...**

**For information, support or guidance on Prevent in Sandwell, you can email:**  
[Prevent\\_Inbox@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:Prevent_Inbox@sandwell.gov.uk)

**If you would like to talk to someone about any queries, concerns, or a referral do not hesitate to make contact with anyone from the Prevent Team:**

**Strategic Prevent Coordinator:** [Pardeep\\_Brar@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:Pardeep_Brar@sandwell.gov.uk)

0121 569 4725 / 07500 129348

**Prevent Education Officer:** [Justin\\_Nixon@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:Justin_Nixon@sandwell.gov.uk)

0121 569 4725 / 07790 396643

**TYS Prevent Officer:** [Sarfraz\\_Khan@sandwellchildrenstrust.org](mailto:Sarfraz_Khan@sandwellchildrenstrust.org)



**Merry Christmas from the Prevent team – we hope that you have a safe and enjoyable festive period!**