

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/safeguarding/workstreams/prevent/>

## Gaming and radicalisation

### Growth of the gaming market:

The **gaming market is growing rapidly** and has now surpassed both movies and music. It is popular globally with all ages and with all demographic groups. Gamers are spending much more time engaged in play, and increasingly it's seen as a social and community activity. **Accenture's [most recent research](#)** into the industry found that gamers spend an average of 16 hours a week playing games; 8 hours a week watching or participating in gaming streams, and 6 hours a week interacting in gaming forums and communities.

### Gaming communities:

These additional 14 hours a week that are spent not playing games are used to engage with other gamers via social media across platforms like YouTube, Baidu, Discord, Steam and Twitch. **This social side to gaming is a growing attraction.**

Nearly all gamers involved in Accenture's research reported that they gamed online to socialise with friends and meet new people. During COVID-19 in particular, these platforms have allowed gamers to have greater social interaction, connecting people globally. **Online gaming and related social media platforms often allow users to remain anonymous and there is often very little moderation.** Gaming culture can also foster grievances including oppressed and threatened identity, which is exploited by radicalisers or extremist groups.



### 'Gamification' and 'Mods'

**Gamification** is the use of game design elements within non-game contexts, such as in image boards or forums. It can be used to promote extremist ideologies and involves obscure memes and humour, controversial issues/racism/cruelty to entice participation.

Many games allow users to create their own modifications, or **'mods'**, or even creating their own games from **scratch**. This positive creative outlet can be abused by extremists. Games are increasingly realistic, interactive and offer the opportunity to personalise Avatars and can create a new self perception.

This can blur boundaries between the real and virtual world. Video games and gamification techniques are unlikely to be the sole factor in drawing an individual into extremism, but they may have impact when used alongside other radicalisation techniques.

### First Person/Ego Shooter Games

**First Person/Ego Shooter** games are particularly popular amongst extremists, creating the feeling that the player is actually in the perpetrator's place, controlling the action. The Christchurch attacks carried out by **Brenton Tarrant** in 2019 were gamified. The attacker livestreamed the atrocities from a helmet cam in a way that made the shooting look almost like a video game. Since this event, extremists have made references in online forums to their desire to "beat his high score".

### Who is most at risk of becoming a target?

The online world has also made it much easier for radicalisers to identify those who could be potentially influenced. Social media platforms are full of people looking for help and support, and those looking to exploit this can easily join these groups and befriend a vulnerable person. **Gaming is popular globally, with all ages, and people from all backgrounds can be radicalised.**

### What do you do if you have a concern?

**Notice:** Is there a change in the behaviour of an individual or do you see something that concerns you?

**Check:** Have you discussed your concerns with a colleague or manager?

**Share :** Share your concerns with the Prevent/Safeguarding Lead within your organisation.

**NOTICE CHECK SHARE**