



# Federal Bureau of Investigation

## Potential Indicators of Self-Radicalization and Extremist Activity on Campus

Each indicator listed below may be, by itself, lawful conduct or behavior and may also constitute the exercise of rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution. In addition, there may be a wholly innocent explanation for conduct or behavior that appears suspicious in nature. For this reason, no single indicator should be the sole basis for law enforcement action. The totality of behavioral indicators and other relevant circumstances should be evaluated when considering any law enforcement response or action.

### What Should I Consider Suspicious?

#### Potential Indicators of Self-Radicalization:

- Isolation/ruptured relationship with family
- Name change to one that is aligned with an ideology
- Change in physical appearance: dress, growing/cutting hair to a length or style atypical for the individual, adding or removing tattoos, or wearing symbolic jewelry
- Change in social affiliations; may disassociate from former friends/relationships in favor of people who share the new ideology
- Adherence to extremist religious doctrine and/or political affiliation
- Expressed perception that others threaten the individual and his or her new-found beliefs or religion
- Vocalized concern with policies affecting their new ideology

#### Potential Indicators of Extremist Activity:

- Communication with or links to extremists
- Consumption or sharing of videos and/or propaganda from radical media sources
- Active participation in blogs, chatrooms, or password-protected web site known to be frequented by extremists or individuals engaged in self-radicalization extremist views
- Pursuit of religious instruction from a person or institution promoting extremist views
- Acknowledged or implied membership in or association with radical groups
  - Active leadership role or increased participation within the radical group; participation in secret radical group meetings; views reinforced by other radical group members
- Weapons training; paramilitary exercises; acquisition of gear, weaponry, or explosive device components
- Internet research on potential targets for extremist acts, acquisition of technical capabilities for committing such acts, planning, and/or logistics
- Expressed acceptance, approval, and/or intent to conduct an attack(s)
- Use of cover terms or “code words” to mask true meaning of events or other illicit activities
- Suspicious foreign travel and/or suspicious travel patterns: one-way tickets, claims of lost passports

**Note:** There may be a legitimate and lawful reason why these indicators are observed. Some of the activities, taken individually, could be innocent. We are asking you to determine when that is *not* the case so that the circumstances may be examined by law enforcement professionals in a larger context to determine whether there is a basis to investigate. The activities outlined on this handout are by no means all-inclusive but have been compiled from a review of terrorist events over several years. *It is important to remember that just because someone’s speech, actions, beliefs, appearance, or way of life is different does not mean that he or she is suspicious.*

### What Should I Do?

#### Be part of the solution.

- ✓ Be aware of the indicators.
- ✓ Talk to peers and students. Ask questions, and listen to and observe their responses.
- ✓ Make notes of suspicious statements, correspondence, and other expressions of thought.
- ✓ Hold briefings with employees and remind them to remain vigilant.
- ✓ Watch for people and/or actions that are out of place.
- ✓ Do not jeopardize your safety or the safety of others.

#### Do not jeopardize your safety or the safety of others.

Preventing terrorism is a community effort. By learning what to look for, **you** can make a positive contribution in the fight against terrorism. The **partnership between the community and law enforcement** is essential to the success of anti-terrorism efforts.

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