

The freedom to voice political, religious or ideological beliefs is an important and healthy part of any democracy. It is the right of individuals to engage in free speech online, even when their messages may be extreme or unpopular.

Free expression & the internet

The internet has changed the way many of us communicate and interact with each other, both as individuals and as a society. The internet also plays an important role in allowing people to express their views freely on globally connected platforms.

It is **not** acceptable for any individual or group to use the internet to advocate the use of violence in any situation, including to further a religious, ideological or political cause.

Online advocation of violence

The majority of people access the Internet in a safe and lawful manner, but a small number of people may use the Internet to search out or post messages, video clips, images or content of a violent nature. Over time, this material can affect a small number of people in our community who may be vulnerable to justifying violence as an option.

There is no checklist to recognize people who may be vulnerable to justifying violence as an option by material viewed online. However, some behavioral signs may be useful to help family members, friends and members of the public to seek assistance if they are concerned somebody they know may be planning to commit a violent act.

These signs may include:

- Becoming increasingly secretive about online viewing habits
- Using online social networking platforms such as Facebook or Twitter to promote violence or other criminal behavior to advance a cause
- Downloading large amounts of violent promoting content such as:
 - Online instruction and training manuals about making explosives or other methods to undertake violence, and/or
 - Violence promoting literature, images and/or video clips that advocate the use of violence or other illegal behavior to promote a cause.

WHEN TO CALL 9-1-1:

If you are aware of a serious threat online, report it. In the event that someone indicates they are going to harm themselves or other people, this should be taken seriously and must be acted upon immediately by calling 9-1-1 or your local law enforcement agency.