



Safety Net Report

Executive Summary

Digital media can be a challenging landscape for anyone to navigate, but especially so for people with neurological conditions (e.g. stroke, brain injury, etc.) or who are neurodivergent (e.g. ADHD, autism). At a time where there are many different online platforms on which misinformation, extremist beliefs and scams can proliferate, it can be very difficult for our clients to stay safe. It is widely recognised that in the past decade, conspiracy theories and fake news sources have spread hugely, particularly online.

Our Safety Net project has delivered workshops, primarily to neurodivergent teenagers and to adults who are carers or who work in social care, educating participants about these potential dangers, and discussing how they can keep themselves—and others—safe.

Workshop material has included content on a wide variety of material, including: scams, grooming, catfishing, fake news and the manosphere.

Ultimately, we have delivered workshops to 449 clients in total, and data from post-session questionnaires and focus group interviews shows that we have had an impact on participants' awareness. It is difficult to know whether this will become long-term behavioural change, since our interventions have been limited to single workshops. If we were to continue this project, we would focus on a smaller number of participants, working with them over a longer period of time in order to properly track long-term impact.

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About The Brain Charity

Based in Liverpool, The Brain Charity provides practical help, emotional support and social activities to anyone living with a neurological condition, as well as their family, friends and carers. We are unique in that we support people no matter which neurological condition they live with.

There are over 600 neurological conditions in total. Many are well-known and all too common, such as dementia, stroke, epilepsy, traumatic brain injury and multiple sclerosis. There are also very many conditions that only affect an unlucky few. For someone diagnosed with a rare condition such as trigeminal neuralgia or Alice in Wonderland Syndrome, life can become very lonely and frightening.

The impact of a diagnosis can be devastating and wide-ranging. Clients can lose control of their health and their lives. Many face unemployment, poverty and social isolation as a result.

We were set up 30 years ago out of a recognition that not enough support was being provided once neurological patients left the hospital setting. The genesis of The Brain Charity came from doctors at The Walton Centre NHS Neurological Hospital, who saw a need for patient to receive information, advice and support in the community.

Our mission is to provide activities, advice and support that improves people's wellbeing and quality of life. We champion neurodiversity, providing training to organisations across the sectors. We have a big ambition to fight loneliness, we guide people through the hard times and help them reach their potential.

Our core values are:

- Kindness – we welcome everyone to our charity.
- Commitment – we will travel side-by-side with everyone throughout their journey, no matter how complex, how long or how difficult.
- Authenticity – we are a community-led organisation.
- Courage – we are enthusiastic about taking on new challenges.
- Optimism – we believe that equality for people with neurological conditions is now within reach and will strive every day until prejudice and lack of opportunities are removed from society.

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Background

The Brain Charity is at the forefront of the current neurodiversity movement, working to support people with neurological conditions and who are neurodivergent to help them reach their potential. We also work to improve acceptance and understanding in society of neurodiversity, including the additional challenges that neurodivergent individuals face.

The Brain Charity's initial project commissioned by Ofcom as part of their Making Sense of Media initiative stemmed from our recognition that many of our clients generally had lower levels of digital literacy compared to the general public, and this therefore led them to be more susceptible to online scams or fraud and more likely to be targeted. This is something that had been identified in previous community consultations, and although we offer I.T. classes as one of the activities we run from our centre, clients had requested more specific sessions on certain aspects of digital life.

We had identified that with regards to media literacy, our clients often find it difficult to:

- **Identify unreliable information themselves:** 32% of disabled individuals lack basic digital and media literacy skills, and many people with a neurological condition have not been taught critical thinking skills through education.
- **Make rational decisions around online interactions:** Loneliness and social isolation is one of the most common issues affecting our clients: in our last community consultation in 2022 we found that 65% of respondents were regularly affected by loneliness. This desire for human contact can leave them particularly vulnerable regarding online interactions; for example, several of our clients have been the victims of romance scams.

- **Identify risks without support**, such as a carer who is digitally literate or skills, and who can spot, double-check and advise against risks.

In addition, although The Brain Charity is a national charity, we have strong Liverpool roots (approximately 80% of our clients come from either Liverpool and Knowsley), and this project has been aimed at people from the wider Liverpool area. This is because these are areas of high deprivation (Liverpool and Knowsley are the 4th and 3rd most deprived local authority areas in England), which tend to experience additional disadvantages that compound digital illiteracy. Many are less likely to use technology due to either negative perceptions or inexperience due to the costs of digital technology. Not only do they find themselves socially isolated, but they also miss out on the benefits of online activity.

We would deliver this through a combination of:

- Group media literacy sessions delivered to clients.
- One-on-one support to clients with specific needs.
- Group media literacy sessions delivered to carers and care workers.

As we began to promote this project, however, we did not receive the uptake which we had envisioned when initially designing Safety Net. Although this was disappointing, what emerged from our first delivery sessions enabled us to pivot and deliver a project that was more cutting edge.

We redesigned our project, keeping the focus on helping neurodivergent and vulnerable individuals identify unreliable information (including scams), but with a heavy focus on:

- Common online scams.
- Online grooming.
- Extremist beliefs, such as common conspiracy theories found online, and the manosphere.


These are very hot-button issues which we found neurodivergent individuals are disproportionately vulnerable to.

Examples of Workshop Content



STAYING SAFE ONLINE

- Common types of online scam
- Online grooming
- Extremist beliefs
- How to report issues





WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

- The anonymity the internet affords disabled people can be very liberating.
- The internet is not a 'safe space' and should be handled similarly to the "real world".
- Neurodivergent people particularly vulnerable.

A man with a brain injury was scammed out of all of his money. He and his mother are calling on social-media companies to protect disabled people from con artists.

Anthony Dawson Jun 2, 2021 9:04 PM



Office on the web **ISM AND GROOMING.**

'Staggeringly high' number of autistic people on UK Prevent scheme

Terror laws reviewer says criminal justice outcome not always right one for people with the condition



© Lloyd Gunton, who has autism, was jailed for life after declaring himself an Islamic.

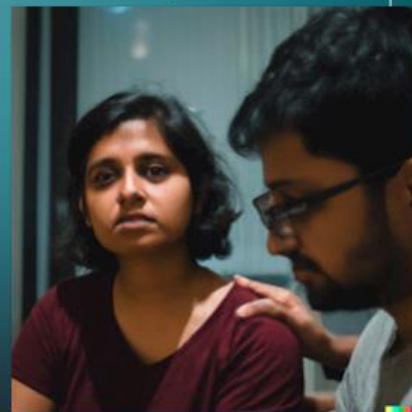
RADICALISATION AND AUTISM.

- Autistic people can be at risk of radicalisation due to a combination of factors, including social isolation, difficulty Office on the web Frame communication and understanding social cues, a desire for structure and routine, and a tendency towards obsessive interests or fixations.
- These factors can make them more vulnerable to online propaganda and extremist ideologies, which can provide a sense of purpose, belonging, and structure.



MATE CRIME.

- Office on the web Frame
- Mate crime can happen anywhere.
- Neurodivergent kids/teens at risk.
- Trustworthy nature exploited.
- "Befriend" then exploit the person.



CLICK TO ADD TITLE

A survey of 225 women found that "9 autistic women out of 10 are sexually victimized" — Frontiers behavior neuroscience 2022

This is 3x the average rate...

Evaluation Aims and Scope

Our evaluation has aimed to measure the impact of our sessions on five elements:

1. Participants' ability to recognise scams online (or those received via email or text).
2. Participants' ability to protect themselves from online scams.
3. Participants' understanding of more serious matters online e.g. grooming, catfishing, etc.
4. Participants' understanding of conspiracy theories, fake news and the manosphere.
5. [To carers and social workers only]: Participants' confidence in being able to support others to stay safe online.

In total, our project has delivered 29 workshops, engaging a total of 449 people on the Safety Net project. This breaks down to:

258 people who are neurodivergent or live with a neurological condition.

191 people who are carers or work in social care.

We did not carry out monitoring on every single cohort who attended Safety Net workshops, but on a roughly indicative 236 participants (137 neurodivergent participants, and 99 carers).

We asked delivered the following four/five question survey after each workshop:

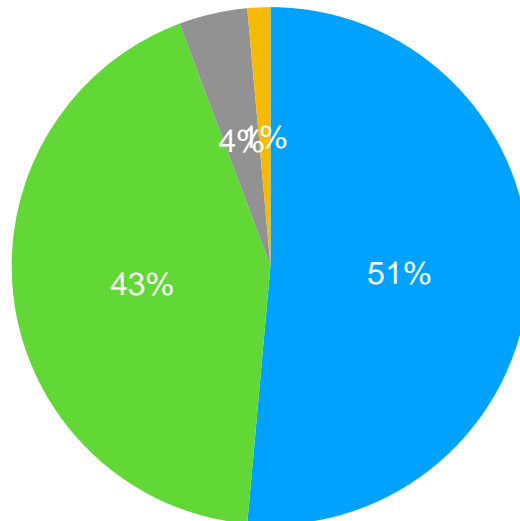
1. How much more prepared/equipped do you feel to spot scams online or through email/text?
2. How confident do you feel in protecting yourself from online scams compared to before the workshop?
3. How knowledgeable do you feel in terms of understanding more serious matters online (e.g. grooming, catfishing, etc.)?
4. How knowledgeable do you feel in terms of understanding conspiracy theories, fake news and the manosphere?
5. How much more confident do you feel in being able to protect others to stay safe online compared to before the workshop?

We also carried out several interviews with focus groups who had attended workshops. These were carried out by Brain Charity staff members or volunteers who had not been involved in delivery of the Safety Net project, in order to reduce bias and make interviewees feel at ease.

Findings

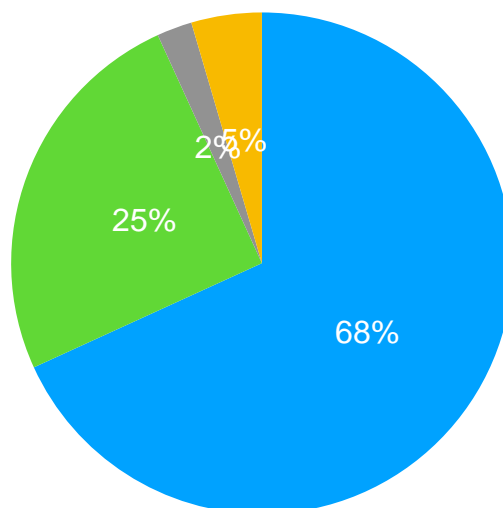
1. How much more prepared/equipped do you feel to spot scams online or through email/text?

■ Very ■ Fairly ■ Don't Know ■ Not Very



2. How confident do you feel in protecting yourself from online scams compared to before the workshop?

■ Much More ■ A Bit More ■ Stayed the Same ■ Don't Know

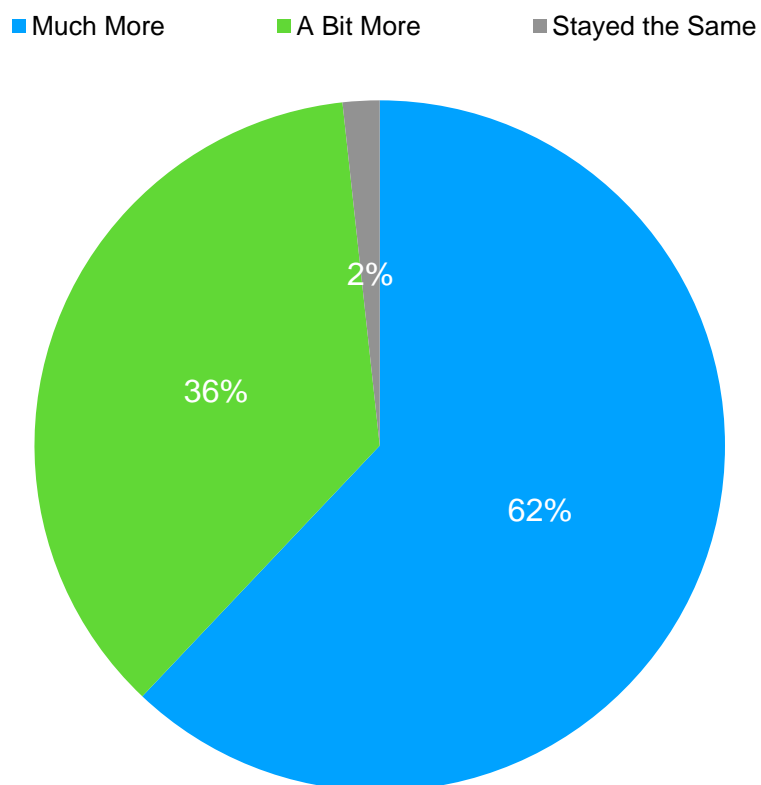


Here we can see that almost all (approx. 95%) of participants reported that, following a Safety Net workshop, they felt more equipped to notice online scams, with around half of all participants saying that they were very confident in this area.

Of all the areas covered by our project, scams was the one in which we found that clients had the most prior knowledge and understanding. It was the links between neurodivergent conditions and increased risk that people in our focus group interviews commented on as being particularly enlightening: “Finding out about ‘how’ scams/exploitation work on a practical level and then ‘why’ neurodivergent people are more susceptible was so useful from a professional and personal perspective” - from a carer.

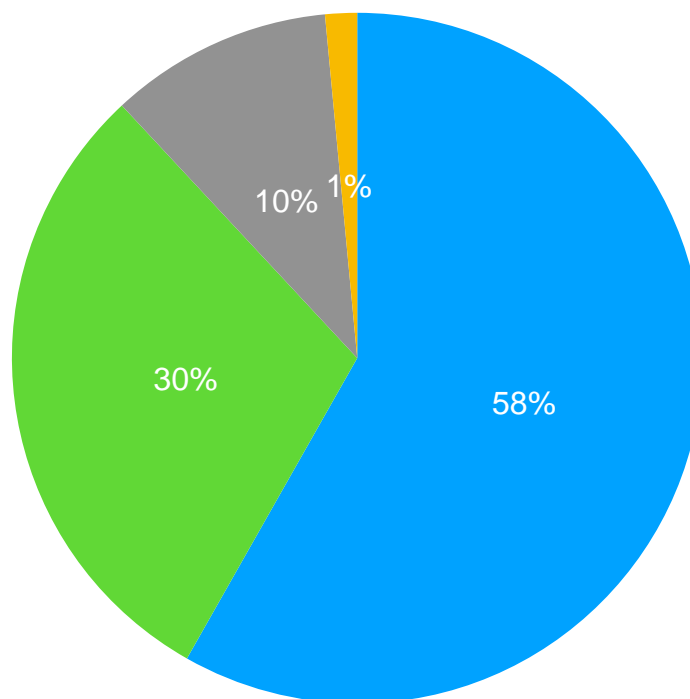
Several of the focus group participants who worked in social care or were a carer themselves remarked that they had had their eyes opened to just how wide the range of potential scams that their children or the people they care for might be at risk from.

3. How knowledgeable do you feel in terms of understanding more serious matters online (e.g. grooming, catfishing, etc.)?



4. How knowledgeable do you feel in terms of understanding conspiracy theories, fake news and the manosphere?

■ Much More ■ A Bit More ■ Stayed the Same ■ A Bit Less



The sections of the workshops that focused on more serious matters online, conspiracy theories and the manosphere proved to be most divisive. Although the data from post-session questionnaires demonstrates that most (89%) left with increased understanding, many workshops did feature healthy and robust debate from many participants (particularly in sessions delivered to teenagers in school), often presenting challenging views themselves.

In one of our focus groups comprised of neurodivergent school children aged 15-18, one participant mentioned that, in the workshop they had attended, one attendee had held similar views to Andrew Tate and other leading figures in the manosphere. This should perhaps not be surprising: almost half the young men aged 16-24 (45%) polled by HOPE Not Hate reported that they held a positive view of Andrew Tate, and significantly more had heard of him (79%) than Prime Minister Rishi Sunak (58%).

Some of the respondents in our focus group worried that this could therefore have the opposite of the workshop's intended effect, that more participants could be influenced to take his views seriously, views that have been widely condemned as misogynistic.

All of the young attendees were regular users of social media, and one of the ways in which they engage with media is by sharing the content they see on social media with their friends: "I say to my friends, if you see a funny video, send it to me. You're living through a kind of social media world, as opposed to, you know, maybe an older generation would go off [the app] after looking at it. I'll share this with you via WhatsApp. That's what we do." Another respondent, however, said that they did not only share content that aligned with their own personal beliefs, for example stating that they might share an Andrew Tate video, not because they agree with the content, but simply to share it more widely with their friends. In fact, they appeared particularly eager to share this type of content, rather than others that might perhaps be considered purely entertainment (e.g. the example cited was cat videos, which they said 'always get shared everywhere'), perhaps because they considered this

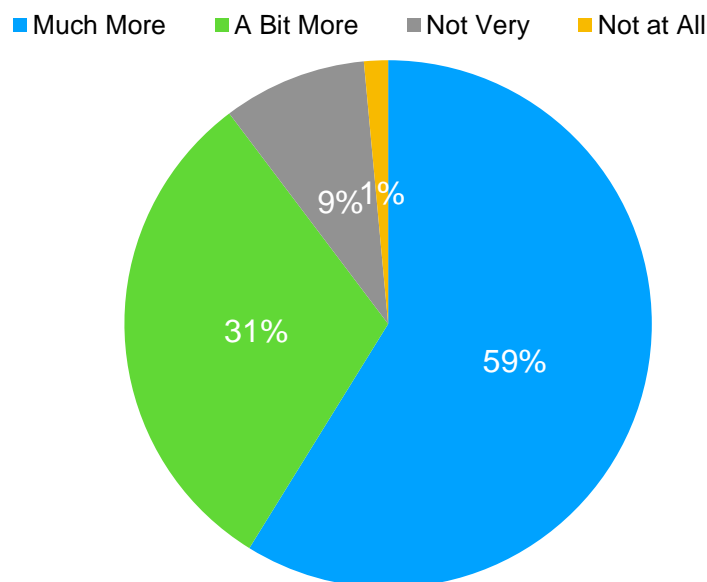
type of content to be deserving of a larger audience. They believed that they were sharing the videos from a detached, non-partisan position.

This was interesting since it demonstrated how people are able to access this type of content from a wide range of sources, including their friends who might not necessarily agree with it. This may be particularly challenging for neurodivergent people, particularly those who might not fully understand the political ramifications of doing so.

The material on conspiracy theories was particularly engaging for many participants: it is the kind of topic that many neurodivergent individuals, particularly those with hyperfixations, can take huge interest in—something recognised as both a positive and a potential danger. Some participants left the workshops claiming that the material on conspiracy theories was not relevant to them (“I don’t think this made any difference to me”—note that 10% of questionnaire respondents said that their understanding of conspiracy theories stayed the same). However, these views were a minority, and the data from the questionnaires demonstrates that most attendees found the material enlightening and useful.

The importance of questioning the provenance of online information was emphasised, something that can perhaps be difficult for some neurodivergent people, who may at times be disposed to take things at face value. For example, many popular conspiracy theories on the internet were mentioned during workshops—but it was emphasised that none had been verified by any reputable sources.

5. How much more confident do you feel in being able to protect others to stay safe online compared to before the workshop?



From our focus groups, we have found carers and people working in social care have benefitted the most from confidence boosts in being able to protect the people they support. Some certainly found it scary at first, since they were having their eyes opened to just how many potential dangers and pitfalls there are online for neurodivergent individuals. However, the data above reflects how 90% of participants left with increased confidence to help others

stay safe, even if this just meant challenging them on something that they might have read online.

The underlying problem continues to be a low level of general understanding around neurodivergence. For example, it was discussed that in schools, it can be very difficult for teachers to pick up instances where students are facing online dangers, not only because they can be very secretive about those things, but also because students' neurodivergence may not always be visible. They may be masking, they may not be diagnosed, or the staff may not be trained in neurodivergence.

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Legacy, Learning and the Future

In addition to delivering the workshops, we have created two resources for future use, which will be submitted along with this report:

1. An extensive glossary of terms related to online safety, including websites, notable figures spreading fake news or who are members of the manosphere, common terms used in extremist online communities that target neurodivergent individuals, and a list of links to reputable sources on this topic. This is meant to be a helpful guide so that people, especially carers, know what to watch out for.
2. A podcast series, hosted by our Safety Net Media Literacy Trainer Alistair Barfield, interviewing experts in the fields of extremism and online safety.

Overall, we believe that the Safety Net project has managed to make some impact on local neurodivergent young adults, particularly through helping to educate people working in healthcare and social care. Our largest delivery partner has been the NHS, and we have delivered sessions to all the autism teams for Merseyside, as well as the autism champions and school nurses for Knowsley, Liverpool and Sefton.

The project's major strength has been the fact that it was delivered by someone who is autistic themselves. Each session included time to ask questions, and we found that not only did participants ask questions about workshop content, but also just wanted to speak to someone with lived experience of neurodivergence. It is incredibly important to have someone from the community elucidating the problem and working to find solutions.

If we were to run this project again or continue to deliver, we would take a longer-term approach, focusing on how engagement with the material impacts behaviour and online media literacy habits over a period of time.

The fact that we have been able to engage 449 individuals from a range of different groups and organisations in only a short fixed-term project demonstrates the huge demand for this kind of training: neurodiversity is one of the current buzzwords, and we should not pass up this opportunity to shape their experience of online media to be safer and more fruitful.



GLOSSARY+



The use of jargon and specific language appears to be a common theme with many online groups within the manosphere, alt-right and anti-feminist circles online, this document is intended to explain this jargon and show notable problematic individuals within or near to these communities.

This is a working document that is liable to be changed and be updated.

Glossary of terms:

(A quick note on the terminology used: Not every word/phrase used in this glossary is used solely by extremist groups, many are online terms that are used outside of these circles. However, due to the online nature of these organisations/ideologies this language is prevalent in extremist circles, therefore their inclusion in this list remains valid.)

Websites/apps/channels:

4chan – an anonymous imageboard website where users can post and discuss various topics, including video games, politics and humour. Due to its entirely anonymous nature, it has become a hotbed for the alt-right and misogynistic content. 4chan is well known for its autistic community.

Bitchute – A video sharing platform designed as a completely unregulated alternative to YouTube, as a result of this Bitchute continues to be the internet's largest platform for hate speech, particularly far-right, misogynistic and white nationalist content.

Breitbart News – An American far right news organisation, YouTube channel and website focusing on conservative, Christian and anti-Islamic rhetoric.

Facebook – the world's largest social media platform, however Facebook is not popular with young people and millennials. Facebook has private messaging features and private communities that require membership to join, both of which can be used for grooming.

Fresh and Fit Podcast – A podcast and YouTube show hosted by Myron Gaines and Walter Meekes, focused on dating advice and fitness. It is a vehicle for the hosts to give female guests free alcohol and espouse anti-feminist rhetoric.

GAB – A microblogging website designed to be a completely unregulated alternative to Twitter, conspiracy theories and right-wing content are completely unchecked on this platform.

Instagram – A social media platform where users post pictures and short videos. Notably Instagram also has an instant messaging feature where private conversations may be had and grooming can take place.

Info Wars – A far-right/alt-right website and daily news show focused on perpetuating conspiracy theories and selling supplements.

Manosphere Highlights Daily – A prominent YouTube channel that focuses on showcasing clips of famous manosphere influencers or women/feminists framed to look stupid.

Rebel News – A Canadian owned far-right news website, focusing on anti Islamic rhetoric it describes as ‘counter-jihad’

Rumble – A video sharing platform that attempts political neutrality, despite this it continues to be a hotbed for conspiracy theories and hateful rhetoric.

Snapchat – a popular multimedia messaging app that allows users to share photos, videos, and messages with their friends, the notable feature of Snapchat is the ability for users to send temporary messages and pictures that ‘self delete’ upon being watched.

Telegram and Kik – instant messaging platforms, often contact will be initiated by groomers on other platforms and moved to Telegram or Kik to continue the conversation as these platforms are unregulated.

Threads - a Meta (Facebook) owned microblogging platform, designed to be a rival to Twitter.

TikTok - a social media platform that allows users to create and share short videos its ubiquity with young people cannot be overstated, it can be used to groom young people or spread extremist beliefs and conspiracy theories. TikTok is owned by Chinese corporation Byte Dance and is not regulated in the same manner as other video sharing platforms and social networks.

Twitter –a microblogging platform that allows users to interact with and post short ‘tweets’ most notably it also has a direct messaging feature. Twitter has large vocal groups of fans or ‘stans’ of celebrities and pop artists, these communities can be a hotbed for grooming.

WhatsApp – A meta (Facebook) owned messaging platform, WhatsApp is notable for its large ‘group chats’ which can be used to spread misinformation and conspiracy theories, this is particularly prominent in developing nations. YouTube – A video sharing platform, both short and long form content is uploaded to YouTube, vulnerable people can be radicalised on YouTube and it has been a notable breeding ground for numerous conspiracy theories and extremist beliefs.

Notable Persons:

It may appear as though American personalities are solely responsible for the growth of extremist ‘manosphere’ content. Please be warned that this list is not definitive and just represents the most notable personalities/accounts currently active. This is also an English language specific guide.

(As of 01/07/2023 Andrew and his brother Tristan have been arrested and officially indicted with Human Trafficking and Rape in the Romanian criminal justice system).

Steven Crowder – An American alt-right comedian and internet personality, notable for his ‘louder with crowder’ call in show and his ‘change my mind’ series.

Hannah ‘Pearl’ Davis – A social media personality and youtuber who espouses anti-feminist extremist beliefs (Often referred to as the female Andrew Tate).

Lawrence Fox – Actor and political commentator. Owner of the Reclaim Party, he continues to push right wing populist sentiment, engaging in anti LGBTQ protests.

Nick Fuentes – Nick Fuentes is a well known white supremacist and far right political commentator, previously a youtuber with a considerable following, he was banned in 2020 due to anti semitic remarks.

Paul Golding – Founder and current leader of the far-right fascist Britain First party, convicted for religiously aggravated harassment he continues to be a notable figurehead in British fascistic politics.

Russell Hartley – A popular youtuber/Tiktoker & social media personality who gives dating advice and markets himself as a dating expert.

Alex Jones – Far right journalist, conspiracy theorist and founder of Info Wars. Convicted in 2022 of falsehoods relating to the Sandy Hook shooting.

Aaron Marino aka **alphamofficial** – A TikTok/social media star his content focuses on dating advice and grooming.

Gavin McInnes – Journalist and social media personality, co-founder of Vice media and founder of The Proud Boys a far-right neo-fascist anti progressive organisation.

Candace Owens – A journalist and outspoken self identifying alt-right Christian conservative, Candace Owens’ frankness and black female voice is unique in the manosphere.

Tommy Robinson – Far right, anti Islam activist and convicted criminal. Notable for being a member of the BNP (British National Party) and founding the far right organisation EDL (English Defence League).

Joe Rogan – Comedian, actor and Mixed Martial Arts pundit, known for his UFC commentary and podcast ‘The Joe Rogan experience’ which as of August 2023 has the most weekly internet listeners of any podcast.

Kevin Samuels – Is a deceased internet personality and image consultant, famed for his livestreams wherein he would invite African American women onto his stream then proceed to highlight why they’re experiencing trouble with men and how sexually attractive he finds them.

Ben Shapiro – An alt-right spokesperson, lawyer and journalist. Notable for his series of debates with students in American universities.

Andrew Tate – Social Media personality, adult internet entrepreneur and ex kickboxing champion

Tristan Tate – Brother of Andrew Tate and member of his entourage, also espouses the same beliefs.

Andrew Wakefield – A disgraced former gastroenterologist famous for his observation that the MMR (Measles Mumps and Rubella) vaccine ‘caused’ autism. His title as Dr was removed upon investigations into his conduct.

Paul Joseph Watson – A British internet personality and alt-right journalist, notable for his professional relationship with Alex Jones.

Notable conspiracy theories

Bilderberg group – The Bilderberg Group is an annual private conference political leaders and experts from various industries including politics and finance. The meetings are closed to the public and the press, and participants are sworn to secrecy about what was discussed. The group has been the subject of many conspiracy theories over the years claiming that the Bilderberg Group is a secret society that controls world events². However, there is no evidence to support these claims

George Soros – An Hungarian-American businessman and philanthropist, known for championing progressive leaning causes. He is often used as a target of rage in the far-right and has innumerable conspiracy theories citing him as both the figurative and literal devil.

Lizard people – A conspiracy theory that has gained traction since the early 1990s and is spread by British author and ex football player David Icke. They believe that the world is controlled by a secret cabal of intergalactic lizard people. While Lizard people isn’t an inherently anti-Semitic conspiracy theory, some question whether the use of the term ‘lizard’ is dehumanising Jewish people.

Pizzagate – a conspiracy theory that went viral during the 2016 United States presidential election cycle. The theory claimed that high-ranking Democratic Party officials were involved in a child sex trafficking ring centered around Comet Ping Pong pizzeria in Washington, D.C.

QAnon –an American political conspiracy theory and political movement. It originated in the American far-right political sphere in 2017. QAnon centres on fabricated claims made by an anonymous individual or individuals known as "Q". Its main conspiracy theories claim dozens of politicians and A-list celebrities work with governments around the globe to engage in child sex abuse.

The Rothschilds – The Rothschild family is a wealthy Jewish family. The family is known for its wealth and has been the subject of many conspiracy theories over the years normally perpetuated by members of the alt-right/far right. These theories claim that the Rothschilds control the world’s wealth and governments

Sovereign citizen movement - The sovereign citizen movement is a loosely organized collection of groups and individuals who believe that virtually all existing government in the world is illegitimate. They claim to be answerable only to their particular interpretations of the common law and believe that they are therefore not subject to any government statutes or proceedings, unless they consent to them.

Terms

The terms used by these extremist communities are not unique to them, a lot of the language used is frequently expressed online and should not be viewed solely as language of hate.

Alpha – A pseudo scientific term found often in the ‘manosphere’. Alpha males are presented as being dominant, with uber-masculine traits and are considered the more desirable sexual partner, thereby obtaining the most attractive sexual partners.

Beta – Are considered inferior to the other categories of male, they are subservient to their dominant peers and are the less desirable mates for sexual partners.

Omega – Are the lowest of the pseudo scientific categories of men, they are considered completely undesirable, they are socially awkward and have few friends, they are almost invariably NEETS.

Evolutionary psychology –a theoretical approach in psychology that examines cognition and behaviour from a modern evolutionary perspective. It seeks to identify human psychological adaptations with regards to the ancestral problems they evolved to solve. It is used by those in the manosphere to criticise progressive politics, particularly when regarding women.

Flexing – Refers to the act of displaying overt wealth or position often via material items: luxury cars, mansions, jewellery and expensive tech are the most prevalent examples of flexing. Flexing culture can also be used to showcase an attractive girlfriend or sexual partner, reducing women to the position of objects.

FRM (Fathers right movement) – A loose organisation of male positive organizations that campaign for equal custody of children on behalf of their fathers.

GamerGate – A targeted right wing harassment campaign of female games journalists/female video game designers in 2015 and 2016. Many alt-right influencers started their online careers in the Gamer gate movement.

Hatecore (Nazipunk) – A music genre that uses the soundscape of Hardcore punk and punk rock while promoting neo-Nazi ideologies, it closely mirrors the same political beliefs as the Nazi party, hatred of minorities, immigrants, Jewish people and LGBT groups.

Manosphere – The manosphere is a collection of websites, blogs, and online forums promoting masculinity, misogyny, and opposition to feminism. Communities within the manosphere include men's rights activists, incels, MGTOW, PUA, and fathers' rights groups.

Misandry – The concept of ingrained prejudice in men. - the opposite of misogyny.

N.E.E.T – An acronym for ‘not in education, employment or training’, many neurodivergent people are Neets.

Normie– Someone that hasn't taken the ‘Red pill,’ is also used as a slur against neurotypical people by the neurodivergent community particularly autistic people. *1

Red Pill – is used by various groups to describe their own awakening to what they perceive as the truth a rejection of traditional gender roles and their belief that men are oppressed by society. However, it's important to note that taking the red pill is often used by white supremacists, the alt-right or extremist right-wingers also. *2

Blue Pill – Those that choose not to 'take the red pill' are referred to as blue pillers, they are criticised by the alt-right and manosphere for being brainwashed sheep who refused to 'wake up' to the truth.

Black pill – Having a pessimistic outlook, deciding that you'll never have a sexual/romantic partner due to things that are beyond your control (height, physical attractiveness etc) The term is used predominantly by the Incel community.

PUA – Pick up artists – Pick up artists teach men how to communicate and engage sexually with women. This is usually with the objective of obtaining as many sexual partners as possible.

Rider – Someone who follows someone else's beliefs or a fan of someone's perspective. Often used in a derisory manner.

Slut shaming – "Slut-shaming" is the practice of criticizing women, who are perceived to violate expectations of behaviour. It refers to the act of judging, stigmatising, or bullying people based on their appearance, sexual attitudes, and actual or perceived sexual habits.

Cel – The suffix 'cel' is often added within the incel community to describe people.

WokeCel – A man who has a liberal or progressive political ideology.

FemCel - A female Incel, this is often used to describe women who don't self identify as incels.

CurryCel – A south Asian Incel (this is often used in a self-deprecating manner).

BlackCel – A black Incel (this is often used in a self-deprecating manner)

RiceCel – An east/south-east Asian incels (This is often used in a self-deprecating manner)

Organisations

Alt-Right (alternative right) –The term "alt-right" is an abbreviation of "alternative right". It is a far-right, white nationalist movement that originated in the United States during the late 2000s before increasing in popularity and establishing a presence in other countries during the mid-2010s. Many far-right personalities gained traction and support in the 'far-right' movement.

Britain First/National Front/British National Party – Minor political parties focused on far-right politics and fascism *3

Combat 18 or C18 – A British neo-Nazi terrorist organisation, originally founded as an extremism branch of the BNP.

DFLA/FLA the Democratic Football Lads Alliance – a grassroots far-right protest group organised around tackling extremism in the UK, they have been described as a racist anti-islam organisation.

Incel (Involuntarily celibate) – A large online movement of (mostly) men who have decided that due to biological constraints (height, weight, physical attractiveness) that a sexual relationship will never manifest for them. They are an inherently misogynistic group that few women as objects that they deserve ownership of.

MGTOW (Men Going Their Own Way) – A loosely organised online movement of men that believe that pursuing a romantic/sexual relationship with women is a waste of their time. *4

Proud Boys – A far-right neo-fascist organisation that engages in political violence opposing liberal/progressive ideologies and feminist organisations They often engage in protest marches that can become violent.

XY Crew – An American based misogynistic hate group focused on disseminating falsehoods and fighting ‘the patriarchy’.

Useful Links/citations:



<https://tinyurl.com/2wrfdbhv> - Alex Jones: The billion dollar conspiracy theorist – The BBC podcast ‘Americast’ special discussing Alex Jones’ history and his recent court appearances.



The Southern poverty law centre ‘Hatewatch’ - <https://tinyurl.com/2rdnuhdc> – The SPLC are an American focused anti far-right group dedicated to categorising and observing groups that are fall on the extreme political right.



Hope not hate 2023 paper -<https://tinyurl.com/4cjw9ydp> - Every year ‘Hope not Hate’ a charitable organisation dedicated to providing a comprehensive look at modern hate in Britain creates an overview of the previous years findings, this is the most recent document produced.



Britain First: Dysfunctional, Dangerous and in our Communities - <https://tinyurl.com/2br4h5x3> – Hope Not Hates comprehensive look at the modern far right movement surrounding Britain First and Paul Golding.



Ofcom Executive Summary Report. - <https://tinyurl.com/46xrvx4y> – The findings of yonder consulting on behalf of Ofcom, this is a thorough guide to the scams affecting British citizens.



Are conspiracy theories harmless Karen M Douglas <https://tinyurl.com/59njwb2p> – A peer-reviewed research article focusing on the real-world impact of conspiracy theories.



<https://tinyurl.com/y4twvc5d> - Alex Jones, Pizzagate booster and America's most famous conspiracy theorist, explained Vox Media. – An article discussing Alex Jones and his impact on Donald Trump's presidential campaign.

Useful videos:



<https://tinyurl.com/ybmvska4> - MuneCat Debunking the Manosphere This is an excellent discussion and refutation of the modern manosphere movement from a feminist perspective. – (Not safe for work due to coarse language used)



<https://tinyurl.com/4ecwwjv> - Hbomberguy Autism and Vaccines a measured response – Harris Michael Brewis's thorough examination of the anti-vaccine movement and the history of disgraced former physician Andrew Wakefield.



<https://tinyurl.com/55hn562w> - Ordinary things - Behind Brazil's Failed Coup – An exploration of Jair Bolsonaro’s rise to power in Brazil and the subsequent failed coup perpetuated by his followers.



<https://tinyurl.com/mrxrsx5t> - Folding ideas Line Goes Up The Problem With NFTs – Dan Olson’s exploration of cryptocurrencies and the recent NFT bubble.



<https://tinyurl.com/5dywerwm> - Candace Owens x Andrew Tate: The Interview – An interview hosted between right wing political journalist Candace Owens and Social media influencer Andrew Tate.



The far right in Britain | Guardian explainers - <https://tinyurl.com/449nfd3m>
- A brief history of the fascist movement in Britain, from Oswald Mosely to Tommy Robinson.



Are we witnessing a 'new wave of far-right extremism' in the UK? - BBC Newsnight - <https://tinyurl.com/5n6hhcyn> - A BBC documentary looking at the DFLA and the recent rise of grassroots far right protest.

If you have any additional questions or information you’d like to add to this document please email safetynet@thebraincharity.org.uk

Appendix:

*1 - There are several deviations of the term Normie that are often used, they are commonly a crude portmanteau of the word normie with slur as the suffix.

*2 – The matrix is an extremely popular film and analogy for manosphere influencers ‘breaking out of the matrix’ is commonly used as a metaphor to describe going against the norm. In the movie, the main character is given a choice between taking a blue pill and remaining in the contented experience of ordinary reality or taking a red pill and learning a potentially unsettling or life-changing truth.

*3 There are many other minor political parties operating in the UK, a full list of far-right parties can be found on the Hope Not Hates report “State of Hate 2023”.

*4 - The Manosphere and MGTOW movements are popular in none-English speaking countries (particularly in Germany) and shouldn’t be considered an exhaustive list of problematic personalities.