

# IDEOLOGICAL TRANSMISSION

Although there is no universally accepted model that explains ideological transmission, socialisation is a process whereby society's norms, values and traditions are transmitted. Primary socialisation takes place during childhood, when children develop their core identity. Secondary socialisation extends into adolescence and adulthood and is when the young adult learns how to behave in society – putting what they learned as a child into practice.

## PRIMARY SOCIALISATION

### Family and home

Provides the primary context for ideological transmission, where children are first exposed to political or religious influence. Parents more successfully transmit concrete ideas, about party affiliation or religious adherence, than they do abstract values. This is particularly so where views are shared by both parents, strongly held and frequently discussed.

### Children

Young people don't just passively absorb ideology from their parents. There is strong evidence that children are active in their own ideological development, initiating discussions that can cause parents to seek out new information and perspectives, or challenging their views.

### Collective memory

Research with incarcerated terrorists and in post-conflict zones suggests that shared experiences, such as being refugees, living through a war, or being exposed to accounts of earlier family trauma can significantly influence ideological development.

### Genetics

Inherited factors, such as how much tissue connects neurons in the brain at birth, can predict cognitive and language development in young children and potentially cognitive problems later on.

## EXTREMIST SOCIALISATION

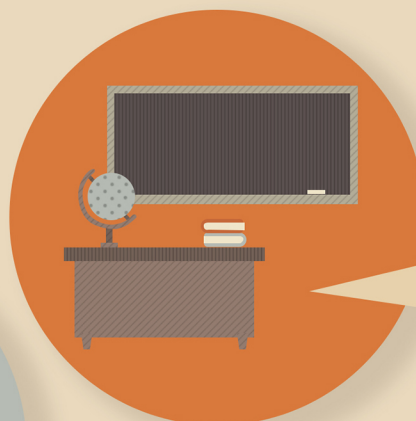
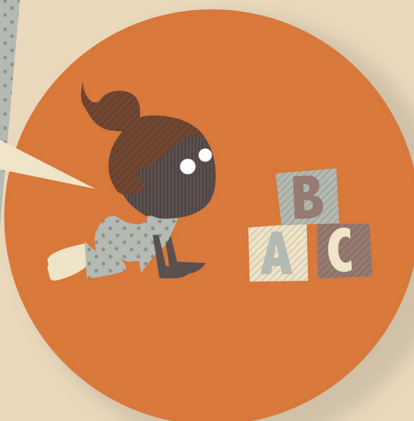
Some sites of socialisation are seen as particularly significant for extremist transmission. Although young people may be more exposed to extremist messaging in these contexts, relatively few adopt radical positions or act violently as a result.

**Online:** Socialisation never takes place online alone, but online places and tools like social networks, messaging applications and chat rooms can provide space for rapid ideological transmission or forums for attracting and persuading potentially vulnerable people.

**Extremist networks:** Violent and non-violent groups can facilitate ideological indoctrination for new recruits and existing members.

**Prisons:** May act as a bridge between criminality and extremist involvement, providing an environment in which extreme ideas, skills and networks can be transmitted.

**Student societies:** Universities are important sites of socialisation and often seen as vulnerable to extremist transmission, especially their student societies which may provide platforms for radical speakers.



## SECONDARY SOCIALISATION

### Schools

Although charged with the responsibility for developing good citizens who are literate in religion, politics and moral values, there has been much debate on how best to do this and what makes a good citizen. Research has focused on how classrooms, pupil councils and volunteering, and the playground can influence student learning about democracy, leadership and authority, and intercultural dialogue.

### Friends

People tend to be friends with others like themselves (homophily) but it isn't clear whether we just seek out those already like us, or if being friends makes people more alike. Clubs, youth groups, urban spaces, and social media all offer sites for informal peer-to-peer interaction.

### Religious education

Research suggests that doctrinal transmission in formal settings, such as schools and religious classes and through informal religious nurture may be equally effective. Informal nurture can involve watching or participating in rituals, listening to religious music, and picking up the emotional register of a religious gathering or event.

### Social environment

Social class, gender, ethnicity and religion, as well as where we grow up, and what events we live through all influence how and what we learn. But, when it comes to our ideological outlook, it is difficult to disentangle the effects of social environment from family influences.

### Other external influences

Whether directly through propaganda and persuasion, or indirectly through the opinions and actions of others, there are many external sources and places of transmission, including public events and crises; government action; mainstream and social media; political parties and religious movements.