

“GROOMING” = tricking or manipulating over a period of time, with the intent to sexually abuse a child

For a child, the “grooming process” is when someone older than the child tries to entice or trick the child over a period of time, to gain his or her trust, and then takes advantage of the child sexually.

For an adult, the “grooming process” is when a sexual predator or pedophile tricks or manipulates the adult over a period of time, in order to gain trust so that he/she can sexually abuse a child or children.

For a child, examples of grooming are:

- ◆ Treating a child differently from other kids or telling the child that “I like you the best”, or “you’re more special than the other kids”.
- ◆ Telling a child that what they do together is their “special secret” or “special game” and telling the child not to tell anyone about it.
- ◆ Wanting to spend time alone with a child or making excuses to be alone with the child.
- ◆ Letting a child do things they are not normally allowed to do (e.g., stay up late, stay out past curfew).
- ◆ Buying a child presents, at times other than holidays or birthdays.
- ◆ Making a child keep a promise or forcing a child to keep secrets, so that the child is afraid that someone or something will get hurt if they tell.
- ◆ Not respecting the child’s privacy by coming into a child’s room while the child is getting dressed or un-dressed, or coming into the bathroom while the child is in there.
- ◆ Not letting a child close the doors while the child is in the bedroom or the bathroom.
- ◆ Coming into a child’s room at night.
- ◆ Trying to undress or be naked in front of a child, or takes a shower or bath with the child, when the child can do this by themselves.
- ◆ Saying sexual things about a child’s body or how a child looks and dresses.
- ◆ Telling a child private things about his or her sexual partners and sexual experiences. Asking a child private details about their body or relationships.
- ◆ Teaching sex education by showing pornographic movies, or showing their body or touching and looking at the child’s body.
- ◆ Hugging and kissing a child more often than other people do, kissing on the mouth or hugging a child in a way that makes the child feel uncomfortable or confused.
- ◆ Touching a child’s body parts (e.g., arms, legs, face) and/or playing with hair, even after the child asked them to stop.

- ◆ Asking the child to do things that involve physical contact, such as giving backrubs, washing body parts, putting lotion or ointments on a child when unnecessary, or no one else is around.
- ◆ Always wanting to play games that involve touching like: tickling, wrestling and sitting on laps.
- ◆ Touching private body parts during games and activities such as tickling, wrestling, gymnastics, swimming and sitting on laps.
- ◆ Not listening (or respecting) when the child says “no”!

Remember: Sexual abuse can happen in many ways other than actual penetration or through forced sexual assault. It can also include: inappropriate sexual comments, touching, forcing or tricking a child to touch someone else, penetration, or anything else that makes a child feel uncomfortable or confused.

Sexual offenders are usually NOT strangers. In fact, over 90% of the time, sexual offenders are people whom the child or his/her family knows, likes, loves or even lives with!

If a child thinks that any of these things are happening to them, or if anyone is making a child feel uncomfortable or confused, the child should trust their “uh-oh feeling” and tell an adult they trust; so that the adult can help stop the abuse.

Please call Childhelp’s National Child Abuse Hotline
1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453)
to get help if you think you or a child might be a target of “GROOMING”.



Childhelp
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