

LEARN ABOUT CHILD GROOMING

HOW DOES CHILD GROOMING EFFECT YOU, YOUR FAMILY AND COMMUNITY?

What is Child Grooming? Child Grooming is befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child, and sometimes the family, to lower the child's inhibitions for child sexual abuse. It lures minors into trafficking of children, illicit businesses such as child prostitution or child pornography.

Family Watchdog feels it is important to teach parents and caregivers what is child grooming as well as the warning signs of child grooming by an older adult.

Now is where we tell you some scary statistics! Did you know that 93% of boys and 80% of girls who are molested were molested by someone they knew? This could be ANYONE, *but more than likely, it's someone you or your child knows*. This could mean it could be a babysitter, an uncle, a teacher, the neighbor, a family friend or gardener.

Child grooming is where children get tricked into sexual abuse or human trafficking - Sometimes they are promised housing, money, a great paying job, nice clothing, fancy dinners - and sometimes only to receive a cot in an abandoned house. So we as parents and caregivers need to learn the signs of child grooming and how to protect our children from being groomed.

Children and young people can be groomed online or face-to-face, by a stranger or by someone they know - for example a family member, friend or professional. Groomers may be male or female. They could be any age.

Many children and young people don't understand that they have been groomed or that what has happened is abuse.

Educate yourself on the outcomes of a child that has been groomed and how it can effect you, your family and your community.



LEARN THE SIGNS AND HOW TO STOP SUSPECTED CHILD GROOMING



The signs of Grooming can often include:

- A child is being very secretive, including their online and mobile activities and messages
- Having an older boyfriend or girlfriend or unhealthy obsession with an older adult
- They may go to unusual places to meet their friends, like a train station or building
- The child may have new clothing, mobile phones or gaming systems that they can't or won't explain.

Behaviors can include:

- The child becoming withdrawn, anxious, develop depression, or even become suicidal
- They can be clingy, develop eating disorders or skip school
- A child may have trouble sleeping, nightmares, soil their clothing or wet the bed
- Drug and/or Alcohol abuse and/or use

How can you help prevent your child from being groomed? Family Watchdog suggests learning all about child grooming so you can better approach it. It's a talk that you should have with your child when the time is right. And of course we always suggest having the "good touch, bad touch" conversation with your child at a young age and teach them not to keep secrets. You can do some research to learn more about child grooming before having this talk to educate yourself.

What should you do if you suspect a child is being groomed?

All too often the signs of child grooming is overlooked. Trust your gut instinct and then act on it. Sometimes parents can be afraid of how their children will react if they prohibit their child seeing a person they like, but it is important if you have concerns about a person's relationship with a child, be willing to stop all contact immediately between your child and the potential offender. It is also important to listen for statements or questions from your child that would support your suspicions, and to encourage your child to tell you more about the time he or she spends with the person.