

GROOMING WHAT IS IT?



FIRST PRINCIPLE

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Top Tips

- **Apply offline child safety online**
- **Blocking is better than removing a child's access to friends**
- **Almost 9 out of 10 images shared by young people go on to be shared online**
- **When things go wrong, ZIP IT, FLAG IT, SAVE IT, BLOCK IT**

Grooming is the befriending of a child under the age of 16 for the purposes of meeting to engage in sexual activity.

This can happen over months, weeks or days. Often the culprit is an unknown adult with previous experience of manipulating children.

Some of the children most at risk include those who:

- have lived through significant changes in their home lives
- may be looking for an older role-model
- are vulnerable due to learning difficulties
- spend most of their social lives online

Children may meet groomers online through unsecured social media accounts, child 'dating' apps or via online gaming. Children who are regularly monitored or checked-on while doing these activities may be less likely to fall victim.

If you notice unusual behaviour in your child, if they try to hide things from you, or if any of the following sounds familiar, contact a Social Worker, your child's school or the police.

In a typical online grooming scenario, the suspect does three things:

They BEFRIEND

They BUY

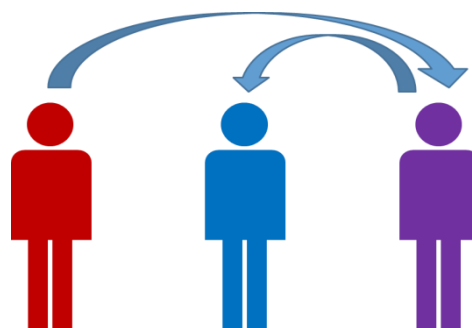
They BEG

If you notice any of the following, contact the police.



The Mutual Friend

An expert in grooming targets your child's friends first, hunting for the weak link in a group. Many children don't question mutual friend requests. Do they really know them?



A Good Understanding

They will claim an alleged mutual interest. Over time mutual understanding builds a level of trust. Who wouldn't trust someone with the same values?

Compliments

Everyone likes to be told they're beautiful, handsome, charming, funny, clever. They shower the child with compliments so they feel good.



Mysterious Gifts

A groomer will buy gifts, send the child clothes, a phone, money, in-game DLCs, etc. They might buy a gift and have it sent to their home address.



What Do They Want in Return?

When someone receives a gift, their natural reaction is to give back. What does the groomer want from the child? What is the child willing to do when asked or when guilt-tripped?

Alienation or Inclusion

Some will seek to alienate the child from their family and friends, leaving themselves as the final true friend.

Some will attempt to charm the parents and family of the child. If the family all like him, what's the danger?

Requests for Images

It might be considered a game, a laugh or it may be somehow downplayed by the groomer but they will eventually ask for photos, possibly indecent photos of the child.



Online Sexual Activity

The next step is mutual online sexual activity over voice or video calls. The child might be blackmailed due to sending a rude image before.

Arranging to Meet

Progressing from distant, online sexual activity, the groomer will suggest the next logical step, which is to meet up for sexual activity. The consequences of this could be very severe.

If you notice ANY of these signs, think...

DANGER!

First Principle: Related links

Ask the Police

Official Police Resource. The Ask the Police website provides you with information on a wide range of non-emergency policing matters.

askthe.police.uk

Secured by Design

Official UK Police initiative that combines the principles of 'designing out crime' with physical security.

securedbydesign.com

Sold Secure

Dedicated to reducing the risk of crime by assessment of security products.

<https://www.soldsecure.com/>

Crimestoppers

An independent charity that gives people the power to speak up to stop crime 100% anonymously, by phone 0800 555 111 or online.

<https://crimestoppers-uk.org/>

Victim Support

Covering the whole of Norfolk and Suffolk, a free, confidential support service specifically designed to help victims and witnesses of any crime.

Contact us on:

Phone: 0300 303 3706 (weekdays between 8am-5pm)

Email: nsvictimcare@victimsupport.org.uk

Web: www.nsvictimcare.org

Socials: @nsvictimcare

Call us on 101. Always dial 999 in an emergency

To see the full range of information go to:

suffolk.police.uk/firstprinciple or

norfolk.police.uk/firstprinciple

Or alternatively use your mobile phone to scan this QR code.

