



Updated 2/2017

## Abuse: Ch. 2 Signs of an Abuser

### Video Outline

#### CENTRAL IDEA

Despite the stereotypes of abusers, there is no one physical profile of an abuser. They can be anyone and are almost always known to the victim. Each type of abuser has a set of signs that you should know in order to help identify an abuser.

#### OBJECTIVES

- Identify the most common characteristics and behavior patterns of abusers.
- Identify the most common signs of an abuser for the different forms of abuse.
- Define and understand the act of grooming within a situation of sexual abuse.
- Identify the 6 stages of grooming.
- Explain the effects of grooming on the behavior of the child.

#### DEFINITIONS

**Grooming:** a method of building trust with a child and adults around the child in an effort to gain access to and time alone with her/him . . . this increases the likelihood that the offender's time with the child is welcomed and encouraged."

~ *US National Sex Offender Public Registry*

#### COMMON TRAITS OF ABUSERS

- Abusers can be:
  - Male or Female
  - Adult or Child
  - Charismatic or Reclusive
  - Single or Married
  - Heterosexual or Homosexual
- Most abusers are known to the victim.
  - Examples – parent, relative, teacher, classmate, neighbor
- Sexual preference is not a factor when determining likelihood of a person being an abuser
  - Homosexuals are NOT more likely to be sexual predators.
  - Heterosexuals sometimes DO abuse children of the same sex as themselves.
- Sexual, Physical, and Emotional Abuse are actions based on the desire for power, control, and domination of victim
  - Sexual abuse ≠ uncontrollable sexual arousal or lust

## GROOMING

- Definition: a method of building trust with a child and adults around the child in an effort to gain access to and time alone with her/him
- Purpose: increases the likelihood that the offender's time with the child is welcomed and encouraged
- Dr. Michael Welner's 6 Stages of Grooming
  - Target the Victim
  - Gain the Victim's Trust
  - Fill a Need
  - Isolate the Child
  - Sexualize the Relationship
  - Maintain Control
- Effects of grooming:
  - Manipulates the child into becoming a cooperating participant
  - Reduces the likelihood of a disclosure
  - Increases the likelihood that the child will repeatedly return to the offender
  - Reduces the likelihood of the child being believed
  - Reduces the likelihood of being detected
  - Manipulates the perceptions of other adults around the child
- How the child is affected by grooming:
  - Believes that he/she is responsible
  - Fears for self or others.
  - Is made to believe that they "enjoyed" the encounter because s/he was sexually aroused (e.g. ejaculated)
  - Feels responsible for abuser who "loves them" or will "get in trouble."

*(Common Signs of Abusers Chart on next page)*

## COMMON SIGNS OF ABUSERS

Physical	Sexual	Emotional	Neglect
Aggressive	“Extra-Special” Treatment	Aggressive	Spends Time with Friends/Partner Instead of Child
Explosive Behavior	Bonding with Child	Explosive Moods	Gambling Problem
Quick Temper	Helps Break Rules	Calls Names	Substance Abuse
Violent Reactions	Special Requests	Criticizes	Ignores Child
Violent Language	Gains Trust of All	Intimidates	Leaves Child Alone
Aggressive Body Language	Lots of Physical Touch with Child	Attention is Conditional	Misses Child’s Events
Holds Objects as Weapon	“Grooms” Child	Blames Victim for Events/Situations	Ignores Child’s Health
Stands in Personal Space	Requests for Alone Time w/ Children	Creates Physical or Financial Dependence	Disregards Child When Making Choices
Fight-Ready Stance	Spends Time w/ Child in Isolated Places	Undermines Confidence	Speaks Poorly of Child
Intimidates	Provides Alcohol or Drugs to Child	Uses Guilt on Child	
	Isolates Child	Judgmental	
<b>Bullying:</b>	Gives Gifts to Child		
Challenges Authority	Gives Sexual Content to Child		
Has Extra Money or Other Items	Creates “Secrets” with Child		
Has Extra Lunch			
Taunts or Teases			
Lacks Empathy			
Breaks Rules			