

## GROOMING

- Process paedophiles engage in to a child and to prepare them for sexual abuse
- Not ALL child sexual abuse starts with a SEXUAL ASSAULT
- The child may be groomed over many WEEKS, MONTHS and YEARS
- Often paedophiles target a SPECIFIC child that fulfils certain desired characteristics
- These can be AGE, PHYSICAL, PERSONALITY and DEGREE OF VULNERABILITY
- AGE- may target a child up to 18 months to 2 years before they reach the DESIRED AGE
- PHYSICAL- body build, hair and eye colouring
- PERSONALITY- timid, compliant, non-assertive, innocent. Immature for age, lack of confidence
- DEGREE OF VULNERABILITY- can be from broken home, lacking in/or craving parental attention, love or affection, lacking supervision, lonely, lack of peer friendships, friendless, bullied
- Paedophile may be grooming more than one child/family at a time
- Grooming may start in TARGETING OF CHILD'S FAMILY
- Befriending the family, parent or parents (often single parent families)
- Targeted through 'lonely hearts' or personal advertisements in local newspaper or local newsagents windows
- Advertisements looking for baby-sitters
- Offer to look after the child/children by baby-sitting
- Offer to take child out on treats e.g. the cinema, zoo, funfair, swimming, play football etc.
- Paedophiles often extremely knowledgeable about children's interests – current bands, music and CD's current TV programmes, movies, videos, current computer games, fashion, books and magazines, the latest popular activities, drinks, food, current terminology and 'language'
- Paedophiles speak the language of the child and show a real interest in children's interests in order to engage the child and gain their trust
- Paedophiles often very willing to engage in child activities that parents are less willing to such as play computer games for hours on end, buy them gifts e.g. mobile phone
- When looking after the child allow them to drink and eat forbidden food, allow them to swear, watch programmes and films they are normally not allowed to watch, play fight, stay up late
- This is use not only to befriend but also to seduce the child into keeping things 'secret' "I won't tell, if you don't tell."
- The paedophile becomes the child's 'special friend' with whom they do 'special things'
- The paedophile may denigrate the parent(s) by telling the child their parent(s) are not interested in them in the special way that (s) he is
- The paedophile will show the child affection, giving them hugs and cuddles
- These gradually become more and more sexualised

- The paedophile may also use pornography to demonstrate to the child that other children do this and that it is OK to be sexual with a 'special' friend
- Pornography also desensitises the child and becomes an aid to what is expected of them sexually
- Throughout this process the paedophile is testing the child to see whether the child reveals to the parent(s) what they do together
- This is so gradual and subtle, the child becomes dependent and craves this 'special' friendship
- Because the child has already engaged in secrets it becomes hard to reveal the 'sexual' secrets
- The paedophile plays on this by reminding the child of all the other 'secrets' or threatening to reveal them to child's parent(s) or by threatening to terminate their 'special' friendship
- The child is now invested in this special friendship and is afraid of losing this
- The child may continue to spend time with the abuser NOT for the SEXUAL components of the 'friendship' but because the child is afraid of the consequences if it fails to comply with the paedophile
- In some cases the child will become sexually aroused, may orgasm, which serves to make them feel even more guilty "I was sexually aroused/had an orgasm, therefore I must have wanted it"
- This may be reinforced by the paedophile blaming them by saying to them "look what YOU made me do"
- Once the child has been abused and goes beyond the desired age, the paedophile will reject the child, become involved with another child who is being groomed, pass the child onto another paedophiles, or get the child to 'recruit other children