



Grooming

Grooming refers to behaviours that manipulate and control a child or young person, their family and other support networks, or institutions, with the intent of gaining access to the child or young person for the purposes of engaging in sexually harmful behaviour, obtaining the child or young person's compliance, maintaining the child or young person's silence, and avoiding discovery of the sexual abuse. Grooming behaviour can therefore refer to grooming of an adult with authority for a child or young person, to make it easier to procure the child or young person for sexual abuse or to ensure that, if the child or young person does disclose, that the adult does not believe the child or young person.

Indicators That a Child or Young Person May Be Subject to Grooming:

- developing an unusually close relationship with an adult
- displaying significant mood changes, including hyperactive, sensitive, hostile, aggressive, impatient, resentful, anxious, withdrawn or depressed behaviour
- using 'street' or different language they learned from a new or older 'friend'
- having new jewellery, clothing, expensive items or large amounts of money that were gifts from a new or older 'friend'
- using a new mobile phone excessively to make calls, videos or send text messages to a new or older 'friend'
- being excessively secretive about their use of social media or online communications
- frequently staying out late or overnight with a new or older 'friend'
- being dishonest about where they have been or who they were with
- drug and alcohol use
- being picked up in a car by a new or older 'friend' from home or school or 'down the street'.

Indicators That a Child or Young Person May Be Subject to Online Grooming:

- discovery of pornography on their computer or device
- receiving or making calls to unrecognised numbers
- increasing or excessive amount of time spent online
- increased secrecy in what they are doing online and efforts to try and hide what they are doing online

- evidence of people on their 'friends' list that are unknown and they have never met them offline.

The following physical contact with students is not grooming behaviour:

- administration of first aid
- supporting students who have hurt themselves
- non-intrusive gestures to comfort a student who is experiencing grief, loss or distress, such as a hand on the upper arm or upper back
- non-intrusive touching i.e. shaking a student's hand or a pat on the back to congratulate a student.