

# ADULT GROOMING

## What is It?

- It's a gradual process. The abuser picks their target, builds up trust, and the actual abuse, usually sexual or financial, doesn't happen until much later.
- It often starts with friendship. The groomer will look for ways to gain their target's trust, often with gifts or promises. Eventually they'll start to ask for something in return, and this eventually leads to abuse. Because groomers work to befriend their victims, some organisations refer to it as 'mate crime'.
- Grooming can happen in person, or it can happen online. Online grooming might be referred to as 'catfishing', where the groomer pretends to be someone they're not in order to gain trust.

## Signs of Grooming

6. They start talking about a new 'friend', 'boyfriend' or 'girlfriend' and it's not clear who they are or how they met them

1. The person becomes withdrawn, or they may seem troubled by something but unwilling to talk about it

Alternatively their emotions might become more volatile

5. The person might be spending more time on the phone, or online, than usual

But they won't say what sites they're visiting or who they're talking to

2. You notice them using or wearing something new, that you didn't buy for them



4. You notice that sums of money have disappeared from the person's bank account, or the person claims they cannot pay for food or bills

3. Groomers often aim to isolate their targets from their family or friends

If they seem reluctant to see you, or they refuse a visit, it might be because someone is manipulating them.

# WHY DOES ADULT GROOMING HAPPEN?

- There are many reasons why someone might groom an adult at risk
- Some cases of grooming result in financial abuse. In these cases, the groomers motivation is clear - financial or material gain
- Many cases of grooming lead to sexual abuse. Again, in these instances it's clear to see what the groomer's getting out of the situation
- Grooming can also result in radicalisation, in which the groomer is simply working someone over to their cause
- But in some cases of grooming it might be difficult to identify a motive. Unfortunately, some people just enjoy having power over others

## WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT GROOMING IS HAPPENING?

The problem is that victims of grooming often feel like they don't need help. Also, some instances of grooming have all the appearance of authentic romances or relationships, until it is too late

If you suspect someone close to you is being groomed, either online or in person, there are plenty of ways you can get the support and guidance you need

- **RESPOND** is an organisation that provides a range of services to people with learning disabilities, who have suffered from sexual abuse. Call **0808 808 0700** or go to **www.respond.org.uk**
- **RSVP** is an organisation who offer services to support children and adults who have been subjected to sexual violence and abuse. Call **0121 643 0301** or visit **www.rsvporg.co.uk**
- **ACTION FRAUD** is the UK's national reporting centre for fraud and cybercrime where you should report fraud if you have been scammed, defrauded or experienced cyber crime in England, Wales & Northern Ireland. Call **0300 123 2040** or go to **www.actionfraud.police.uk**
- **SMBC ADULT SOCIAL CARE** supports adults with care and support needs. Call **0121 704 8007**
- You can also contact **ANN CRAFT TRUST** by calling **0115 951 5400**. Talk to them about your concerns, and they'll let you know what steps to take to receive help