

OLG's Safeguard the Children News Corner - #5

OLG's Safeguard the Children Committee welcomes you to a series of articles to help educate our entire community to prevent child abuse in all its forms. We will present information regarding the various types of abuse, some signs of abuse, and how to report suspected abuse. We will keep you posted about opportunities for educational programs as well as general information and statistics through this series. We welcome your questions and input.

Contact Loretta Haemker at OLG School: 344-4126 or call the Ministry Office: 342-4505.

The "Grooming Process"

The grooming process: Someone tries to entice or trick a child to gain his/her trust in order to take advantage of the child sexually.

Some examples of grooming:

- Kissing the child on the mouth and hugging the child in a way that makes the child feel uncomfortable or confused
- Asking private details about the child's body or relationships
- Buying the child many presents at times other than holidays or birthdays
- Coming into the bathroom while the child is there
- Coming into the child's room at night
- Letting the child do things that they are normally not allowed to do (e.g. stay up late, stay out past curfew)
- Making excuses to be alone with the child
- Making the child afraid that someone or something will get hurt if they tell "the secret"
- Making, or forcing the child to keep secrets
- Not allowing the child close the doors while he/she is in the bedroom or bathroom
- Not respecting the child's privacy by coming into the child's room while he/she is undressing
- Saying sexual things about the child's body or how the child looks or is dressed
- Showing their own body
- Taking a shower or bath with the child
- Teaching sex education by showing pornographic movies
- Telling the child private things about sexual partners or sexual experiences
- Telling the child that what the abuser and child do together is a "special secret" and not to tell anyone
- Touching or looking at the child's body
- Treating the child differently from other children or telling the child that he/she is "special"
- Trying to undress or be naked in front of the child
- Wanting to spend time alone with the child

These are only examples. Talk to your child about what is acceptable behavior. Encourage your child to ask questions if he or she feels uncomfortable or worried about another person's actions. If you notice these grooming behaviors, pay attention to the person who directs such behaviors toward your child.

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If you have a reasonable suspicion that someone is abusing a child, call the child abuse hotline for L.A. county: (800) 540-4000, (TTD line 800-272-6699)
Ventura County: (800) 754-7600
Santa Barbara county: (800) 367-0166.
To contact law enforcement (within L.A. County), with reports of sexual abuse call the L.A.P.D. Sexually Exploited Child Unit: (213) 485-2883,
L.A. Sheriff's Dept.: (323) 526-5000,
or the District Attorney, Sexual Crimes and Child Abuse Unit: (213) 974-9790.
If the child is in immediate danger, call 911.

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