



## NCS Safeguarding and Wellbeing Bulletin

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### Safeguarding and Pastoral Team

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### Welcome to our Parent Safeguarding and Wellbeing Bulletin

In each Newsletter we intend to focus on one safeguarding or wellbeing 'Hot Topic' issue and will share some advice and tips about supporting your child or keeping them safe. We will also signpost some supportive organisations and external agencies.

We are committed to working with all our parents and students, to actively promote the safeguarding, welfare and wellbeing of our young people.

If you have any concerns about your child then please do not hesitate to contact one the Safeguarding Team.

*"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit."* - Durant





## Hot Topic: Grooming

### What is Grooming?

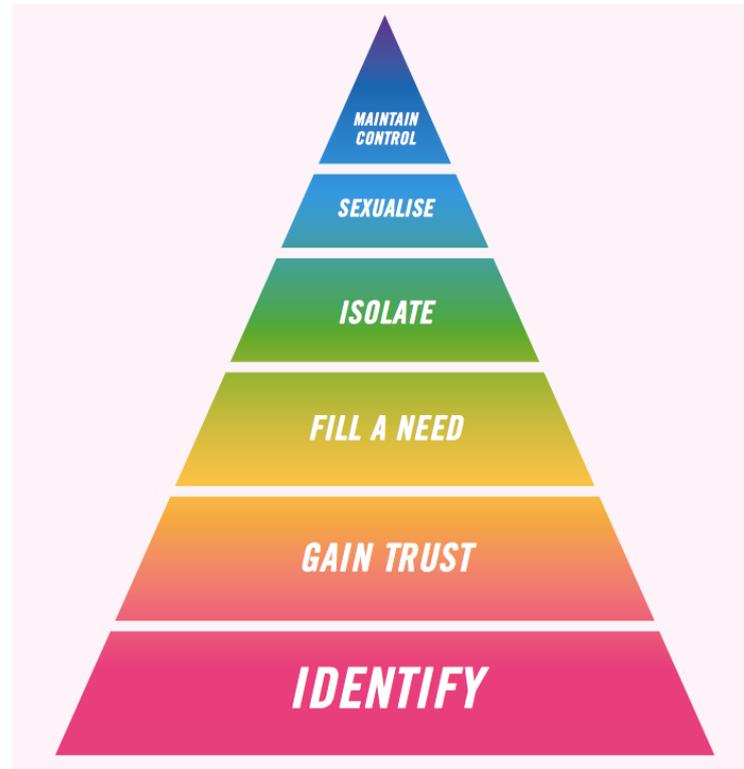
Grooming is when a person develops a relationship of trust with a young person so that they can exploit, manipulate and abuse them.

### How does grooming take place?

Grooming can take place online or face to face. A young person can be groomed over a short or long period of time.

There are several stages to the grooming process:

1. **IDENTIFY:** The Groomer meets the young person online or face to face. They start a friendship and also start to identify vulnerabilities that the young person might have.
2. **GAIN TRUST:** The groomer gains the trust of the young person, e.g. by chatting to them online, playing games with them
3. **FILL A NEED:** The Groomer uses their knowledge of the young person's vulnerabilities to fill a need. E.g. if a young person is struggling with their studies they might offer to help, if a young person is feeling lonely they will offer kindness and friendship, if a young person is limited financially the Groomer might buy them gifts or food.
4. **ISOLATE:** The Groomer will start to isolate the young person from their own family and friends, e.g. saying things like 'Your parents/family/friends don't understand you, but I do'
5. **SEXUALISE/ABUSE:** The Groomer will start to make demands that the young person gets involved in drugs / alcohol / pornography / sexual activities / illegal activities. They may record videos and images of the young person's involvement.
6. **MAINTAIN CONTROL:** The Groomer keeps controlling the young person through the use of threats and violence. They might blackmail the young person using the evidence of their involvement in illegal / sexual activities.



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## What are the signs your child might be a victim of grooming?

Young people who are being groomed might show a number of different signs, depending on which stage of the grooming process they are at. These might include

- Spending time with new friends online
- Being secretive about who they spend time with (online and in person)
- Having new things, e.g. phones, clothes, shoes
- Having money from an unexplained source
- Having an older boyfriend / girlfriend
- Being upset, withdrawn or distressed
- Lashing out at family/friends
- Sexualised behaviour
- Spending time away from home or going missing for periods of time
- Always needing to be somewhere
- Drug or alcohol abuse
- Mental illness
- Fearfulness

## How to support your child if you think they might be a victim of grooming

It is important to remember that young people usually do not realise they are being groomed. They have been manipulated by the groomer to feel that they are in a mutual relationship.

The young person might be worried or confused about what is going on and are likely to be scared about speaking to an adult. You might need to start the conversation. There is guidance on the NSPCC website about how to approach difficult topics.

It is vital that if your child reveals they have experienced abuse, you

- praise them for telling you
- take them seriously
- reassure them that it is not their fault
- listen carefully to all that they want to say
- report what has happened to the NSPCC: 0808 800 5000 – they can then advise you on how to move forwards

We would also recommend that you inform the safeguarding team at the NCS so that we can provide support to your child.



## What to do if an image/video of your child has been shared online

Some Groomers will share images/videos of young people or threaten to do this. However, young people can prevent images/videos from being spread on the internet. The Internet Watch Foundation has worked with the NSPCC to create a tool that allows nude/indecent images/videos of children to be automatically removed from the internet if it is ever shared.

[Report Remove: Remove a nude image shared online | Childline](#)

## How the NCS supports your child

As part of our pastoral and safeguarding programme we address the topic of grooming. We discuss with students how to stay safe when interacting with people online, as well as the stages of grooming so that young people know what to look out for. We also share with our students where they can get help from inside the NCS and also from external organisations.

## References and Supportive Organisations

[Parents Against Child Exploitation \(Pace\) UK \(paceuk.info\)](#) This organisation provides support for parents and carers of children who are being or have been exploited by

[What Parents Need to Know About Sexual Grooming | NSPCC](#)

[Talking about difficult topics | NSPCC](#) Guidance about how to have challenging conversations with young people.

[Grooming - Victim Support](#) Written for young people with a description of what grooming is and how to recognise the signs. There are also links to where young people can get support.

[Unraveling the Stages of Grooming \(ncptf.org\)](#)

Detailed information about the stages of grooming.