

# Safeguarding

# Grooming

Grooming is when someone builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a child or young person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them. Children and young people who are groomed can be sexually abused, exploited or trafficked. Anybody can be a groomer, no matter their age, gender or race. Grooming can take place over a short or long period of time – from weeks to years. Groomers may also build a relationship with the young person's family or friends to make them seem trustworthy or authoritative.

Indicators of Grooming:

- being very secretive about how they're spending their time, including when online having an older boyfriend or girlfriend
- having money or new things like clothes and mobile phones that they can't or won't explain
- underage drinking or drug taking spending
- more or less time online or on their devices
- being upset, withdrawn or distressed
- sexualised behaviour
- language or an understanding of sex that's not appropriate for their age
- spending more time away from home or going missing for periods of time.

**What to do if you think a child is being groomed..**

- **listen carefully to what they're saying**
- **let them know they've done the right thing by telling you**
- **tell them it's not their fault**
- **say you'll take them seriously**
- **explain what you'll do next**
- **report what the child has told you to the DSL immediately**

**IF YOU HAVE ANY CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD,  
DO NOT DELAY, TELL SOMEONE TODAY!**

