

What do we know about
offenders' methods and
impact?

A close-up photograph of two baboons. The larger baboon in the foreground has a dark face and thick, greyish-brown fur. It is looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. The smaller baboon is positioned behind it, partially obscured, and appears to be grooming the larger one's head. The background is a soft, out-of-focus reddish-brown color.

Definition of Grooming

- To clean and maintain the appearance of (as the coat of a horse or dog)
- To make neat or attractive (an impeccably groomed woman)
- To get into readiness for a specific objective - prepare (was being groomed as a presidential candidate)

Definition of Manipulate

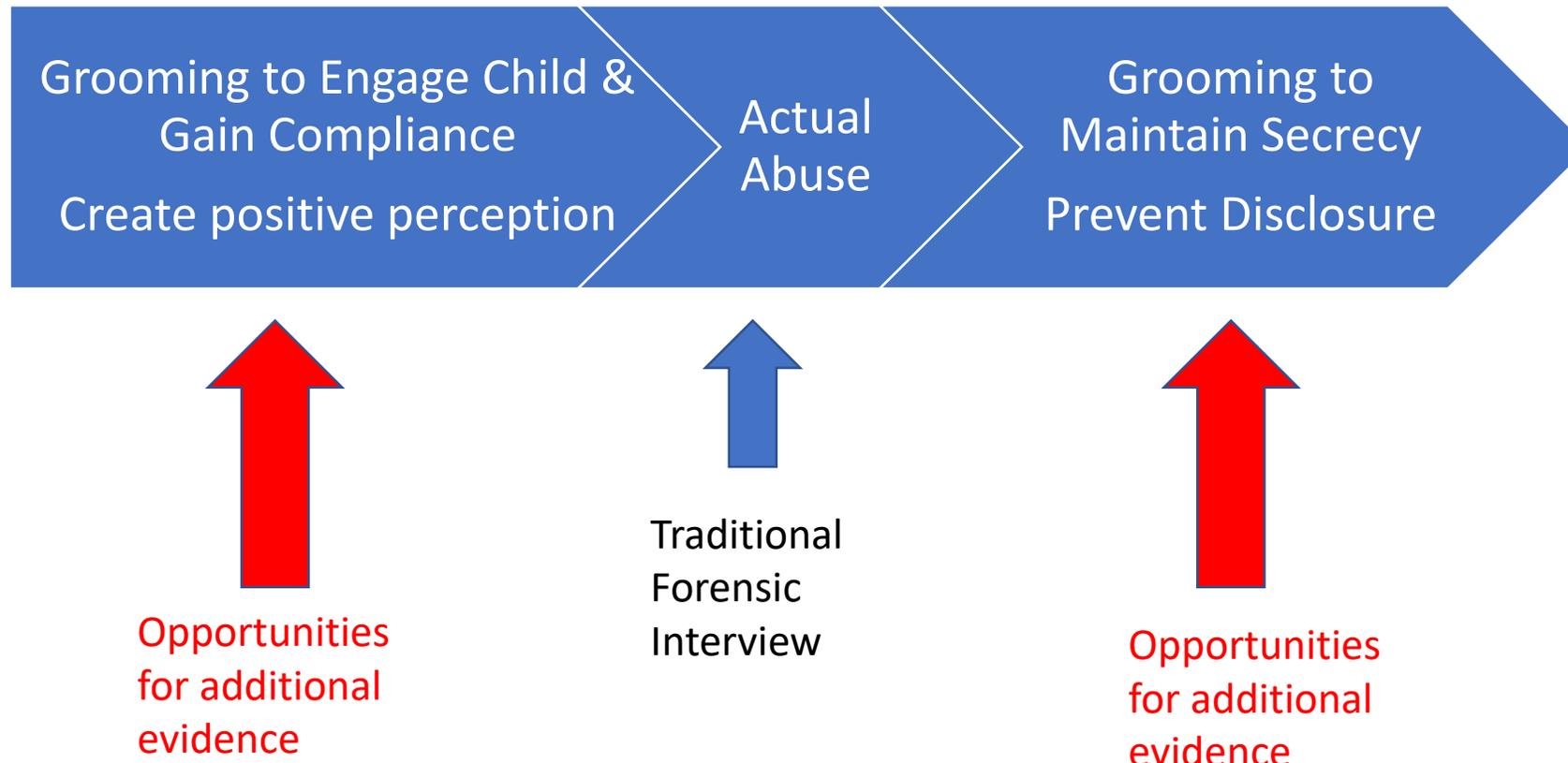
- To treat or operate with or as if the hands or by mechanical especially in a skillful
- To manage or utilize skillfully or to control or play upon by artful, unfair, or insidious means especially to one's own advantage
- To change by artful or unfair means so as to serve one's purpose



Grooming?

- Grooming vs. Manipulating?
 - **“to get into readiness for a specific objective”**
 - Grooming is pro-social behavior
 - Get ready for a specific objective like sexually abuse is **NOT**
- Should we change our language?

Evidence Collection Model



Craven, S., Brown, S., & Gilchrist, E. (2006).

Sexual grooming of children: Review of literature and theoretical considerations. *Journal of Sexual Aggression*, 12(3), 287-299.

Grooming Overview

- Purpose
 - provide a theoretical review of grooming as it relates to CSA and propose a new definition of grooming
- Proposed definition of “grooming”
 - “A process by which a person prepares a child, significant adults and the environment for the abuse of this child. Specific goals include gaining access to the child, gaining the child’s compliance, and maintaining the child’s secrecy to avoid disclosure. This process serves to strengthen the offender’s abuse pattern, as it may be used as a means of justifying or denying their actions” (p. 297)

Grooming Overview

- Three different types of offender-victim interaction proposed:
 - Aggressive – use of force, violence, or threats
 - Criminal-opportunist – one-off offenses with more stranger or less well-known victims
 - **Intimate – cause less physical harm and a significant focus of their grooming behaviors is to:**
 - **Gain compliance of victim**
 - **Avoid disclosure/criminal justice intervention**

Grooming Overview

Three types of grooming proposed:

1. Self-Grooming
2. Grooming the environment & significant others
3. Grooming the child

Grooming Overview

- Self-Grooming
 - Justifying or denying their behavior
 - Relates to overcoming “Internal Inhibitors” from Finkelhor’s Pre-Condition model
 - “Success” is likely to result in:
 - Further justification
 - Denial of their actions
 - Enhanced sexual excitement for the offender

Grooming Overview

- Grooming the environment & significant others
 - Necessary in order to gain access to the child
 - Involved “grooming” both the environment and the child’s significant others
- Extra-familial Offender
 - Parents may be unsure of the offender’s motives initially
 - Offender must gain the trust of the parent long before any abuse may occur
 - Clearly suggests cunning and planning

Grooming Overview

- Grooming the environment & significant others
 - Intra-familial Offender
 - Offender is already in a position of trust and will exploit this in a variety of manners
 - Targeting single-parent families – Dennis P.
 - Isolating the victim from non-offending parent, siblings, and outside world
 - “How does the offender get alone time with child?”
 - Isolate non-offending parent from the child
 - Encourage substance use/abuse by non-offending parent
 - Criticize the parenting behavior of the non-offending parent in front of friends and families

Grooming Overview

- Grooming the child
 - Most commonly recognized form of grooming behavior
 - Physical Grooming
 - Gradual sexualization of the relationship between the offender and victim
 - Desensitize the child to touches which become increasingly sexual over time Desensitize the child to sexual issues and nudity – including seeing each other nude or bathing– Ray M.

Grooming Overview

- Grooming the child (cont.)
 - Psychological Grooming
 - Used to achieve the increased sexualization
 - Used to increase the victim's compliance
 - Isolating the child from others
 - Building increased "trust" between child and offender
 - Threats or bribes, including potential of harm to those the child loves
 - Used to prevent child disclosure
 - Threats or bribes to maintain secrecy
 - Child made to feel responsible
 - Child confused about physiological response which feels good

PROPOSAL:

Four Forms of Grooming/Manipulation

1. Self-grooming
2. Grooming /Manipulating the environment
3. Grooming/Manipulating significant others
4. Grooming/Manipulating the child

**Katz, C. & Barnett, Z.
(2015).**

Children's narratives of alleged child sexual abuse offender behaviors and the manipulation process, *Psychology of Violence*,
[http://dx.doi.org/10,1037/a0039023](http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0039023)

Manipulation Process

- Purpose – increase our understanding of offenders' manipulation tactics identified during FI's
 - First article to specifically reframe the seduction and solicitation of children from **grooming to manipulation**
- 95 investigative interviews with children (5-13 years old) conducted in 2011 which met criteria:
 - Alleged sexual abuse of a child
 - The was the first forensic interview of the child
 - Determined to be a high probability that the abuse occurred based on external evidence
 - Child made allegations & disclosed in the FI
 - No developmental disabilities identified

Manipulation Process

- Case characteristics:
 - All alleged offenders were male
 - More than half of the children involved were abused by offenders known to the child, but not family members
 - More than half involved multiple incidents of abuse
 - Forensic interviews were conducted using NICHD protocol.
- Manipulation Process – any action performed by the alleged abuser before or immediately after the incident of abuse (establishment of emotional rapport with child, manipulation of the child's family, use of temptation or coercion immediately before and/or after the abuse).

Manipulation Process

- Most commonly used Manipulation Tactics:
 - “Manipulation of the Family” – 68%
 - “Establishment of Emotional Rapport” – 59%
 - “Coercion” – 39%
 - “Providing treats” – 17%
- Although coercion was only identified by 39% of children, it was the second most reported offender behavior in children’s narratives – after the actual abuse

The Internet and Electronic Media

Grooming/Manipulation and Solicitation

Williams, R., Elliott, I.A., & Beech, A.R. (2013).

Identifying sexual grooming themes used by internet sex offenders. *Deviant Behavior*, 34, 135-152.

Who are you talking to?

- The purpose of this study is to use qualitative analysis of the transcripts of sex offenders and undercover researchers to determine a set of themes that occur within the first two hours of the grooming process online.
- Subjects:
 - Average age of the chat-room users was 31.8 years
 - All of the users were male

Who are you talking to?

- Design:
 - 8 transcripts of dialogue between child decoys and adults eventually convicted of soliciting children
 - Obtained from **Perverted Justice**
 - 1-2 hour transcripts where grooming was clearly demonstrated
 - Thematic analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data
 - The decoys represented themselves as females between the ages of 12-14

Who are you talking to?

- Three superordinate themes and several sub-themes were found:
 - Rapport-building
 - Sexual content
 - Assessment
- It is common for offenders to jump between various themes and sub-themes
- Not a linear experience

Who are you talking to?

- Rapport-building
 - Coordination
 - Synchronize their behaviors with the child's behavior
 - Coming down to the child's level or
 - Elevating the child to a more adult level
 - Mutuality
 - Discover the interests, attitudes, and personal situation of child and then present himself with similar interests, etc.
 - Aiming to become the confidant of the child
- Positivity
 - Portray himself to the child in a extremely positive light to create the impression he is friendly, trustworthy, and harmless.
 - Liberal use of flattery toward the child

Who are you talking to?

- Sexual content
 - Introduction
 - As a game
 - Advice
 - “Mutual Fantasy”
 - Forcing the topic
 - Maintenance/Escalation
 - Repetition
 - Forcing the dialogue

Who are you talking to?

- Assessment – this is an ongoing process
 - Of Child
 - Trust/Vulnerability
 - Receptiveness
 - Of Environment
 - Obstacles
 - Opportunity
 - Information
- Similarities with contact grooming/manipulation??

Resource

- Professional Bibliography
 - “Manipulation/Grooming of Victims of Child Sexual Abuse”
 - <http://www.nationalcac.org/images/pdfs/CALiO/Bibliographies/grooming-bib.pdf>

www.nationalcac.org

• INC

The image shows the homepage of the National Children's Advocacy Center (NCAC) website. At the top, there is a dark blue navigation bar with a 'Select Language' dropdown menu on the left and icons for 'REPORT CHILD ABUSE', 'FIND A CAC', 'DONATE', and 'SEARCH' on the right. Below this is a white navigation bar with the NCAC logo and the text 'National Children's Advocacy Center' on the left, and a menu of links: 'Home', 'Local Services', 'Get Involved', 'Training Services', 'Events', 'Media', 'CALiO™ Library', and 'About'. The main content area features a large photograph of a diverse group of smiling children of various ages and ethnicities. Overlaid on the top right of this photo is the text 'Local Service, Global Leadership.' in a bold, dark blue font. At the bottom of the page, a dark blue banner contains the text 'Our Mission: The NCAC models, promotes, and delivers excellence in child abuse response and prevention through service, education, and leadership.'

Select Language

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www.calio.org

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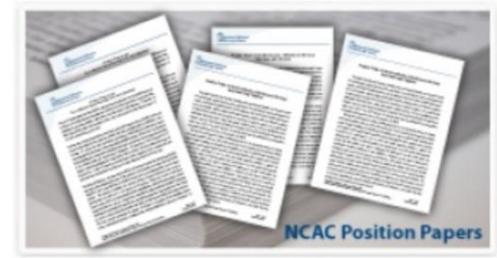
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NCAC POSITION PAPERS



BIBLIOGRAPHIES

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