

## Identifying Grooming Behaviors

- Grooming behaviors begin with seemingly appropriate acts towards children, such as showing interest in their hobbies
- Grooming behaviors may evolve to include actions that lead the child to feel obligated to the adult, such as using his or her influence to help the child do things like skip school or avoid punishments
- Grooming may also include illegal behaviors, such as showing pornography to the child to persuade the child that sexual activity between adults and children is normal
- Grooming can occur on the Internet; offenders may pose as children in online message-sharing forums while learning details about potential victims and attempting to gain their trust. Sex offenders' ultimate goals typically include online sexual activity (in chat room, for instance) or meeting the child in person to engage in sexual activity
- Some offenders seduce children through intimidation and persuasion to gain compliance
- Some offenders seek out the children of single mothers for the purpose of victimization
- Offenders may provide superficial care and attention to children who may be lacking this interest at home
- Some offenders will strive to gain the trust of families and communities in order to gain access to victims
- Offenders can be respected community members in positions of authority