

UNDERSTANDING EXPLOITATION

Youth Focused



What is sexual exploitation?

- A form of sexual abuse where an one forces, convinces or engages a youth, in any kind of sexual activity, in exchange for money, drugs, food, shelter, etc.
- Abusive individuals often use lies & dishonesty to **groom/lure** youth into situations of sexual exploitation.
- No one under 18 can consent to exploitation. Sexually exploited youth are not criminals, they are victims.

What is grooming?

- Befriending & establishing an emotional connection with a child, & sometimes the family, to lower the child's inhibitions with the objective of sexual abuse.
- It is also regularly used to lure minors into various illicit businesses such as child trafficking, child prostitution, or child pornography.
- Involves info collecting and boundary and vulnerability testing. (Testing the waters.)

COMMON GROOMING TACTICS

FLATTERY:	Used particularly on girls in an effort to take advantage of the societal importance placed on female beauty.
PITY:	Used to encourage a sympathetic response from youth and coerce them into feeling as if they are in a friendship or sexual relationship.
SHARING SEXUALLY EXPLICIT MATERIAL:	Used to normalize sexual activity and desensitize youth to believe certain sexual activity is okay. (eg: a youth having sex with an adult)
PERSISTANCE:	Used to wear down personal boundaries, often under the guise that the "groomer" will stop after the indivual gives them what is wanted.
UTTERING THREATS:	Used to terrify youth to comply with a request for sexual content.

EARLY WARNING SIGNS OF EXPLOITATION

Changes in Attitude	Behavioural Changes	Changes in Physical Appearance / Hygiene	Changes in Lifestyle / Home
Withdrawn Extreme mood swings Reserved Lying Confrontational Increased sexual activity /	Secretive about activities Very protective of their "partner" Changes in appetite (+/-) Abnormal drink / drug use	More provocative dress Weight changes (+/-) Decline in hygiene Sexualized behaviour Unexplained bruises	Skipping school Ignoring house rules Looking for a new place to live

SUPPORTING EXPLOITED YOUTH

- Build trust & respect.
- Avoid blame & judgement.
- Be mindful of your language.
- Listen more. Talk Less.
- Listen for verbal cues.
- Create short term plans together.
- Don't impose your values on them.

