Warning Signs of Grooming

PREVENTION (CAREGIVERS)

Grooming can be difficult to identify because it often mimics genuinely positive relationships between an adult and child. Grooming can leave victims unsure of whom to trust, even people who seem to be nice and care about them.

The following behaviors may be used during the grooming process:

- Bathing a child.
- Walking in on a child changing.
- Deliberately walking in on a child toileting.
- Asking a child to watch the adult toileting.
- Tickling and “accidentally” touching genitalia.
- Activities that involve removing clothes (massage, swimming).
- Wrestling in underwear.
- Playing games that include touching genitalia (playing doctor).
- Telling a child sexually explicit jokes.
- Teasing a child about breast and genital development.
- Discussing sexually explicit information under the guise of education.
- Showing the child sexually explicit images.
- Taking pictures of children in underwear, bathing suits, dancewear, etc.

PREVENTION

- Begin talking with your child about sex and anatomy at an early age.
- Teach your children about different types of touch and what is "okay" and "not okay."
- Teach your children to recognize grooming behavior.
- Let your children know that they can always come to you with concerns.
- Get to know your child’s teachers, day care providers, coaches, and any other adults in their lives.
- Be aware of what apps your children are using and monitor all of their online activity.
- Visit schools and practices unannounced.
- Ask questions.

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