

Understanding Child Sexual Abuse

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Who is a CHILD?

**Any individual under the age of 18
years is considered a child.**

(Legal definition)

Child Abuse

Child abuse constitutes all forms of:

- ✓ Physical and/or
- ✓ Emotional ill-treatment
- ✓ Sexual abuse
- ✓ Neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation,

resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.



Child Abuse

- ❖ **Ridiculing a child**
- ❖ **Making fun of a child**
- ❖ **Disregarding a child's health needs**
- ❖ **Pressuring a child to meet the needs and expectations of the adult.**
- ❖ **Tricking a child**
- ❖ **Not allowing a child to attend school**
- ❖ **Employing a child to work in your house**
- ❖ **Ignoring a child's emotional well being**
- ❖ **Hitting or humiliating a child**
- ❖ **Touching a child in a way that makes the child feel uncomfortable and unsafe**
- ❖ **Forcing a child touch your private body parts**



What is Child Sexual Abuse ?

**Any act,
using a child for the
sexual gratification of
the more
powerful person.**

INTENT



What is Child Sexual Abuse ?

Child Sexual Abuse is a violation of a Child's body as well as in the trust implicit in a care giving relationship

Types of Sexual Abuse

Contact Abuse:



- ✓ **Penetrative - Peno - vaginal intercourse, Anal sex, oral sex**
- ✓ **Touching of the child's private body parts, making the child touch the powerful person's private body parts**
- ✓ **Fondling of the child's body with an intention of sexual gratification of the powerful person.**

Types of Sexual Abuse

Non -Contact Abuse:

- ✓ **Exposing child to pornographic content: Movies, MMS clips, internet, Magazines etc.**
- ✓ **Making the child watch others indulging in sexual activity or showing private body parts of others.**
- ✓ **Talking about sex and sexual activity with the child. Passing comments of sexual nature.**
- ✓ **Showing the child the private body parts of the powerful person, a powerful person watching a child's private body parts while the child is undressing or bathing for their sexual gratification**



WHY WE DON'T TALK ABOUT IT

- Disbelief and denial about its existence
- Social stigma is attached to it
- Children themselves do not find language, expression, capacity or ability to disclose such incidences.
- Family does not acknowledge because of shame and secrecy surrounding sexual abuse, even if the child discloses
- Culture of privacy and family prestige and family unity



Some Myths about Child Sexual Abuse

- Sexual abuse happens to “pretty little girls”
- Only men are sexual abusers.
- Sexual abuse is most often committed by strangers
- Children who are sexually abused did something to cause the abuse to occur.
- Children can ‘ask for abuse’ by wearing tank tops or other revealing clothes.
- Children who know too much about sex are more likely to be abused.
- Teaching children about sexual abuse scares them.
- A child who is sexually abused is destined to be damaged for life.



Some Myths about Child Sexual Abuse

- An offender may be drunk and high and they don't remember what they did and therefore are not responsible for their behaviour
- It's not sexual abuse if a girl doesn't complain or show distress
- Most children who have been sexually abused will tell someone about the abuse.
- Sexual abuse can happen only with children coming from poor and uneducated families.
- The child did not say no or try to stop the sexual assault, so the child is partly to blame.
- If a child discloses sexual assault and then retracts their statement, they must be lying.

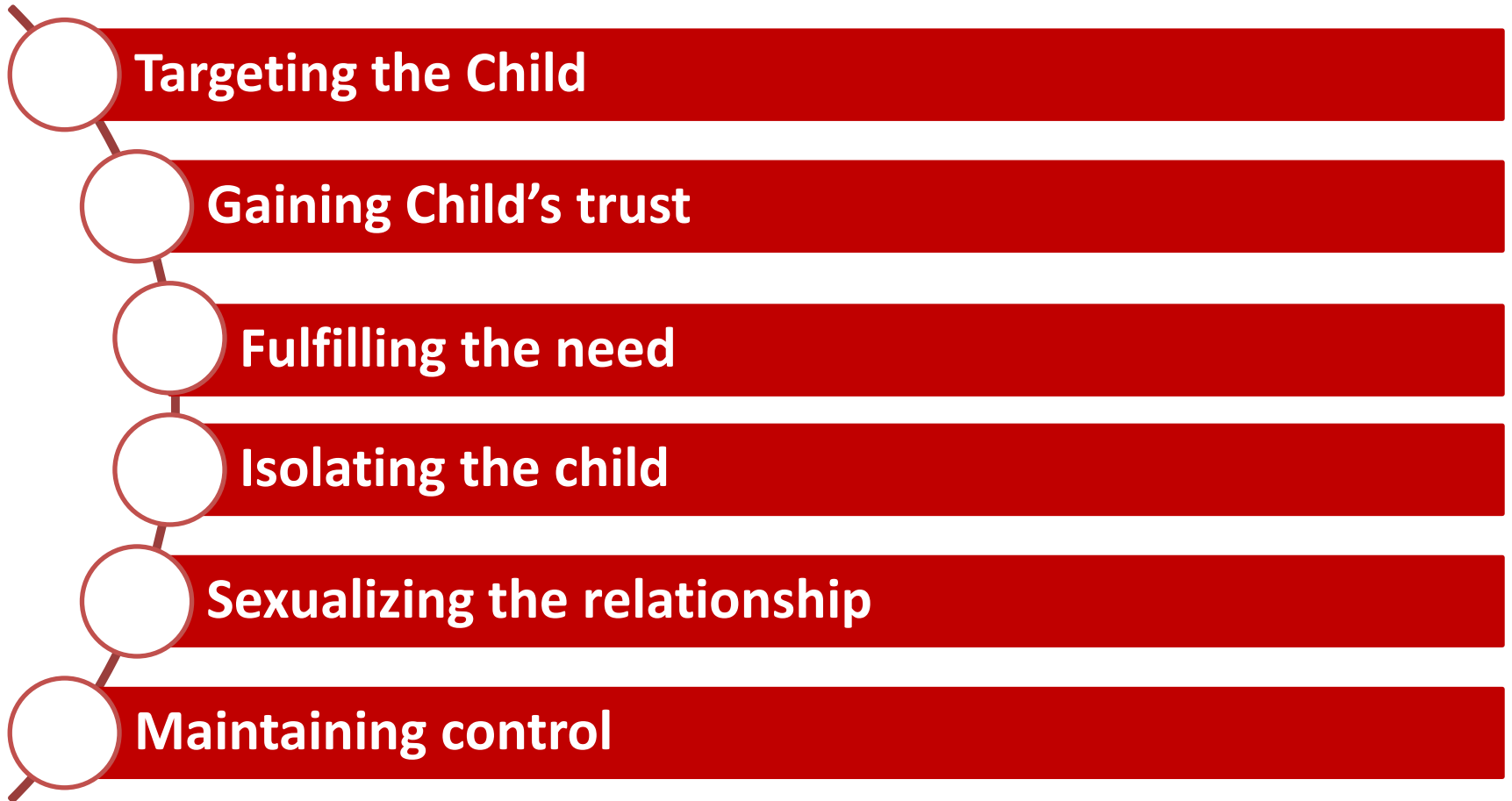


- The Role of Grooming in Child Sexual Abuse

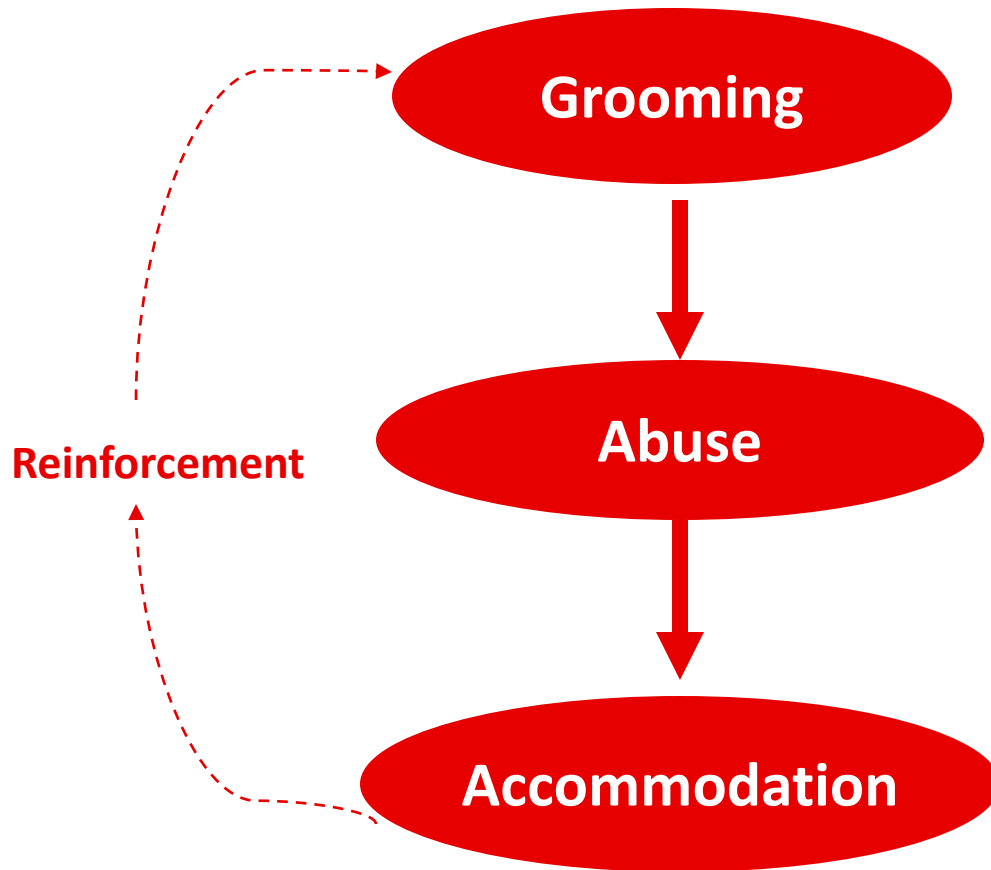
Child Sexual Abuse is Never an Accident

HOW DOES IT HAPPEN

SIX STAGES OF GROOMING



How Does Sexual Abuse Happen?



Grooming is a process by which the abuser wins the child's trust.

- For example the child may be given presents or told that they are "special".

Accommodation means a child's response to abuse as a result of grooming.

- where the child sees no way to escape ongoing abuse and thus learns to adapt.

Children Less Vulnerable to Sexual Abuse

- ✓ **Children who receive a lot of physical affection and have good communication with their parents.**
- ✓ **Parents aware of their children's environment.**
- ✓ **Loving, secure family setting.**
- ✓ **Children who respect authority but are not overly fearful of it.**
- ✓ **Children who know Personal Safety Rules in relation to sexual abuse.**

Children More Vulnerable to Sexual Abuse

- ✓ **Low self esteem.**
- ✓ **Marital discord households, financial instability, illness - Persistent/Terminal illness, arrival of younger sibling.**
- ✓ **Children who are overly fearful of adults**
- ✓ **Children with parents who are 'too busy' for them.**
- ✓ **Children without parental care - orphans, unaccompanied and separated children, street children, child laborer, children in institutions**
- ✓ **Mentally and physically differently abled children.**

Why don't children tell us?

Mummy & daddy
wont believe me

*It is our
special secret*

I don't even know how to
say what happened, I just
feel weird

I don't think uncle
meant to be bad to me...

It didn't hurt...I was just
uncomfortable

She's mommy's
good friend

They said it was
just a game

Daddy will leave us and
go..!

It was my fault!

...I liked it

How can the child know?

Safe Touch

Anything that makes the child feel good and secure and leaves the child happy and comfortable.

Examples:

- holding hands with friends
- sharing meals
- warm hug from loving parents

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Unsafe Touch

Anything that makes the child feel confused and leaves the child uneasy, excited or uncomfortable.

Examples:

- touches involving private parts
- caressing on thighs and other parts

What about the *confusion*?



Determinants for action

- Child's comfort
- Other's intent
- Instinct

Why do they tell us?

- ✓ **Inability to bear abuse anymore or physical illnesses following sexual abuse**
- ✓ **Increased awareness & understanding of the abuse**
- ✓ **Secure adult relationships**
- ✓ **Discussion with an understanding parent or other adult**
- ✓ **Fear of close others getting abused**
- ✓ **Revelation during therapy for any other reason**



THANKYOU

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