

Information for Parents

If you have any questions about the information provided in this packet, contact us at:

Child Abuse Prevention Program @ the New York Foundling
(212) 660-1376
CAPP@NYFoundling.org

Important Telephone Numbers

Non-Mandated Reporters Child Abuse Line	800-342-3720
NY Foundling Parent Helpline: 24 hr hotline for parents in crisis and referrals for parenting support information.	888-435-7553
N.Y.C. Police Department Special Victims Unit	212-267-7273
NYC Domestic Violence Hotline	800-621-HOPE
Resources for Children with Special Needs (RCSN)	212-677-4650
AIDS/HIV Hotline (Administered by the NYC Dept. of Health)	800-541-2437
Legal Information for Families Today (LIFT) Free legal information, support, and referrals	212-343-1122
Covenant House Hotline Helpline for kids dealing with; family, relationships, running away, suicide, etc.	212-613-0300
NYC Education Hotline Transportation issues, after school programs, Special education, etc	718-935-2007
LIFENET Provides counseling, crisis intervention, Depression, substance abuse, etc	800-LIFE-NET
New York City Housing Authority The Bronx/Brooklyn Staten Island Manhattan Queens Section 8 Assistance	www.nyc.gov or 1-718-707-7771 1-718-447-1179 1-212-964-8950 1-718-784-6155 www.nyc.gov or 1-718-707-7771
WIC	www.health.state.ny.us or 1-800-522-5006
The Food Stamp Program (SNAP)	www.foodstampshelp.org or 1-718-557-1399
Child Care Program	www.nyc.gov or 1-212-929-7604 x3010 or x3016

Head Start Program	1-888-469-5999 or call 311 www.nyc.gov or 1-212-232-0966
NYS Child Support Helpline	1-888-208-4485
Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP): Helps low income homeowners and renters pay bills for heating fuel, equipment and repairs Utility Assistance Program	www.nyc.gov 1-800-342-3009
Prenatal Care for Pregnant Women & Infants (PCAP) Emergency Housing Hotline Food Emergency	1-800-522-5006 (any language) 1-800-994-6494 (English/Spanish) 1-866-888-8777 (English, Spanish, Chinese, Haitian- Creole, Russian)
Medicaid	www.health.state.ny.us 1-800-541-2831
Food Bank for New York City 39 Broadway, 10 th Floor New York, NY 10006	www.foodbanknyc.org 1-212-566-7855
Health Plus (various locations) Child Health Plus (under 19 yrs. Old) Family Health Plus (19-64 yrs. Old) Health Care Plus Provider: Amerigroup	www.healthplus.amerigroup.com/ 1-800-698-4543 1-877-869-1156 212-563-5570



Discipline – Punishment – Rewards

Discipline is to teach our children a certain behavior that will help them get along in the world. Through discipline we teach safety, responsibility, family rules and personal values.

Punishment is a penalty paid for a wrongdoing. Its purpose is to decrease the likelihood that bad behavior will occur again. Punishment does not teach a child what to do instead of the misbehavior.

Try not to discipline your child in anger. It's healthy to feel angry at times- parenting can be frustrating. However, it is not healthy to punish or hurt your child out of anger. Letting anger control you can lead to actions you may regret.

Try these exercises to manage your anger:

STOP. Take slow, deep breaths.

Slowly count to 10, or higher if it helps.

Take a break, or a walk. Call a friend or leave for a short time, but make sure your child has proper supervision.

Keep a journal. Writing about your feelings can be a great release.

Remind yourself what is normal for your child's age. Think about why he or she may be acting a certain way.

Seek help if you think you may lose control. Call the **Parental Information and Resource Centers hotline** at **1-800-342-7472**, 24-hours a day and someone will listen to your concerns and give you information about programs and services that support parents and children.

Rewarding positive behavior is another helpful method of teaching your child discipline. Just like when you punish a child when they exhibit negative behavior they learn what not to do, you can also teach your child what to do by rewarding them when they behave well.

Try these rewards:

Use your words. Everyone loves to hear praise, and it is important for children to hear positive reinforcement. Try telling your child that you admire their behavior, and that you are proud of them for behaving so well.

Reward your child with special time. If you can take time out of your schedule to spend time with them doing an activity that you will both enjoy you can enrich your relationship with your child while, at the same time, rewarding their behavior.

Stickers, candy, or other small gifts. While you want to avoid teaching your child that rewards must be material objects, you can still reward them with small items or tokens occasionally.

General Tips for Parents of School-Aged Children:

Your child may cry and whine over seemingly unimportant things.

- ❖ Try to remain calm, and make every effort to determine the cause of the problem.
- ❖ Don't scream back or call your child a "cry baby."

Your child will begin to develop a conscience and appreciate the value of rules.

- ❖ Keep rules consistent so your child knows what to expect.
- ❖ Don't hit your child for testing the rules
- ❖ When disciplining your child remember to use "child timeframes." Ten or fifteen minutes may seem short to an adult, but not to a first grader.

Your child will start to develop friendships.

- ❖ Encourage these friendships, and provide opportunities for your child to meet other children.
- ❖ If your child is having trouble making friends, don't constantly bring up your child's lack of friends. Get your child involved in an extra-curricular activity such as scouting, sports, church groups, or other activities.

These years are very important for your child because they set the tone for all future academic achievements.

- ❖ Encourage your child as much as possible. Praise him when he does well in school.
- ❖ Set up a study area.
- ❖ Avoid comparing your child to others when he is doing poorly. Don't say "I was better when I was your age."

- **LOVE ABUNDANTLY** The most important task is to love and really care about your child. This gives him or her a sense of security, belonging, and support. It smoothes out the rough edges of society.
- **DISCIPLINE CONSTRUCTIVELY** Give clear direction and enforce limits on your child's behavior. Emphasize, "Do this" instead of "Don't do that."
- **SPEND TIME WITH YOUR CHILDREN** Play with them; talk to them; teach them to develop a family spirit and give them a sense of belonging.
- **GIVE THE NEEDS OF YOUR MATE PRIORITY** One parent put it this way: "A husband and wife are able to be successful parents when they put their marriage first. Don't worry about children getting 'second best.' Child-centered households produce neither happy marriages nor happy children."
- **BE REALISTIC** Expect to make mistakes. Be aware that outside influences such as peer pressure will increase as children mature.
- **DEVELOP MUTUAL RESPECT** Act in a respectful way toward your children. Say "please" and "thank you," and apologize when you are wrong. Children who are treated with respect will know how to treat you and others respectfully.
- **REALLY LISTEN** This means giving your children undivided attention, putting aside your beliefs and trying to understand your children's.
- **OFFER GUIDANCE** Be brief. Don't give speeches. And don't force your opinions on your children.
- **FOSTER INDEPENDENCE** Gradually allow children more freedom and control over their lives. One parent said, "Once your children are old enough, phase yourself out of the picture, but always be near when they need you."
- **TEACH YOUR CHILDREN RIGHT FROM WRONG** They need to be taught basic values and manners so they will get along well in society. Insist they treat others with kindness, respect, and honesty. Set personal examples of moral courage and integrity.

How to Handle: Shopping with Your Child

Anyone who has shopped at a grocery store or a mall with children, especially young children, knows that the experience can be trying, even highly stressful. Here are some steps that can change shopping with kids from potential *misery* into potential *mastery*.

- Plan ahead:
 - Check attitudes: Is your child too tired or hungry to shop? Are you? If yes, postpone your trip or find a sitter for your child.
 - Explain the rules: Before entering the store make your expectations clear, such as: "Stay close to me," and/or: "Use your quiet voice."
 - Agree on rewards for good behavior: Keep it simple, such as a choice of a favorite snack food, or a stop at the park on the way home, or promise to read a story or play a game with your child at home.
- At the store:
 - Make a game out of shopping: Who can see the bananas? Who can find the shoe store first? Which store name begins with a T?
 - Give children some choices: When possible, allow your child(ren) to make some decisions. Be prepared to bargain or compromise.
 - Praise your child: "You are being so helpful." A hug can be reassuring and say more than words at times.
- If All Else Fails:
 - Ignore inappropriate behavior unless it becomes dangerous, destructive, annoying to others, or truly embarrassing.
 - Wait for the child to calm down, saying nothing at all, and then ask if they are ready to try again.
 - Go home if the child cannot calm down. If shopping can't wait, find a sitter and return alone.



Remember: Kids will be kids. They are not perfect and neither are we.

How to Handle: Grades

At one time or another, most parents have to deal with a not-so-great report card. When this happens, try not to punish or yell at your child. Instead, stay positive and figure out how you and your child can work together to make things better.

- Sit down with your child and look over the report card together.
- Praise your child. Find at least one good thing: good attendance or no tardiness.
- Be calm! Let your child tell you about his or her poor grades.
- Ask how you can help your child do better.

- Ask what your child can do to make better grades. Make a plan with your child and his or her teacher to do better.

Your disappointments and frustrations can become a handicap for your child.

Get involved in your child's academic life, explain why it's important to get better grades, and offer praise when your child does well.

This information is presented courtesy of Prevent Child Abuse New York.

<http://preventchildabuseny.org/pa12alt.shtml>



Strategies for Fathers to Eliminate Family Violence

By Neil Tift

- Develop and model a clear definition of healthy masculinity

- Instill a strong, healthy, moral compass
 - Encourage family members to express emotions openly
 - Understand the impact of language
- Monitor what your children are exposed to- Television, Internet, video games, music, and movies
- Know who your children's friends and heroes are
- Engender a positive sense of humor
- Teach empathy, cooperative behavior, and healthy problem solving
- Define, expect, and model respectful behavior
- Try to set clear limits without corporal punishment
- Help children interpret their world through healthy lenses
- Challenge inappropriate behavior, attitudes, and language in your friends, neighbors, colleagues, and peers
- Expose your children to a wide range of people and experiences
- Provide positive rites of passage opportunities

When Your Child Drives You Crazy...

Parenting is the hardest job you'll ever have. As a parent, you confront significant challenges everyday: babies cry, siblings fight, and teenagers don't listen. Even when they're behaving, your children need nearly constant attention, leaving you with little time to deal with your many other responsibilities. As you scramble to keep up with the demands of life, you may find it difficult to handle your children after long, hard days at work or after a frantic evening of running errands. You may feel alone or have financial difficulties. Sometimes the stress can be overwhelming.

How do you react to stress? Do you ever:

- Use physical force - pull hair, twist limbs, shake - to gain power and control over your children?
- Withdraw from parenting responsibility because it is too overwhelming - leave kids unattended, drink too much, tune out?
- Call your children nasty names out of anger and frustration - curse at your children, put them down, make them feel worthless?

Most parents will react this way at one time or another. However, if you often find yourself using these methods to cope with your children, it is time to find better ways to handle your stress.

No one is perfect. Parenting requires on-the-job training - that's part of what makes it so difficult. All parents have to learn how to be good caregivers to their children. Here are a few pointers to remember when you're feeling overwhelmed.

For yourself:

- Know what to expect. Learn from a doctor or nurse what your child is capable of doing at a given age. For example, don't try to toilet train your 9-month-old baby. Wait until the baby is 2 or 3 years old - that's when babies are developmentally ready to learn to use the toilet.
- Keep in touch with others. Don't isolate yourself. Get support from friends, relatives, doctors, nurses, school staff, and mental health professionals.
- Recognize your own feelings. Are you frustrated, angry, tired, or anxious? Develop your own ways to calm down.
- Being a parent can be a good experience. Getting to know and love your children will make you feel great. Recognizing and encouraging the uniqueness of your child will make you feel proud.
- Know and meet your own needs. It is essential that you take care of yourself. If you need time away from your children, ask a trusted friend or relative to baby-sit while you unwind.

For your kids:

- Praise your children often. Let them know you love them and remind yourself!
- Talk to your children. From babies to teenagers, children need parents to explain things to them. Tell your children what you expect from them. Learn to listen to them as well. Children have feelings and ideas too.
- Make clear, realistic rules. Use the rules consistently, but don't be too rigid. Tell your children what the limits are, and follow through.
- Discipline should be realistic. Physical force is never the best answer. Instead, take away a favorite activity, give a child a chore, or send your child to his or her room.

This information is from Prevent Child Abuse New York.
<http://preventchildabuse.org/pa12alt.shtml>

Getting Your Children to Listen to You

Getting your children to listen to you is often difficult and frustrating, but it is **not** impossible!

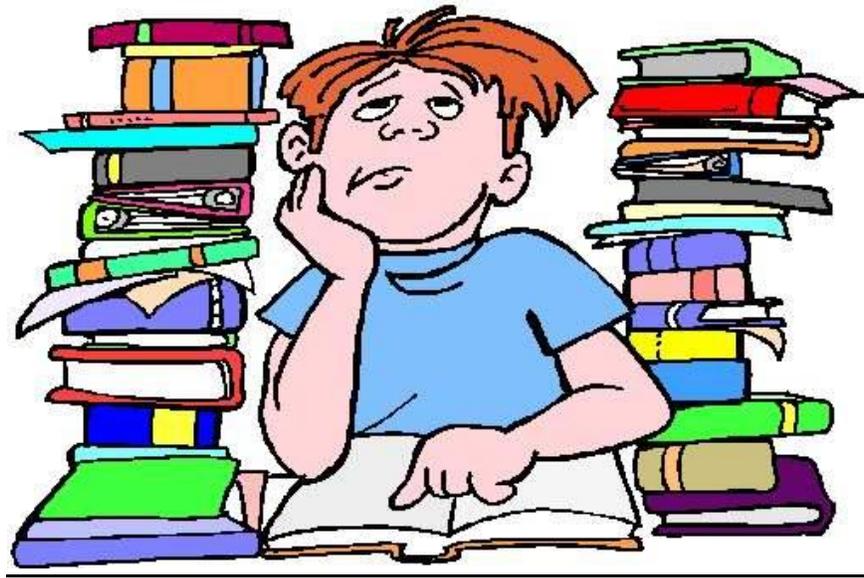
The next time your children challenge you, try these techniques:

- When explaining something to your children. Get close to them and make eye contact. Talking *at* your children from across the room or from another room rarely works. When you are close to your children, and on their level, they will hear you better and can focus on what you are saying.
- Tell your children what to do instead of what not to do. Use the word *do* instead of *don't*. Try saying:
 - "Walk instead of running."
 - "Keep your paint on these papers."
- Give clear and specific information about what you want your children to do.
 - Instead of saying:
 - "Be a good boy and clean up."
 - "Get ready to go."
 - Try saying:
 - "Put your toys in this basket."
 - "Put on your jacket and hat and bring your backpack."



- Give your children reasons why they should do something. Describe the situation. Information helps children remember and figure out what to do. Try saying:
 - "I need quiet when I'm making a phone call."
 - "Ants come into the house when there is jelly on the floor."
- Use fewer words. A child's natural attention span is not long enough to listen to extensive explanations and they will unintentionally tune you out when you talk for long periods of time. Instead of a lecture, use a word or a phrase to remind them. Try saying:
 - "Walk, please."
 - "Books and jacket."
 - "Homework before TV."
- Don't back yourself and your child into a corner. Use the word *when* instead of *if*.
 - Instead of saying: "If you don't finish lunch, you can't go outside."
 - Try saying: "When you finish lunch, you can go outside."
- What won't work. If you give orders, criticize, put your children down, or beg them you will not get them to listen to you. This will make them stubborn, defiant, or hurt.
- Screaming and yelling is not effective. In fact, the louder you yell the less effective you are. Yelling and screaming lets your children know that you are out of control.

This information is from Prevent Child Abuse New York <http://preventchildabuse.org/palisten.shtml>



Homework Survival Tips

Study Area...

Choose a study area in your home where your child can concentrate- with no distractions like TV, radio, or little brothers and sisters. So that everyone knows that your child is hard at work, make a special sign for your child to display during homework time- "Homework in Progress- Do Not Disturb."

Equipment...

Homework cannot be done efficiently without proper equipment. Be sure that your child's study space is equipped with paper and pencils, and whatever else they may need to do their work.

Encouragement...

Your encouragement will help your child develop a "can do" attitude. Being your child's cheerleader will motivate him/her to accomplish many tasks, including homework. Instead of saying, "you're doing great," try to be specific about what your child is attempting to do. For example: "I can see you're really trying to memorize your multiplication tables, and with some practice I know you'll do it."

Schedule...

Make homework time a part of your child's daily routine, just like brushing teeth. If you begin the homework routine early, your child will become accustomed to taking out those books every night. And even if the teacher did not assign homework, or if your child forgets to bring home the assignment, stick to your guns- Have your child read a book or do a quiet activity during the assigned homework time.

If your child needs extra help...

New York State provides a free service called ***Dial a Teacher***. Your child can call **1-212-777-3380** and speak with a teacher about their homework needs. Hours of operation for the hotline are Monday- Thursday from 4:00- 7:00pm. Help is offered in English, Spanish, Chinese (Mandarin, Cantonese, and Fukanese), French, Haitian-Creole, Russian, Slovak, and Bengali.

When Siblings Fight



It's hard to listen to kids who fight. Parents feel frustrated, angry, and often helpless. They feel irritated because they have to decide when to ignore fighting (which is most of the time) and when to try to stop it. Usually kids fight less if adults:

1. Don't compare kids to one another; Comparisons make kids feel as if they are competing and they are more likely to fight.
 - a. Example: "if he can do it, so can you."
2. Ignore as much fighting as possible. If you pay attention to fighting, kids learn they can hook you into their problems. Let them learn to solve their own problems.
3. Don't try to figure out how a fight started or who started it. Each child will blame the other. If necessary, separate the fighters for a few minutes.
4. Let kids express their feelings.
 - a. Example: "I hate my brother, I wish he'd never been born."
These feelings are normal and will not go away because you say you don't want to hear them. Let kids know their feelings are O.K. You can say something like "I can tell you are really angry with your brother right now, but hitting someone is not O.K."
5. Give kids permission to do something to get their angry feelings out.
 - a. Example: hit a pillow or swing a stick outside.
6. Set a good example.
 - a. If you hit your child or others when you are angry, your children will hit people when they're upset too.
7. Praise kids and hug them when they cooperate with each other. Praise them for solving their own problems.

Boys Socialization Message & Effects



	MESSAGE	EFFECT
1	Hierarchical thinking & bullying others	Insecurity, fear, bullying
2	Don't cry, show fear, & deny feelings	Tension, frustration, rage
3	Express anger & deny other feelings	Rage, violence, lack of empathy
4	Don't true other males; nurturing limited to females	Isolation, dependency on females, put females down
5	More is better	Addictions, materialism
6	You are an object: Perform and Succeed	Objectification of self, others, & women
7	Sexualize all affection & attraction	No non-sexual intimacy—poor treatment of women
8	Dominance, risky behavior to show bravery, conquests	Aggression, controlling behavior, immorality
9	Refusal to ask for help	Isolation, fear of attachment
10	Excuses; Boys will be boys	Irresponsible, immoral
11	Focus on goal, not process	Miss out on living
12	Don't grieve losses, always be strong	Unresolved grief, lose control of behavior

Discussing Sexual Abuse with Your Child

Use concrete examples. When talking with children remember that in 90% of situations where someone sexually harms a child, the child (and often their family) knows the person who is acting in a sexually inappropriate way. When talking with kids about child sexual abuse, use examples and situations that acknowledge this. (For example, "What if you are at Kaycee's house and her older brother asks you to play a game where you take off your clothes?" "Sometimes grandparents or uncles or cousins don't know the rules and touch children in inappropriate ways. If that ever happens, be sure to tell Mom or Dad or another trusted adult so that we can help that person learn the rules.")

Model healthy boundaries. Sometimes we unwittingly confuse children by insisting they hug Grandma even when they don't want to or when we say "Do what the babysitter tells you to do." Help your children practice setting healthy boundaries. When children tell us they don't want to hug and kiss everyone at a family gathering when it's time to leave, support them by helping them find an alternative way to show respect to family members (such as shaking hands, high fives, saying goodbye). Model saying "no" and teach your children that their "no" will be respected. If adults in your child's life don't respect your child's boundaries, as the adult you should reinforce your family rules and your child's rights to set boundaries.

Talking about touch. Experiencing sexual touch can be very confusing. In a strictly physical sense, sexual touch can feel good and for a victim of sexual abuse, this can create more shame and confusion about the situation. "If my body responded this way, this must mean that I liked it and wanted it to happen." Many families prefer to talk about "secret" touch or touch that makes a child uncomfortable. "It is not OK for anyone to touch you in any way that makes you feel uncomfortable—not Mom, Dad, aunts, uncles, teachers, or even your friends. Your body is yours and yours alone and you always have a right to say no to someone."

Talk about tricks. Some people who sexually abuse children tell the child that it is their fault, that no one will believe them, that if they tell anyone they will hurt their family or pet, etc. Explain these tricks to your children and reassure them that you can handle the situation. "As your *parent, aunt, guardian*, I will always be here to keep you safe and will always believe you and love you." "If someone touches you in an uncomfortable way it is never your fault." "They just tell you that to trick you."

Involve other adults. Children need to know that there are other adults in whom they can confide. Sometimes children are afraid that they will "get in trouble" if they tell their parents about something that happened. This fear can be reinforced by the person who is harming them. Help your children to realize that there are other adults who can help them if they don't want to talk to Mom or Dad or if Mom or Dad is doing something that concerns them. Ask "If you don't feel comfortable talking to me about something, who else can you talk to?" or "What if something happens at school, church, the park, who could you talk to?"

Be approachable. By initiating conversations about healthy sexual boundaries, by answering questions accurately and respectfully, by handling disclosures calmly and reassuringly, you send the message that you are someone your child (or other children you care about) can talk to even when something has already happened.

Remember: It's ok to not have all of the answers.

Call for more information or pick up some books from the library.

[NY Founding Parent Helpline: 888-435-7553](tel:888-435-7553)

Brought to you by: StopItNow! Minnesota <http://www.stopitnow.org/mn/parents3.html>



Typical Sexual Development of School-Aged Children

From Peel Public Health, www.region.peel.on.ca/health/commhlth/parov1yr/develop.htm

Ages 3 to 5

- Become very curious about bodies and the differences between boys and girls
- May play house, or doctor, or other forms of body exploration or "sex play" with friends
- Learn that they are either male or female
- Learn about male/female roles by observing others
- Enjoy learning and talking about body parts and functions
- Find adult bathroom activities very interesting
- May ask questions about pregnancy and birth such as: "Where did I come from?"
- May learn words related to sex and try using them
- May mimic adult sexual behavior
- May begin to masturbate

Ages 6 to 8

- Begin to have strong friendships with children of the same sex
- Be affected by stories they hear in the media (e.g. about AIDS or abuse)
- Have definite ideas about male and female roles
- Have a basic sexual orientation and identity
- Want to be like their peers: for example, boys may feel pressured to choose the type of toys and activities that other boys choose
- May engage in name-calling and teasing
- May continue with sex play
- May begin to masturbate

Ages 9 to 12

- May begin puberty
- Become more modest and want privacy
- Continue to value same sex friendships
- May experience increased sexual feelings and fantasies
- Develop crushes on friends, older teens, teachers, rock stars, etc. Romantic feelings may be directed towards the same sex and / or the opposite sex
- May masturbate to orgasm
- May have to face decisions about sex and drugs

Concerning Sexual Behavior in School-Aged Children

Taken from the National Center on Sexual Behavior of Youth (January 2004)

INFREQUENT Sexual Behaviors (ages 2 to 12)

- Puts mouth on sex parts
- Puts objects in rectum or vagina
- Masturbates with objects
- Touches others' sex parts after being told not to
- Touches adults' sex parts
- Asks to engage in sex acts
- Imitates intercourse
- Undresses other people
- Asks to watch sexually explicit television
- Makes sexual sounds

PROBLEMATIC Sexual Behaviors

- Is a frequent repeated behavior, such as compulsive masturbation
- Occurs between children who do not know each other well
- Occurs with high frequency and interferes with normal childhood activities
- Is between children of different ages, size, or developmental level
- Is aggressive, forced, or coerced
- Does not decrease after child is told to stop behavior
- Causes harm to the child or others

Sexual Predators on the Internet

A Guide for Parents & Caregivers

Sexual abuse perpetrated on the Internet has been the source of increasing concern over the past few years. While the Internet is a convenient and efficient resource, it also provides a veil of anonymity that allows predators to establish inappropriate relationships with young vulnerable users. As children and adolescents increase their use of the Internet, perpetrators are utilizing chat rooms and popular social networking sites to lure children into dangerous and abusive situations. A recent survey found that 1 in 7 youth ages 11 to 17 were exposed to unwanted sexual solicitations.

What can you do to protect your child from Internet sex predators?

Educate yourself about the Internet, learn the warning signs that may indicate your child might be in trouble, and communicate openly with your child about their online experiences.

This guide will provide information for you to help keep your family safe while using the Internet:

The Grooming Process

Like sex predators in our neighborhoods, Internet sex predators have a grooming process to coerce children into abusive and unsafe situations. The International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children describes the grooming process in three progressive stages: the friendship forming stage, the relationship forming stage, and the sexual phase.

The Friendship Forming Phase

the predator, who may disguise him or herself as a child or adolescent, will earn the victim's trust by giving them compliments, providing empathy, and becoming an overall source of comfort. As the victim feels more comfortable with the perpetrator, the victim will develop a sense of trust that may lead to the disclosure of more personal information to the perpetrator. During this phase, the victim develops a strong bond to the perpetrator, and through conversations, may disclose information such as the school they attend, town they live in, location of after-school activities, or even when they are home alone. Perpetrators are often very calculating in retrieving such personal information in a seemingly innocent and conversational manner, and then piecing it all together to their advantage.

The Relationship Forming Phase

As the relationship progresses, the victim forms a solid sense of trust. In this stage the perpetrator may profess their increased affection toward the victim, may disclose their actual age to be older than originally stated, may provide gifts or money, and begins to pave the way toward the sexual phase. The victim at some point may question to himself/herself or even to the perpetrator the appropriateness of the relationship, but the trust developed in the first phase will often overshadow any of their concerns or doubts.

The Sexual Phase

The perpetrator may begin this phase as a kind of “sex educator,” describing sexual terms to the victim and asking about their personal experiences. This phase may progress to sexual solicitations, such as an exchange of sexual photos or videos and may include requests and plans for an offline liaison.

Some signs that a child may be at-risk

- A child spends long amounts of time online, especially at night or early in the morning
- A child receives phone call from someone you don't know, or is making calls to numbers you don't recognize
- A child receives mail, gifts, or packages from someone you don't know
- A child becomes withdrawn from the family and/or friends
- A child is using an online account belonging to someone else

Internet Safety Tips for Parents

- Educate yourself about different apps and social media sites
 - Try to keep updated on the latest trends. Review the list of popular social networking and blog sites listed in the next section.
- Communicate with your kids and make time for them
 - Adolescence in particular can be an emotionally tumultuous stage in life. Listen to what your child has to say, and make sure they know they can rely on you for comfort and advice without judgment or punishment. If they feel they have nobody to rely on in times of stress and despair, they may be vulnerable to inadvertently finding this comfort and reassurance from people they meet on the Internet.
- Discuss and set limits with your child for personal information disclosure
 - It can be tempting for kids to disclose their personal information on their social networking pages, or even in discussions with people they meet on the Internet. Discuss the dangers of this with them. Disclosure of personal information can compromise the safety of the child and their family, leaving open the possibility of an uninvited offline liaison by a perpetrator parading on the Internet to be somebody else. Discuss with your child what personal information is safe to share, and what is not and why.
- Develop a safety plan
 - It is common practice to develop safety plans with kids for potentially dangerous situations in the neighborhood or in school, so why not extend this to the Internet? The Internet is essentially an unsupervised playground, but can be both fun and safe if children are armed with a safety plan. Discuss what you both can do if your child is faced with illicit images, sexual solicitations, or concerns about a friendship they formed with someone on the Internet.
- Teach children about the permanency of images on the Internet
 - Educate your child about the permanency of the images they place on the Internet. Even if their social networking page is set to private images can continue to be copied, downloaded, and traded years after they have been removed from a webpage. Someday your child may want to be an actor, Supreme Court Justice, Miss America, or even President of the United States and would not want pictures from their past to compromise their reputation.
- Internet restriction doesn't work
 - Again and again, children and adolescents state that they are reluctant to tell their parents about sexual solicitations or unintended exposure to pornography on the Internet because they are afraid of restricted Internet privileges. This fear closes the lines of communications between parents and kids and discourages discussions about online experiences.
- Report any incidents of sexual solicitations or unwanted exposure to illicit materials. You can contact one or both agencies listed below:

○ CyberTipline
www.cybertipline.com

1-800-843-5678

○ Your local FBI Office
www.fbi.gov

FBI New York
212-384-1000

Social Networking & Other Sites

Below is a list of social networking sites, as well as other websites utilized by children and teens. While most of the social networking sites have a minimum age requirement, proof of age is not required to become a registered user (other than typing in your birthdate).

- **YouTube** - a social media site that allows users to upload and share original videos. Users often post mature content; while people under 18 are not supposed to have access to mature content, kids often find ways to work around these rules. Anyone with a YouTube account can post videos and comment on the videos they watch; many comments are mean and contain vulgar language.
- **Facebook** – the world's largest social network. Users typically post their '*status*', upload pictures, videos and share favorite quotes and websites. These posts are organized into a '*Timeline*', a history of the user's content. A person must accept a '*friend request*' to allow friends to view their Facebook page. Many kids accept *friend requests* from people they don't know in order to have the most friends – a type of virtual popularity.
- **Google+** - similar to Facebook, it helps people build new connections by providing access to sites throughout its broad platform. It also captures the user's activities, searches and location and shares this information with companies like restaurants and retailers.
- **Instagram** – a photo sharing site, it uses a follower model, and all photos are public by default, which means they are visible to anyone using Instagram.
- **Tumblr** – a social networking site that allows users to post photos, quotes, links, music, videos, and text. Online text posts are called '*blogs*'. Tumblr uses a '*dashboard tool*' which shows all the recent blogs that a person follows. The dashboard allows users to upload content to their blog with one click; users can also choose to connect their Tumblr blogs to their other social media accounts so that when they make a post on Tumblr, they post on their other social media accounts simultaneously.
- **Twitter** – a microblogging and social networking site that enables users to send and see '*tweets*' – text based messages up to 140 characters. Some *tweets* are graphic or may contain mature content. It uses a follower model, so if a user's privacy settings are set to public, everything they post can be viewed by anyone who chooses to follow – and there are 200 million Twitter users.
- **Pinterest** – a bulletin board style website that allows users to '*pin*' online images, photos, text and videos to a virtual '*pinboard*' and share them with others. A person's virtual *pinboard* can contain just about anything. People with a Pinterest account can browse other *pinboards*, '*re-pin*' others' images to their own *pinboards*, or 'like' others' photos. Unlike many social media sites, there are no privacy options on Pinterest – users can follow anyone.

Note: most social media sites do have privacy settings that are available.

Internet Resources for Parents and Kids

- Boomer Tech Talk – www.boomertechtalk.com/internet-safety-tips-for-parents-an-introduction/
- Chatropolis – www.chatropolis.com/chat_dictionary.html
- Common Sense Media – www.commonsensemedia.org
- Connect with Kids Education Network – www.connectwithkids.com
- Netsmartz – www.netsmartz.org
- Norton Online Family Report – www.us.norton.com
- The Real Time Report, *Social Networking Stats; Teens on Social Networks* – www.therealtimereport.com
- Tech Tips and Definitions, Geeks.com – www.geeks.com/techtips