

SAFEGUARDING ADULTS WEEK 2021

Adult Grooming

This information is provided by [The Ann Craft Trust](#)

What is Adult Grooming?

Grooming is a form of abuse that involves manipulating someone until they're isolated, dependent, and more vulnerable to exploitation. When most people think about grooming, they think about children, but adults are vulnerable to grooming too.

Grooming is a gradual process where the groomer picks their target builds up trust and friendship often through gifts or promises, which is why it is sometimes referred to as 'mate crime' The groomer will then start to ask for things in return and the actual abuse, doesn't come until much later.

Grooming can take place in person or on line. Where the grooming takes place on line it can be referred to as catfishing, where the groomer pretends to be somebody they are not to gain the person's trust.

Grooming is not listed as a category of abuse in the Care Act 2014, but many of the types of abuse listed in the Act occur as a result of grooming including financial abuse, emotional and psychological abuse and radicalisation.

Why Does Adult Grooming Happen?

There are many reasons why someone might groom an adult at risk.

- Some cases of grooming result in **financial abuse**. In these cases, the groomer's motivation is clear – financial or material gain.
- Grooming can also result in **radicalisation**, in which case the groomer is simply working to win someone over to their cause.
- Grooming can also take the form of **predatory marriage**. This is where someone exploits an adult at risk, often with dementia. They isolate them from their family and coerce them into marriage.
- Many cases of grooming lead to **sexual abuse**. Again, in these instances it's clear to see what the groomer's getting out of the arrangement.
- Criminals may groom vulnerable people so they can use their property for criminal purposes such as drug-dealing, hiding weapons and other criminal activities and this is referred to as **cuckooing**.

Signs of Grooming

Here's some of the signs of grooming you should look out for:

- The person becomes withdrawn, or they may seem troubled by something but unwilling to talk about it. Alternatively, their emotions might become more volatile.
- You notice them using or wearing something new, that you didn't buy for them.
- Groomers often aim to isolate their targets from their family or friends. If they seem reluctant to see you, or they refuse a visit, it might be because someone's manipulating them.
- You notice that sums of money have disappeared from the person's bank account, or the person claims they cannot pay for food or bills.
- The person might be spending more time on the phone, or online, than usual. But they won't say what sites they're visiting, or who they're talking to.
- They start talking about a new "friend", "boyfriend" or "girlfriend", and it's not clear who they are or how they met them.

Grooming can also lead to radicalisation. In which case, you might notice that the person starts talking about an issue or a cause that's never really interested them before. [Head here for more information about radicalisation and adults at risk.](#)

Grooming can be linked to cuckooing and there can be additional signs of that an individual has been groomed for the purposes of using their property. See [Cuckooing – advice for all](#) for further information

What To Do If Your Suspect Grooming is Happening?

Victims of grooming often don't feel like they need help so it makes it difficult to support them or prevent the abuse from happening. Also, some instances of grooming have all the appearance of authentic romances or relationships, until it's too late.

If you suspect someone close to you is being groomed, either online or in person, please call 0300 303 8886 to report your concerns, or email adult.care@rochdale.gov.uk

There are plenty of ways you can get the support and guidance you need.

[Respond](#) is an organisation that provides a range of services to people with learning disabilities who have suffered from sexual abuse. You can call their helpline on **0808 808 0700**.

[Operation REPEAT](#) is a campaign to address the problem of doorstep crimes and scam prevention. Not many people realise that these issues count as grooming. But you can report a crime, or share your concerns, by calling **101** or **999** in an emergency.

The [Prevent Team](#) at Rochdale can help you if you suspect that someone close to you is in danger of being radicalised.