

steps to defend your child

PREVENT

Teach your child that only a doctor, in your presence, is ever allowed to touch their private areas. Ask your child questions and listen carefully – encouraging communication. Reassure them that it is okay to tell you anything.

PROTECT

It's OK to be suspicious about an individual's behavior or motives. Child molesters often start the "grooming" process to isolate their targeted victims by the "seduction of the parent." The molester will create the illusion that he or she is acting in the best interest of the child.

Molesters will often identify a family need and make themselves valuable by providing childcare, food, money, transportation, tutoring, or mentoring to your child. This also provides an excuse for the molester to be alone with your child.

Parents of molested children often report a "creepy" feeling when they first get to know the person who later molested their child. Yet, the molester was so good at convincing the parent that they were harmless, the parent ignored his or her "internal signals." Trust your instincts. It is better to be safe than sorry.

RETHINK

While abduction and molestation by strangers does occur, parents should also be concerned about an abuser within their circle of friends, family or community. Statistics show that 60% of molesters are acquaintances, such as a friend of the family, babysitter, youth leader, or neighbor. Alarmingly, 30% of molesters are relatives of the child victim.

district attorney office locations

San Diego – Hall of Justice
330 W. Broadway, San Diego, CA 92101
(619) 531-4040

North County Branch – Vista Courthouse
325 S. Melrose Dr., Ste. 5000, Vista, CA 92083
(760) 806-4004

East County Branch – El Cajon Courthouse
250 Main St., 5th Floor, El Cajon, CA 92020
(619) 441-4588

South Bay Branch
333 H St., Ste. 4000, Chula Vista, CA 91910
(619) 498-5650

Juvenile Division – Juvenile Courthouse
2851 Meadowlark Dr., San Diego, CA 92123
(858) 694-4250

Know who might be dangerous to your child.

Trust your instincts.

Act.

Be safe, not sorry.

Call police if you suspect child sexual abuse.



www.sandiegoda.com

MOLESTATION PREVENTION



prevent. protect. rethink.



**San Diego County
District Attorney**

A Message from your District Attorney:

Molestation is a very serious crime that can affect a child for the rest of his or her life. Victims suffer higher rates of school difficulty, depression, alcohol or drug abuse, anxiety, post-traumatic stress, eating or sleeping disorders, and suicide.

However, child molestation CAN be prevented by following the steps outlined in this brochure. With informed

and intelligent decision-making, the number of child molestation victims can decrease. Pay attention to the warning signs and ask direct questions. You may save a child from being sexually touched and victimized.

Also, guard your own child's safety. Stop, look, and listen to what your child says. Know when to say "No" to suspicious adults that request to have your child around them without your supervision. Take note of the signs of abuse listed herein. And most importantly, call your local police if you suspect your child, or any child, to be in danger of molestation.

Together, we can work to reduce the number of molestation victims, now and for the future.



Summer Stephan
District Attorney

Red Flags of Molestation: The Abuser

Abusers often, but not always, may give you clues that he or she should not be trusted alone with your child. Do not ignore these warning signs or your instincts.

SOMEONE WHO WANTS TO MOLEST YOUR CHILD MIGHT DO THE FOLLOWING:

- Be secretive or inconsistent about his or her past to try to hide any prior child molestation complaints, arrests, convictions, and punishment
- Single out a particular child or gender for special activities or gift-giving
- Act nervous or suspiciously when another person enters a room unexpectedly after the adult has been alone with the child
- Make offers that sound too good to be true to try to get your child alone: free babysitting, free trip to an amusement park, free tutoring, free transportation or free clothing, sports equipment or toys
- Provide an attractive environment or home that lures neighborhood children to visit by providing candy, movies, pool parties and video games
- Intervene and try to provide assistance in family disputes or problems so that he or she appears to be a role model or a peacemaker
- Be secretive about his or her communication with your child through e-mail, texting, letters, or phone conversations
- Create reasons to go on overnight, out-of-town trips with your child

Red Flags of Molestation: The Victim

A child being sexually molested often, but not always, may give clues that she or he is being victimized. Each of these signs can mean something other than child abuse, but they can also be cries for help.

A CHILD BEING TARGETED OR ALREADY MOLESTED MAY:

- Suddenly express sophisticated sexual knowledge. A child may mimic sexual behavior that she or he has experienced
- Change his or her vocabulary, using expressions or words for body parts different than ones typically used at home
- Desire not to be with someone or go somewhere
- Have a change in his or her school performance, demeanor, appetite, and/or sleep
- Show an inflammation or an infection in their genital areas. Be aware that most of the time it cannot be determined by looking at a child's genitals whether or not she or he has been molested
- Suddenly, nervously desire privacy when it comes to bathing or dressing out of fear that you can "tell" they are being molested. The abuser may have warned the child that she or he would be the one getting in trouble if anyone "found out"
- Use expressions or hint that they know something that others do not, such as: "I have a secret." "I know something you don't." "Mr. X is not as great a person as you think he is."