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How to spot a pedophile (longer guide) – parenting and children part 5

Categories : [Children](#), [Uncategorized](#)

Tagged as : [abuse](#), [how to identify](#), [how to spot](#), [molestedpedophile](#)

How exactly do you spot a pedophile in your child's life? While there are no easy answers, there are some patterns and signs we can watch for.

[Anonymous over at Quora](#) writes of his experience spotting a paedophile at a church festival. And while his was a somewhat blatant example, it does get the point across. I'll put his story at the end for you to read so you can see what a pedophile might look like in action.

How does a pedophile operate?

The standard M.O. of a pedophile is to "groom" both the victim and the victim's family. He manipulates the child into being too scared or too confused to tell on him, and he also manipulates the family into not seeing (or not wanting to see) what's actually happening. (This can also apply to other types of long-term abusers as well.)

A pedophile can use a "blitz" strategy as well, but that's basically a kidnapping M.O.

How to spot a pedophile - the list

1. Handsy
2. Kid is uncomfortable
3. Seeking out the kid (especially in isolation)
4. Buying affection
5. Your kid is going through stuff
6. You make excuses for them

First off, this isn't (can't be) a complete list. People are just too inventive in getting what they want. So consider these like guidelines rather than set in stone.

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Secondly, these all blur into one overall strategy, so it can be difficult to separate them. But like driving past a forest, all the trees are a blur until you focus on just one tree at a time. So consider this my attempt at trying to break up the forest into individual trees, in the hopes you'll be able to identify them easier.

I've written a quick guide [previously](#), but I wanted to provide more detail than that one had, so this is a longer guide.

Spot a pedophile #1: “Handsy”

The person is “handsy” with kids. We're talking too much. If it's happening in front of you then you're probably looking for **unnecessary** as opposed to excessive. The pedophile might be stupid and grope a kid excessively in front of witnesses, but more likely he'll try to be subtle and touch more than necessary.

Yes, some people are naturally more affectionate than others, but we're talking too much, and it's especially true with kids. I'm not going to go into exactly how much is too much. Like the definition of pornography vs art – you'll know it when you see it.

Unfortunately a skilled pedophile is unlikely to let you see him being handsy. But switch on your spidey-sense if you notice a family member or relative who hugs the kids too much, or is always helping them up etc.

What's normal #1?

Like I always say, it's easier to spot the weird if you make a point of knowing what normal looks like (LINK Left of bang?). These are my personal standards.

I tickle fight with my kids. Pretty much every day (my kids insist, and if I say no, then they ambush me). But I am reluctant to tickle fight with other people's kids. If I tickle fight my kids when their friends are over then often they'll invite their friends to join, or the friends try to get involved (because obviously it's fun). This is when the fight quickly fades out.

They're not my kids so I'm not comfortable with touching them. I *might* tickle a foot or an armpit, but even then I stop quickly and invent an excuse to end it. This goes even more so if their parents aren't there in the room with us.

I think this is about normal, so that's my standard. The kid seeks the adult out for the tickle fight.

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The kid is smiling hugely and already giggling just asking for the fight. The adult is reluctant if it isn't his kid. The "fight" is over very quickly if it isn't his kid (it usually doesn't even start).

Spot a pedophile #2: Your kid is uncomfortable around him/her

The kids aren't comfortable with him. If you read Anonymous' letter on Quora at the end of this, you'll see how the kids obviously weren't comfortable with the guy trying to play with them.

Your kids have an incredible sense of judgement. If they don't like a person, take note and watch that guy like a fucking hawk.

The younger the kid the keener their judgement tends to be. Probably down to around 3 years old or so. Why does their judgement get worse as they get older? Partly due to the parent.

Remember when your 5 year old didn't want to hug uncle whathisname? And you made your kid hug him anyway? **Welcome to making your kid ignore his gut instincts.** Little wonder most adults have a hard time listening to their gut feelings (LINK listen to your gut is BS).

If your kid pulls away from any adult trying to touch them, LET THEM (yes, even hugging or polite handshaking). Then pay attention to how that person interacts with kids. Watch if they try insert themselves into your kid's life. Especially watch for them getting handsy with any kid (but especially yours).

My one kid is shy with new people. And sometimes an elderly relative will try make conversation with him and try get him to loosen up. Which is cool because so far anyone doing this has just tried talking to him, and **hasn't pushed it.** If he doesn't really respond to the adult, or even if he does, the conversations don't go on and on. No adult so far has forced the issue. The adults don't try pick him up and put him on their lap, or move to sit next to him. They let him maintain a comfortable distance and let him dictate the course of the interaction.

If you see someone trying too hard to get your kid to like them, then pay attention to that person now and forever more. A paedophile might be real subtle and take his time and groom the kid (and you) slowly and over a long time, so this can be difficult to spot

Spot a pedophile #3: seeking out the kid (part 1 – the obvious)

Pedophiles will concentrate around younger people (teenagers and younger). They will seek interaction with them. Think of it like the "friendzone" – the friendzone is guys who are too scared

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to make a move on the woman (yet), but they crave contact with her anyway. So they settle for “being friends”. That way they get to have interaction, be close by, and hope that one day circumstances will change and they’ll “get the girl”. This is the pedophile and kids. Even if they’re not going to do anything to the kid (now), they’ll seek out interaction. That way if the opportunity presents itself, they can act.

- That too-old dude who tries to act cool and be part of the conversation of high school kids.
- That family friend who always picks up every kid and puts them on his lap, even though the kids seem uncomfortable.
- The guy who helps every single kid up and down the slide at the park.
- The 40 year old guy who just understands what the emotionally messed up teenage boy is going through, the crappy parents, the shitty school life, and he even loves the same computer games.

Many people hang out around kids, but most are happy to let the kids be kids. And I’m not talking the parent at the park who’s keeping a close eye on his kids while they play either. I’m talking the guy who actively (and consistently) seeks out that interaction with kids, even interrupting what the kids are doing to get it. This is someone to watch.

This by itself is not a guaranteed way to spot a pedophile, but it’s another indicator to watch for.

Spot a pedophile #3: Seeking out the kid (part 2 – the subtle)

A pedophile seeking out the kid can also be subtle. The subtle one is likely the more insidious, long term abuser – the groomer.

The obvious examples are that overly helpful and handsy dude at the public park. These are the speed-dating type pedophiles. The guys who are there for a quick fix of at least some physical contact with a kid, or worse, a quick kidnapping. The guy who helps every single kid up and down the slide needs to be watched. If the kids were young enough to need the help the parents would be there, so they don’t need the frickin help.

The slow insidious examples are full on grooming. This can be where the pedophile is actually part of your life and takes his time. The family member who will “go say hello” to your kid when she’s playing alone in her bedroom. He’ll “befriend” your kid so you end up thinking they’re just good friends. Then you’ll be less suspicious when they spend time together, just the two of them.

This could be alone in your house when you’re in a different room.

Or he could “babysit” for you when you need to run out or go to an appointment.

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He might be this really cool guy who's so good for your kid because he's always taking him out to watch sports games.

Do you have a troubled teenage boy who's emotionally retreated into computer games? And there happens to be an older male role model who's into the same games, and buys your kid the latest releases? And you're hoping he'll be the healthy male father-figure your kid needs? What are the odds?

These are the people you watch out for. The guy who, if you had to stop and think about it, actually has much more interaction with your kid than other adults do. He'll smile and be friendly and you will think it's great for your kid to have such a friend, but really, doesn't this person have their own life to lead? Their own interests and hobbies? There's a reason that you, the parent, don't spend as much time as you should with your kids – you've got stuff to do!

If you could argue that someone's interests and hobbies seem to involve (or be) your kid, then I'd argue that he's seeking way too much interaction.

What's normal #3

When adults go visit friends/family they're typically quite selfish. They're going because they want to see the adults there and spend time with them. Mostly they're happy to have the kids go play by themselves somewhere out the way. Adults should check on their children (how frequently depends on the parent), but being more involved with the kids than the adults is a possible warning sign. At social events a stock standard adult is more likely to seek **interaction** with other adults than with kids. (Checking on the kids doesn't necessarily count as "interaction".)

Be warned:

Single mothers are at extra risk. Single moms tend to fret about their kid needing a father figure (which obviously they do). And because they have less of a support system they have to drag the kid along to every appointment/event/shop etc. And let's face it, moms get flustered and annoyed when they have to do everything themselves. Because of all this, single moms are targeted by pedophiles simply because it's easier to get time alone with the kid. They'll even make it seem like it was your idea that they watch your kid while you run out.

(None of the above is a judgement about single moms, it's just the way it is. Single dads don't get as flustered because they don't really notice that the dishes need washing. And married couples have each other to watch the kids when one needs to go to an appointment. One of the many

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reasons marriage exists.)

Spot a pedophile #4: Buying affection

This is where at-risk kids are even more vulnerable. A kid with a messed up life wants a loving, reliable adult to make them feel loved, provide food, and generally just let them be a kid. Buying affection can make them think they've found that adult who just loves them and doesn't make them feel shit all the time. It can make you think your kid really loves this person because they respond so well to the gifts and trips. (In this way, buying affection also grooms the parent to be unsuspecting.)

Buying affection is common because it works. Take a kid who's confused about life and the emotions he's going through, and then this loving adult turns up. The adult gives compliments, and buys toys and sweets and exciting trips. The kid will be happy for the interaction. The parents will be happy for the interaction. It also helps avoid the kid being uncomfortable around the pedophile.

Buying affection can also buy silence. It can make a kid feel indebted to the adult so they're less likely to tell someone what's happening. Even worse, it can make the kid confused. How can this person who seems to love me (presents, gifts, trips, hugs) make me feel so horrible? The confusion alone can keep a kid silent for a long time. Think of a drug addict: Even though he feels crappy when the drugs wear off, he still wants the high. Even though the kid feels horrible from the abuse, the affection (from the grooming stages) might be the only affection they get.

Buying affection can also work to groom the parents. Some [kind man](#) with more money than you buys your family food and gifts that you can't provide yourself. An adult can be conditioned to think so highly of someone that they find it difficult to think badly of them. Providing for your family (especially when you can't) can do that. Look at all the church figures accused of abuse over the years, and so many churchgoers will leap into the air to defend them.

Also look at the letter at the end of this article. Notice that the preacher obviously knew the man was a pedophile (or something not normal), but he couldn't do anything about it. Why? Because the pedophile's family was powerful in that church. Translation: the pedophile's family bought the affection of the church.

What's normal #4

There are no knights in shining armour riding white horses. Nobody is going to magically swoop in and make your kid feel loved and cared for. If someone is too good to be true then he bloody well

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is too good to be true. It might not be as obvious as buying presents and gifts and games and sweets. It can be smiles and hugs and warmth that buys affection.

What's normal? The **parent** is the primary source of love and affection and attention for children up until they leave the house. That is what "normal" is. It's another reason why we don't self-reproduce and why marriage exists. If your family deviates very much from this definition of "normal", then see #5 "Your kid is vulnerable".

Spot a pedophile #5: Your kid is vulnerable (going through stuff)

This is difficult to see, simply because most people don't **want** to see this in their kid. It's entirely too easy to sweep this kind of stuff under the rug. The more emotionally vulnerable your kid is, the more vulnerable he/she is to being abused. If you're going through a divorce, or trauma, or a death etc., then your kid is more at risk. Alcoholism, drug abuse, emotional/physical/sexual abuse, these all make your kid susceptible to even more abuse.

Another factor is poverty. Just ask [Richard Huckle](#), the British man who visited poor communities in Asia because poor kids are more vulnerable:

"Impoverished kids are definitely much, much easier to seduce than middle-class western kids; I still plan to publish a guide on this subject."

As the parent, you know if your kid is at risk. You know if they're going through something. A parent can tell if they're having a difficult time. You might not want to admit it, but you know if they're especially vulnerable to paedophiles and abusers. Trying to ignore it makes your kid even more vulnerable.

What's normal #5

- Married parents
- stable relationship
- genuinely happy kids (not just the appearance of happy)
- good relationship between parents and kids.

The more stereotypically Brady Bunch your family is, the less at risk your kids are (less risk, not "no risk"). This doesn't have to mean chipper, always smiling kids, but you can tell if deep down a

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kid is enjoying their life or not.

Although it's probably easier to tell when the kid is younger and not so adept at concealing their feelings.

Spot a pedophile #6: You make excuses for them

You **don't** make excuses when you **don't** fart. You don't have to explain why you were polite and kind.

Making excuses means something not normal has happened. Something has come to your attention and you **want a reason to ignore it** – so you make an excuse. You explain it away. You'd be amazed what the human brain can convince itself of. Many a mother has convinced herself that her son/daughter wasn't being abused, even if the kid found the courage to tell them it was happening.

"Oh, Uncle Joe has always been so friendly with everyone." Is what you say when your subconscious notices that Uncle Joe makes every single kid at the party sit on his lap and give him a hug.

"I'm so relieved my new boyfriend Joe gets on so well with my 12 year old daughter." Is what you say when your subconscious picks up on the fact that there's just too much forcing of interaction coming from the new boyfriend.

"I'm so angry she would overreact and be so vicious about Joe. How could she say those things about him!" is what you say when you daughter tries to tell your boyfriend Joe creeps her out and makes her really uncomfortable.

You don't notice when everything is wonderful. If you're making excuses it means something has happened that is not normal, and you don't want to face it. You want everything to be normal, so you make up this story, called an excuse. This story lets you convince yourself that everything **is** normal, despite something obviously not right having just happened.

Think of it like the guy who ignores the funny feeling in his chest over the last couple days. He tells himself it's "probably just stress from work". Next day he has his second heart attack.

Or the woman who avoids touching the spot where she might have felt a lump. She doesn't go to the doctor because she's afraid of what he might say. What the doctor says doesn't change whether you have cancer or not. People avoid going to the doctor because they don't want to have to face the "not normal". It doesn't change the cancer, it just changes what you have to face.

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This is how many parents have convinced themselves an abuser isn't an abuser. If they don't acknowledge what's going on, they can feel like everything's normal.

What's normal #6

It's normal to explain away things that **aren't** normal. The point is to catch yourself doing it so you can investigate and figure out what's going on.

It's normal that uncle Joe at the family reunion doesn't make every kid sit on his lap.

Normal is that the kids don't all avoid the same person because they all feel uncomfortable around him.

It is normal that a new boyfriend tries to impress your kid. But only because it serves to impress you. Very quickly it moves on to standard behaviour of the boyfriend is there to be with you, not to spend much time interacting with your kid. Not the other way around.

What's the creepiest thing you've seen?

[What is the creepiest thing you have ever witnessed?](#)

Anonymous [Answered Aug 30](#)

I witnessed a pedophile in action.

<https://www.quora.com/What-is-the-creepiest-thing-you-have-ever-witnessed>

We kept foster kids for a while and one of the classes we had to attend taught us how to spot when a pedophile is "grooming" a kid and or his parents.

Shortly after the class we stopped at a church that had a festival going with quite a setup for any families who wanted to attend. Kind of a membership drive. It worked, we joined the church.

But as Im watching my daughter and her friend play on the big blow-up slide theres this guy from

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the church catching the kids at the bottom of the slide. Only the smallest ones needed catching but he was catching them all, and getting too handsy with my kids. They even looked at me the second time to let me know they didnt like it and the 3rd time I noticed they squirmed away from him before he could get to them. I thought maybe I was being to suspicious after taking that class until a little boy in a tight fitting spiderman costume slid down and as he walked away from the slide the man stared at his behind until he was out of site. It pissed me off. He looked around and smiled at me but his smile died when he saw how I was looking at him. He slunk away to the other side of the slide but when I told my wife about him and pointed right at him he walked away.

I found the pastor of the church and asked him if he realized he had a predator in his church but before he could answer the man hurried over and started an obnoxious conversation even insulting the minister with a laugh as if it was a joke. The minister looked ashamed like he was afraid of this guy. So I told him we just joined this church and if I see you touch any more kids Ill kick your ass. I know what you are.

He was pretty shocked and hurried away without a word. I apologized to the minister but he thanked me and said his family was fairly powerful in the church and he had been afraid to say anything. Ministers can be fired if you dont know and theres a lot of petty politics in churches.

So we attended the church for several years but the creepo stopped attending shortly after we started. Several parents thanked me privately.

I really would have beat his ass in church .