

## DEAR PARENTS AND TRUSTED ADULTS:

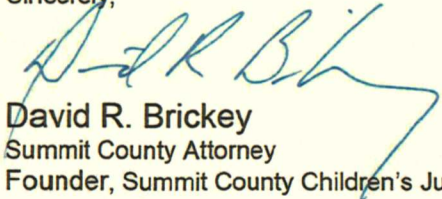
As with all reports of sexual abuse in our community, and especially when the accused is so close to our children, we are left in shock, fear, disbelief, and disillusion, and are often left asking questions. "How did this happen? What do we do to help our children? How do we comprehend such behavior?" This pamphlet is designed to answer the most commonly asked questions, to address the realities of child sex abuse, and what we can do collectively to keep our children safe.

Our justice system states that persons arrested and accused of crimes are innocent until proven guilty. As such, we must strive to remain objective and level-headed so that we can move forward with more information to help reduce further and future trauma to our children and our community.

To further assist families with these difficult conversations, I have sponsored Camp Safety in collaboration with the United Against Bullying Coalition, Summit County Sheriff's Office, and Park City Police Department. Camp Safety provides 5 and 6 year olds with tools to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations.

I hope this information facilitates conversations with your precious families so together we can reduce the rates of child sexual abuse. To that end, I am dedicated to the prosecution of individuals accused of such heinous crimes on our children.

Sincerely,



David R. Brickey  
Summit County Attorney  
Founder, Summit County Children's Justice Center

## REALITIES:

- 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys will have sexual contact with an adult
- 90% of child sex abuse is committed by someone the child knows
- It is easier for most parents to believe that a child predator is a stranger rather than someone they have allowed into their lives
- The most common age at which sexual abuse begins is three
- The average child predator victimizes between 50 – 150 children before he/she is arrested
- Most child predators are upstanding members of the community in a position of trust, deceiving the family
- Most adults can identify the signs of child abuse
- Most parents or guardians believe their child will tell them if they are being abused. The reality is that predators manipulate children into remaining silent if there are no safety discussions in the home
- To reduce all forms of child sex abuse we **MUST** accept these realities and move forward with knowledge of predator behavior
- Knowledge is power – for parents, trusted adults, and children

## THE GROOMING PROCESS:

Groom /grüm/ verb: to prime (someone) for a specific objective; prepare

Predators use a variety of techniques to groom a child to become a victim. Below are some examples of grooming behavior on the part of the predator. (Please note this is not an exhaustive list):

1. Becoming involved in the family so the parents/guardians trust them, thus minimizing questions about their behavior with their child.
2. Wanting to babysit, take on trips, showering with attention and affection.
3. Behavior with a child that appears to be playful, such as: wrestling, tickling, and other forms of physical contact on a continual basis.
4. Predators position themselves in helping, altruistic positions in the community, reducing any suspicion that their behavior is abusive.
5. Predators will use coercion, threats, fear, gifts, money, and other means to keep their victims silent.

## Common Signs of Possible Abuse:

- Gifts or money your child brings home without any explanation
- Physical ailments
- Acting out sexual behavior
- Drop in grades
- Fear of being alone with the perpetrator
- Change in mood or behavior