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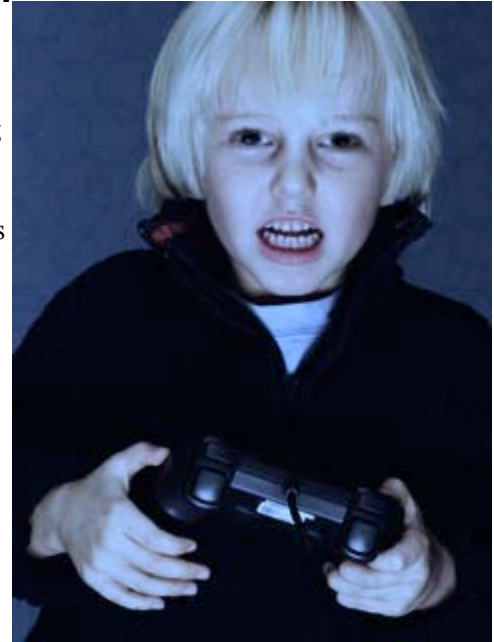
An Adult Who Allows Kids Get Away With Things Their Parents Wouldn't Allow

By [Sharon Womack Doty, J.D., M.H.R.](#)

One of the ways that child molesters groom children is that they allow young people to get away with things their parents wouldn't allow them to do. This can happen in a number of ways. For example, a molester might do something as subtle as letting a child play a video game or see a movie that is disapproved of by the child's parents. Or, it can be as sinister and manipulative as giving children alcohol or drugs, or showing them pornography.

In the beginning, this behavior may seem insignificant. After all, it was "just that one time" and it was just a movie or a video game. There was no real harm done; or it was just a lapse in judgment. Right? The problem is that the beginning is just that—the beginning.

Letting kids do things like watch forbidden movies or have a beer when nobody is looking are two examples of how the child molester employs various tools in a manipulative and calculating way to advance his or her standing in a child's life.



When the molester also begins to side with a child in a dispute between the child and the parent, the molester is beginning to exert himself or herself as confidante or surrogate. The child is now getting to do things he or she wants to do that the parents won't permit, and the child has an unexpected, powerful "adult" ally in a disagreement with the parents. So, in effect, the molester is both letting the child get away with things and creating the perception that the molester is the one who really cares about the child's wants and needs.

The child molester knows that this action can produce two crucial results in the grooming process:

1. Cutting the time needed for grooming: Siding with a child against a parent establishes an immediate level of trust and moves the grooming process forward very quickly. It eliminates the need for a lengthy and sometimes complicated grooming process.
2. Creating a conspiracy of silence: Agreeing with a child in a dispute with parents is a very effective way to trap the child in the molester's "master plan." The child is convinced that he or she cannot tell his or her parents about the "secret supporter" or other aspects of the relationship will become apparent. When the child molester applies this mode of operation, the veil of secrecy drops into position and the leverage the molester needs is in place.

The most difficult aspect of this particular warning sign is that it can continue undetected for a long time. The longer it continues, the more powerful the child's dependency on the molester. This is why other caring adults in the community—not just parents—must pay close attention. It is very important that third-party adults in the community take notice of situations that might indicate that an adult is letting children get away with things their parents won't allow or siding with children in disputes with parents.

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