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# EMPOWERED TO RAISE SAFE KIDS

## A GUIDEBOOK FOR PARENTS

Produced with the  
generous support of:



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## OUR MISSION STATEMENT

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Magen for Jewish Communities is dedicated to creating safer Jewish communities in Israel and around the world by developing and implementing programs and services that create a culture of transparency that prioritizes the well-being of victims, holds predators accountable, and eliminates the stigma surrounding sexual abuse.

Magen advocates for survivors of sexual abuse and exploitation within their communities, institutions and through the justice system.

We raise awareness and promote child-safety through educational events, creating and publishing resources for parents and educators, and the mainstream and social media.

We support survivors of sexual abuse with therapeutic and communal resources, as well as by standing with them throughout their journeys toward therapeutic healing and justice.

## OUR SERVICES

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- • Mental Health Support Services for Survivors and Families: matching survivors with professional help, facilitating support groups, and assisting with financial or situational barriers to therapy and healing.
- • Advocacy and Support for Survivors and Families in the Reporting, Investigation, and Court Processes.
- • Local and International Community Education and Awareness Events.
- • Online Educational programs and Resources.
- • Private Investigations in cooperation with local and international law enforcement and investigative media.

# THE 3 STEP APPROACH

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## STEP 1: LEARN THE FACTS, UNDERSTAND THE RISKS

- Realities - not blind trust - should influence decisions regarding children.
- Over 90% of sexual abuse happens to children by someone they KNOW, not by a stranger.
- Do not focus solely on the outdated “stranger-danger.”
- Do not expect obvious signs in a sex offender.
- The ONE THING that STOPS a predator from targeting a child: The possibility that they could be caught... If they think you are “on to them,” you lower the risk that they will target your child.

## STEP 2: MINIMIZE THE OPPORTUNITY

- A predator looks for ACCESS & PRIVACY with their intended target.
- More than 80% of sexual abuse occurs in one-adult/one-child situations.
- Pay attention to anyone who continually insists on one-on-one access to your child which does not include you. Do they have lots of reasons or excuses for this “alone time?”
- By eliminating or reducing certain one-to-one opportunities, we can dramatically lower the risk of sexual abuse.
- Think carefully about the safety of situations in which older youth have access to much younger children. Be alert to an older child or teen that seems aggressive or “over-sexualized” in any way. Use common sense.

## STEP 3: LISTEN, COMMUNICATE AND EMPOWER

- Children should not have to prevent sexual abuse by themselves.
- Our job is to provide them with the RIGHT skills, tools, information and language, without scaring them.
- Begin the dialog early and often, updating the message as children grow.
- Use child-friendly language & non-fearful examples.
- If your child tells you about an uncomfortable feeling they have because of someone’s inappropriate actions, language or touch: Do not overreact or under-react. Let them know it’s not their fault, and you want to help. Do not respond angrily, negatively or emotionally. Most importantly...believe the child if they tell you someone has touched them. It’s ok to say you don’t know what to do, and are going to ask an expert for help. Don’t promise not to tell anyone.

# PREVENTION FUNDAMENTALS

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1. Trusting Instinct
2. Building Self-Confidence
3. Recognizing Potential Situations and Behaviors/“cues and clues”
4. Taking Action

## DON'T EXPECT OBVIOUS SIGNS IN A MOLESTER.

Child molesters are experts at “grooming” and hiding their true selves. Be alert for people who work very hard trying to gain a lot of one-on-one time with your child, who seem too good to be true, or who go above and beyond the “normal or typical” relationship they should have with your child.

# RED FLAG WARNING SIGNS OF A POTENTIAL SEX OFFENDER

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Red flags can often be early signs of a sex offender's grooming process. One red flag does not immediately indicate that someone is an offender, but does suggest that this person's behavior, and their relationship with your child, be monitored more closely. More than one red flag should be taken seriously, and steps should immediately be taken to protect the child from possible sexual abuse.

A child predator needs ACCESS AND PRIVACY to victimize their target.

## PAY ATTENTION TO WHO IS PAYING ATTENTION TO YOUR KIDS!

- Someone who continually tries to arrange time alone with a child, often with lots of reasons or excuses which exclude you
- Someone who repeatedly befriends one "outstanding" child, singling them out, lavishing them with extra attention, praise, gifts, affection
- Someone who frequently offers favors to "help you out"; i.e. babysitting for free, transporting a child to activities, free lessons, or taking kids on overnight trips without their parents.
- Someone who uses guilt tactics when the child or parent insists on setting boundaries or limits
- Someone who insists on being physical with a child, (hugging, kissing, tickling, wrestling, lap sitting) even when the child does not want this physical attention
- Someone who makes inappropriate comments about a child's looks or body, particularly sexualizing a child
- Someone who continually invites children to spend time alone at their home, enticing them with the latest video or computer games, toys, gadgets, etc - especially an adult who does not have children of their own
- Someone who repeatedly ignores social, emotional, or physical boundaries or limits and seems to have no boundaries of their own
- Someone who frequently enters a bathroom or locker room where children are changing or showering and does not respect a child's need for privacy
- Someone who prefers to spend most of their free time with children and seems to have no interest in age-appropriate relationships or friendships
- Someone who appears especially preoccupied with one child
- Someone who insists on closed doors and an unobservable environment whenever they are with your child
- Someone who seeks to isolate the child from others
- Someone who treats a child as if he or she were older
- Someone who offers expensive gifts or money to a child for no reason
- Someone who undermines a parent's authority by allowing children (especially pre-teens) to engage in behaviors or activities that a parent does not allow
- Someone who frequently engages in accidental touching, touching games, or invades a child's personal space
- Someone who frequently volunteers to rescue a single parent, stepping in and taking care of parental duties, suggesting they can be a "role model" for the child
- Someone who offers to teach lessons to a child for free as a favor to the parent, when they would normally be paid for this job
- Someone who uses secrecy or tries to create a special/secretive relationship with one child
- Someone who seems "just too good to be true"

# BOUNDARIES

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When it comes to child safety, there are three different types of boundaries that a molester will attempt to “blur” during their grooming process. PHYSICAL, PERSONAL & RELATIONSHIP. Children (and parents) who do not have a clear understanding of appropriate boundaries can be vulnerable in situations that may be inappropriate or unsafe.

## BLURRY BOUNDARY VIOLATIONS

**PHYSICAL:** Ownership of our OWN BODIES - anyone who “invades” a child’s physical space (excessive touching games, etc.) and ignores that child’s request to stop. Be mindful of certain people who seem overly physical with affectionate gestures. Hugs and tickles are usually just fine, but...does that person seem to go “overboard” with their physical attention, especially if the child seems uncomfortable? Do they make you or your child feel guilty or embarrassed when you ask them to stop?

**PERSONAL:** Someone who makes inappropriate comments or suggestions about a child’s looks or body, including sharing inappropriate jokes, language, or photographs of a sexual nature with a child or creates a secretive relationship to establish a personal “bond” with your child.

## RELATIONSHIP BOUNDARIES

How to begin...

1. Every adult has a job with rules to follow
2. Consider the adults who play an active role in your child’s life
3. Establish the ground rules/boundaries for that person's relationship with your child

### EXAMPLES:

- **Soccer Coach** - instructs on basics of the game; including skills such as running, scoring, etc. Doesn't provide one-on-one transportation after practice or suggest “alone outings” with one child, does not take a child on an overnight trip
- **Music teacher** - teaches specific music skills for a fee; does not suggest “free” one-on-one lessons as a special treat or to “help” a parent out, does not offer to “babysit” for free
- **Ice Cream Man** - sells you ice cream, doesn't invite a child into his truck or take them on his neighborhood route. Does not continually give free ice cream or other treats to one “special friend,” does not share secrets with children
- **Camp Counselor** - Ensures a safe environment for kids, teaches a skill or facilitates group activities, doesn't shower or change clothes with children, doesn't not take one child away from the group for one-on-one activity, doesn't use sexual innuendo to tease a child
- **Neighbor/Friend/Relative** - Their job is to respect your boundaries and your child’s boundaries, rights, and feelings - even if they disagree with them. Their job is to help keep your child safe

Sex offenders “groom” a child or parent by slowly blurring the boundaries of their relationship. By doing so, they can set up a scenario in which to victimize a child, without that child or parent realizing their motive.

# COMMON TRICKS AND LURES

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These tricks are often used by predators to gain the trust of their intended victim. The calculated grooming process of a molester can often start with one or more of these manipulative strategies. Yet, in some instances, it is important to remember that not everyone who displays a certain type of behavior should automatically be assumed to be a sexual predator. However, when coupled with other behaviors or red flags, caution should be exercised. Use common sense, ask questions, and stay alert. If you recognize a possible “trick” by someone in your familiar circle, take action - eliminate access and privacy with that person and your child.

## **“YOU'RE SO SPECIAL” TRICK (THE “SPECIAL FRIEND” GROOMING TRICK)**

Lavishing special praise, excessive compliments, extra gifts and attention so that the victim feels they are very important or extra special. This grooming trick often works with children because children often seek attention and flattery from adults. Children are typically in need of attention or affection and are extremely vulnerable targets. This also enforces the child’s belief that abuse that occurs is their fault.

## **THE SPECIAL OUTING TRICK**

Predators look for access and private alone time with your child that excludes you. Who is looking to take your child on a special outing? Does it make sense? For example, a teacher or coach shouldn't ask to take one child on an outing because they're “buddies.” Secondly, is the outing so special, extraordinary, or in any way something that the parent typically wouldn't be able to provide. If a family is of limited means, is this person looking to take your child on an overnight trip to Disneyland?

## **OVERLY AFFECTIONATE LURE**

Repeated physical attention and/or affection given to a child, whether or not the child wants it.

## **THE CARETAKER TRICK**

Who's taking care of the kids for you? Nanny/sitter/relative? Know where they are going, for how long and check in with your child afterwards. If they went to the park, who else accompanied them, did they go to someone else's house? Be mindful if your child mentions another person who joined them, which you were not aware of. Consider a “nanny cam” if you are away from your child for long periods daily.

## **THE BULLY TRICK**

An older child using physical force or manipulative behavior on younger, more vulnerable children. This is often very hard for parents to confront because of denial and disbelief on the part of the offender's parents. However, sexual abuse by a juvenile is still illegal and inflicts the same kind of emotional and physical harm to the victim. A physically “over-aggressive” child or teen who seems “overly sexualized” in some way should be monitored, especially around younger children.

## **“I'M JUST LIKE YOU” TRICK**

An adult who convinces the child that they are exactly “alike” by knowing all the kid-friendly books, games, music and other interests of that child. They may also create common ground with the child by inducing the child to break a rule, and then convincing the child that they are now equally to blame and will both get in trouble if anyone finds out. For example, showing the child a movie against their parents' wishes, and then showing them pornography. A child lacks the maturity and nuance to understand that these are not equally problematic and the adult is responsible for any “rule-breaking” that has occurred.

## **ASSISTANCE LURES**

1. Asking a child for some kind of help; carrying packages for them, asking for directions, etc.
2. Repeatedly offering assistance to a parent in order to “help” relieve them of their parental duties or stress.

## **REWARD/BRIBERY LURE**

Convincing a child to play certain games, keep secrets, etc. by offering rewards, treats or gifts that are enticing.

# COMMON TRICKS AND LURES (CONTINUED)

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## **EMERGENCY LURE**

Trying to trick a child into going with them under the guise of “your parents are hurt/late, they asked me to come for you.”.

## **THE SINGLE PARENT TRICK**

Single parents can be vulnerable to a predator’s tricks because they may need assistance in some way. If you are a single parent, be mindful of someone who comes into your life and seems to be overly interested in your children, in a way that seems excessive or intimate. The “new” person should NOT be bathing your child, tucking them in at night without you around, creating a special secretive relationship with your child, or trying to convince you that they need time alone to “bond.”

## **ACCIDENTAL TOUCHING TRICK**

A convicted child predator admitted during an interview that he needs his target to get accustomed to his hands, to physical touch. Be alert if there are a lot of accidental touching games, brushing up against a child, excessive stroking, massaging, lap sitting, tickling, particularly if the child says “Stop” or seems uncomfortable. If your child tells you that another adult is overly physical in a way that seems out of bounds, step in and say something to that adult.

## **TOY LURE**

Kids are often enticed with some new toy or gadget. Sex offenders will often invite kids or teens into their homes to show them the latest video/computer game or equipment, etc. Beware of adults who do not have children of their own, yet are well stocked with toys, games, or gadgets that are generally used by kids and continually invite kids to spend time at their home without you.

## **AUTHORITY LURE**

An adult, using their position of authority, to threaten a child into certain behaviors or actions. Respect for authority is an important part of our culture; it’s important that children understand that respect must have its limits if boundaries are crossed and they are made to feel uncomfortable.

## **GUILT STRATEGY TRICK**

Making a child or parent feel guilty or confused because you have set your boundaries, or have taken an action to let that person know you are uncomfortable with their behavior.

## **UNDERMINING AUTHORITY TRICK**

Any adult who tries to convince a child that their parents’ rules or restrictions are unnecessary or over-protective. By befriending a child and giving them free reign to do as they please in that adult’s presence, the predator aligns himself closely with his intended victim and convinces that child that he is more fun or more understanding. In pitting the child against his/her parents, the predator gains more control, eventually manipulating them into a sexually abusive relationship.

## **THREAT TRICK**

Telling the child they will get into trouble for telling or that the offender will physically hurt them for telling. It’s important to have a conversation early on with your child that if someone scares them or tells them they will get in trouble for telling, it’s a LIE. Let your child know that if they tell you, you can and will protect them. If they don’t tell you, you won’t be able to and that person will still continue to bother or threaten them.

## **INTERNET LURE**

Children should never give out any personal information online. This includes not disclosing information about their school, town, sports or team names, nicknames, after school hangouts, etc. Predators can easily piece together bits of seemingly innocent information to determine where a child lives or goes to school.

# WHAT EVERY PARENT AND CHILD SHOULD KNOW...

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Without up-to-date information and safety skills, parents and children can be vulnerable to a molester's tricks and grooming techniques. As parents, we are our children's first defense when it comes to recognizing "thumbs up and thumbs down" situations and people, and how to act accordingly.

## TIPS FOR PARENTS

- Teach your child IT IS NEVER THEIR FAULT if someone tries to touch them inappropriately. They need to know there is an adult who will believe them and that will help them.
- Replace the concept of stranger-danger. Instead use the phrase tricky person...someone who tries to trick a child into breaking a safety rule or does something that feels weird, yucky, or unsafe.
- A tricky person can be someone you know, don't know, or know just a little bit.
- Be alert if your young child is often in the company of much older children, whether it's older cousins or friends, siblings of playmates, older children of nannies' and/or other caregivers.
- Pay attention to any adult who has singled out your child as extra special or frequently tries to arrange alone time with him/her. This includes family acquaintances, teachers, coaches, etc.
- Question if your child suddenly has gifts, toys, or expensive items that you didn't purchase for them.
- Listen to your child...if they don't want to be around a specific adult...they may be sensing a red flag feeling you're not aware of.
- Screen all potential babysitters for references no matter how they have come recommended to you.
- Periodically, ASK your children if there is anything you can help them with, if anything bothers them, or they need to talk about anything.
- LET KIDS KNOW: THEY CAN TRUST YOU WITH THEIR UH-OH FEELING!
- Always accompany young children to the bathroom in a public place and advise them never to play in or around the area.
- Create an environment in which your child feels free to talk to you. Let him/her know that you are interested and sensitive to their fears or concerns, no matter what it's about.

## TIPS FOR KIDS

- It's all right to say NO to anyone (an adult or even another child) if that person wants them to do something that makes them feel yucky or uncomfortable or just plain weird.
- Know that no one has the right to touch any part of their bodies that a bathing suit covers. No private parts games allowed.
- NEVER go into someone else's home or car without getting permission first...even if it's someone they know, such as a neighbor or local friend. If they want to accept a ride from someone they know, they need to call you to get permission and let you know when to expect them. (This ensures a would-be predator knows that you are aware and awaiting their return home.)
- NEVER accept candy or other treats from anyone without asking a parent first.
- NEVER play in empty buildings or places where there are no people around.
- MOVE AWAY from any car that pulls up beside them or any person who approaches them on foot, if they do not know them. Do not engage in any conversation with that person.
- THREE STEPS BACK...and get away from anyone who gives them an uh-oh feeling, touches them in a way that makes them feel badly, or talks to them in an uncomfortable manner - even if it's someone they know!
- IMMEDIATELY TELL a parent if an adult has asked them to keep any kind of secret from their parents, including secret gifts or treats, secret relationships, and especially any kind of secret about their body or one that makes them feel sad, scared or confused.

# SIGNS THAT A CHILD MAY BE AT-RISK TO HARM ANOTHER CHILD

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Over the last several years, research has begun to point to increased awareness of abuse perpetrated by children and teens. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs as well as research published by the Israeli National Council for the Child, child sexual abuse perpetrated by teens accounts for about one third of all sexual offenses against minors. Multiple studies have demonstrated that adolescents respond to intervention and therapeutic treatment far better than adult offenders and have far lower rates of recidivism, which makes it so critical to identify and intervene with teen offenders as early and quickly as possible.

Seek advice from a qualified mental health professional immediately if you know a child or adolescent who is:

- Confused about appropriate social rules, behaviors, or interactions.
- Experiences or responds to typical gestures of friendliness or affection as sexual.
- Explores his or her own natural sexual curiosity with younger children or those of differing size, status, ability, or power.
- Seeks out the company of younger children and spends an unusual amount of time with them rather than with peers.
- Takes younger children to “secret” places or hideaways or plays “special” games with them (e.g. playing doctor, undressing or touching games, etc.).
- Insists on physical contact with a child when the child resists the attention.
- Anxious, depressed or seeming to need help.
- Tells you they do not want to be alone with a child, or group of children, or becomes anxious about being with a particular young person.
- Was physically, sexually or emotionally abused and has not been offered adequate resources and support for recovery.
- Seems to be crying for help, i.e. behaves as if they want to be caught; leaves “clues” or acts in ways that seem likely to provoke a discussion about sexual issues.
- Impulsively sexual or aggressive.
- Links sexuality and aggression in language or behavior (e.g. makes sexual threats or insults).
- Unable to control inappropriate sexual behaviors involving another child after being told to stop.
- Engages in sexually harassing behavior.
- Shares alcohol, drugs, or sexual material with younger children or teens.
- Views sexual images of children on the Internet or elsewhere.
- Forces sexual interaction, including direct contact and non-contact (like exposing genitals) on another adolescent or child.

For this and more important information about child and adolescent offenders, see the following sites:

[www.safersociety.org/uploads/WP075-DoChildren.pdf](http://www.safersociety.org/uploads/WP075-DoChildren.pdf)

[www.psychologytoday.com/blog/what-your-child-needs-know-about-sex-and-when/201202/teaching-your-child-about-children-who](http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/what-your-child-needs-know-about-sex-and-when/201202/teaching-your-child-about-children-who)

[www.atsa.com/adolescents-engaged-in-sexually-abusive-behavior](http://www.atsa.com/adolescents-engaged-in-sexually-abusive-behavior)

This page has been adapted from [stopitnow.org](http://stopitnow.org)

# INTERNET SAFETY

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## 1 IN 5 KIDS WILL RECEIVE A SEXUAL SOLICITATION VIA THE INTERNET

- Computers belong in common areas, not in bedrooms or closed rooms.
- Educate yourself on setting appropriate filters for explicit images/language for your computer.
- Be aware that internet filters, and even “kosher internet” options can be very helpful tools, but they are not a replacement for vigilance and educating children about safe internet use.
- Explain the dangers of sharing personal information - full name, email, phone, address etc. “checking in” at specific locations on social media - which tells people exactly where they are at that moment. You may want to consider leaving off your child’s last name on their social media accounts so they cannot be easily identified by a potential predator.
- At whatever age you feel comfortable to allow your child to use social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, Youtube etc - do so, but also sign up so that you can follow your child - see what videos they’re posting. Make sure their privacy settings are set so that only friends can view their page. Tell them to not accept friend requests or respond to messages of people they do not know.
- Not all social media apps are created equal. Educate yourself about the current popular apps and which pose a higher or lower potential risk for your children.
- If your child plays games through the internet (even through game stations) talk about the “chat” options and how strangers may try to contact them - not everyone is who they say they are.
- Computer and phone time should be limited, they shouldn’t be on it all hours of the night.
- Parents should be tracking what sites their children are visiting, and have an idea of who they are calling.
- For yourself and for your children, be very cautious what photos/videos you share over the internet. Even images that may seem innocent- pages run by pedophiles will share images of children in shorts, bathing suits, sitting on the toilet, in the tub. What may be cute pictures of your beautiful children can be used as “teasers” for pedophiles.

Talk to your teens & pre-teens about people asking for them to share a “sexy” photo of him/herself. You’d be surprised how many children aren’t scared by the fact that a strange man is asking for this, and in turn “flattering” the child on their looks and convince them to take more photos or more risqué poses etc. (This is a problem we have increasingly observed within the Orthodox Jewish community as well.)

To read more about cyber safety check out the following links:

[www.parenting.com/gallery/social-media-monitoring-kids?page=8](http://www.parenting.com/gallery/social-media-monitoring-kids?page=8)

[www.upstateparent.com/story/life/2015/10/30/socialmedia-positives-negatives-kids-experts-say/74885906/](http://www.upstateparent.com/story/life/2015/10/30/socialmedia-positives-negatives-kids-experts-say/74885906/)

This page has been adapted from [themamabeareffect.org](http://themamabeareffect.org)

# SAFETY TIPS FOR PARENTS & KIDS IN PREVENTING ABUSE & ABDUCTION BY STRANGERS

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While statistics indicate that the vast majority of abuse is perpetrated by someone close to the child, there are some important precautions that can help prevent our children from becoming a victim of abuse or abduction by strangers. Do not rely on the outdated “stranger-danger” concept - EMPOWER kids to recognize “tricky people” and potentially unsafe situations & environments- these apply both to strangers and people they know! The most common tricks & lures used by individuals attempting to take a child to abuse from a public place include: offering a child a ride, offering a child sweets/candy/ money, showing the child an interesting toy, asking a child for directions, luring the child with an animal and/or asking for help with groceries or finding something, appearing to be very friendly and pretending to know the child or their family.

- Know where your children are, who is supervising them, and where they go. (Nannies, babysitters, etc. should not be bringing your children to visit people that you do not know or haven't granted permission first).
- Don't take shortcuts through alleys or isolated areas. Stick to well-trafficked areas.
- Don't put your child's name on the outside of their jackets, backpacks, and other belongings. A child's “danger-radar” is short-circuited when someone calls them by name.
- CHECK FIRST - A child should always check in with their parent or guardian first before changing their plans, going into someone's home or accepting a ride. If you can't CHECK FIRST, the answer is NO.
- If someone grabs them and says: “Don't Yell / Don't Run” - Kids should do the OPPOSITE: Yell, scream and run!! That person is basically telling you that if you scream or run, they will have to STOP trying to victimize you.
- Grownups don't ask kids for help. When kids are alone or just with their friends, they should not assist anyone who may be asking for directions, help with a lost pet, or carrying packages to or from their car/home- without asking a parent first . Teach kids about “the helping rule.”
- Safety is more important than being polite. Teach kids that it's okay to say NO and get away quickly anytime they get an “uh-oh feeling” from someone who is trying to break a safety rule. If anyone makes you feel sad, scared, or confused, trust your instinct. It's better to be impolite than unsafe. This goes for people they KNOW and DON'T KNOW!
- For children younger than 9 years old, create an Ultimate Safe Grownup List of two or three other people that you would send if you couldn't pick them up. (For example: an aunt, parent of their close friend, Grandma). Let your children know you would NEVER send someone they don't know. If someone who is not on this list tries to pick them up or get them into a car, get away quickly.
- Parents: practice safety skills by creating “teachable moments” to make sure kids understand these tips and strategies. Review often, using common sense “what if” scenarios. You don't need to use scare-tactics. Empower your children, give them confidence, and let them know: YOU HAVE THEIR BACK!

# WHEN ABUSE HAPPENS AT HOME - INCEST

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Incest refers to sexual contact between two members of the same family. The parameters of what constitutes the legal crime of incest varies between states and countries. But regardless of the legal definition where one lives, unwanted sexual touching by a family member can have long-lasting devastating effects on a survivor.

Why is it difficult to talk about incest?

It is especially difficult for incest survivors to talk about their experiences, for a number of reasons. They may truly care about and/or love the abuser and be afraid of what will happen to the abuser if they tell. The abuser may be a primary caregiver to the victim, so he/she may wonder who will take care of him/ her if the abuser is taken away or put in jail. The victim may be concerned about other family members' reactions, fearing they won't be believed or will be told it is their own fault. They may have already tried to tell someone what happened, but the abuse was ignored or minimized. The victim might have been told by the perpetrator that what is happening is normal or happens in every family, and they truly don't realize that it is a form of abuse. Or the abuser might have threatened the victim, who might be afraid for their own safety, or the safety of other family members. The incest victim may not know that help is available, or they don't know who to trust.

Incest is a deeply damaging and painful form of sexual abuse, and is far more common than most of society realises. In the US, approximately 35% of victims of sexual abuse are abused by family members. For many years, incest was a heavily stigmatized area of sexual abuse but today, it is important to know that there is hope, resources, and healing for survivors of incest.

Be aware that incest happens in all kinds of families, including those who are successful and/or well-educated. It's important to be mindful of personal boundaries within families, and for children to receive the message that safety rules apply equally with family members and people they love.

If you suspect or your child discloses that they have been a victim of incest- don't panic. There are resources available to help your family navigate this painful challenge. Incest thrives in environments of secrecy, so it's critical to seek help immediately, even if your first instinct is to keep it quiet in order to protect the offender or family unit. This also applies if the perpetrator promises never to do it again- in most cases, they will not be able to keep to this promise without therapeutic intervention.

## FACTS AND STATISTICS:

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- Over 90% of all childhood sexual abuse occurs by someone the child knows and has a trusted, established relationship with...not by a stranger. <sup>1</sup>
- Approximately 30% of sexually abused children are abused by family members. <sup>1</sup>
- 1 in 5 children in Israel are sexually exploited by the age of 18. <sup>6</sup>
- 70% of sexual offenders have between one and nine victims. <sup>3</sup>
- The most vulnerable age range for childhood sexual abuse is between the ages of 8 and 12 years old. <sup>4</sup>
- Children with disabilities are 4-10 times more vulnerable than their non-disabled peers. <sup>5</sup>
- 80% of sexual abuse occurs in a secluded, one-on-one environment...a sexual predator needs two elements: ACCESS AND PRIVACY. <sup>2</sup>
- Fabricated abuse reports constitute only 1-4% of ALL reported cases.
- Sexual abuse escalates over time, in an on-going relationship, lasting an average of 4 years.
- A study by the National Institute of Mental Health reported: There are approximately 39 million survivors of sexual abuse in America today.
- Childhood sexual abuse is one of the most under-reported crimes. Approximately only 38% of child victims will ever disclose their abuse.
- The typical sex offender will commit an average of 280 sex crimes in the course of their lifetime if not caught.
- The younger the victim, the more likely their abuser is a family member.
- Childhood sexual abuse occurs among ALL socioeconomic, educational, racial, and cultural groups throughout the United States and the world.
- Homosexual individuals ARE NOT more likely to abuse children than heterosexual individuals.

1 (Finkelhor, 2012)

2 (Snyder, H. N. 2000).

3 (Elliott & Kilcoyne, 1995)

4 (Finkelhor, 1994)

5 (National Resource Center on CSA, 1992)

6 (Israel National Council for the Child, 2013)

## GROOMING

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89% OF OFFENDERS GAIN ACCESS TO CHILDREN THROUGH GROOMING- manipulation, charm, and enticement, not through use of violence or a weapon. Grooming takes place often in the form of relationships with potential victims and their families prior to the abuse; an ingratiation into a family and their social circle or family dynamic. GROOMING is a process by which an offender gradually draws a victim (and the victim's family) into a sexual relationship and maintains that relationship in secret. At the same time, the offender may also fill roles within the victim's family that make him trusted and valued. It is the beginning of the "con" and it's very calculated.

### GROOMING TRICKS OF THE TRADE:

- Establishing trust/exclusive friendship
- Excessive attention, flattery, affection, gifts, physical attention
- Pressure / Guilt Tactics
- Desensitization/breaking the "touch barrier"
- Secrecy
- Bribery

**PAY ATTENTION TO WHO'S PAYING ATTENTION TO YOUR CHILD.**

# MANDATORY REPORTING IN ISRAEL

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## WHAT IS MANDATED REPORTING?

Mandated reporting is a law that requires individuals to report any kind of abuse of a child or vulnerable adult to government authorities. In Israel, this law is sometimes referred to as “Chok Moran” (The law of Moran). Passed in 1989, Chok Moran was named for a 5 year old girl named Moran from Tiberias, who was murdered in 1988 by her mother’s boyfriend, after years of severe abuse and torture. After her death, the ensuing investigation revealed that countless neighbors had known of the abuse for years and had failed to report it, believing it was not their place to interfere in a “family matter.” This revelation brought shock and horror to the Israeli public and authorities, and the Knesset passed the law the following year.

## WHAT MUST BE REPORTED?

According to Israeli law, abuse and neglect are criminal offenses, and the law requires one to report cases where the abuser is a family member or an adult responsible for the child. This includes but is not limited to school staff, baby-sitters, school bus drivers, etc.

If you have knowledge or reasonable suspicion that a child has been abused or neglected by someone not in those categories, it is still very much recommended to report, though not legally mandatory.

## WHO IS REQUIRED TO REPORT?

ALL ADULTS with a REASONABLE SUSPICION OR KNOWLEDGE that a child has been abused or neglected, or is at risk of being abused or neglected. (This differs from the law in many other western countries, where only professionals are mandated to report.)

## MANDATORY REPORTING OFFENCE:

The punishment for failing to report abuse and neglect is six months imprisonment for a professional, and three months for a layperson.

## HOW DOES REPORTING WORK?

In Israel, a child who has been abused (or where abuse is suspected) is not interviewed by a police officer, rather they are brought to a special center where highly trained social workers interview the child. All necessary police and medical personnel are present in the center, so if necessary, they can be involved without having to make multiple appointments. In situations where abuse by a parent is suspected, the social worker may interview the child in their school. The interview is video-taped, and if the case proceeds to trial, the video is viewed by the judge in place of the child’s testimony in court.

These centers are assigned by jurisdiction; residents of the Jerusalem region go to Mercaz Hagana Bet Lin on the Hebrew University Campus, Har Hatzofim Jerusalem, by appointment.

(In certain situations, the center may recommend that the child visit the Bat Ami office first, listed in the resource section).

Adolescents reporting a crime (whether current or historical) are interviewed by a choker(et) noar (youth officer), a specially trained police officer. Most mercazei hagana and police stations have chokrei noar, but since they are not always there it is recommended to make an appointment.

Adults reporting sexual abuse can do so at any police station, but it is preferred to report in the city where the abuse took place. If a specific gender or language is needed, it is recommended to make an appointment.

If the suspected abuse is occurring within the family, reports can be made directly to the revacha (social services).

The full list of offices and numbers for reporting can be found on the support resource and services page (15).



# WHAT IF...? A TEACHING TOOL FOR PARENTS

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Parents and Kids: Come up with your own personal safety solutions for the following scenarios...(Hint: Use one or more of the Super-10 Play It Safe Rules)

- A. What if... you are waiting for the bus and someone aside from Mom or Dad pulls over and offers you a ride
- B. What if...someone else tries to pick you up from school (when you know you're supposed to get picked up only by your Mom or Dad)?
- C. What if... an adult asks you to help them carry their groceries into their house?
- D. What if...an older kid wants to play a "bathing suit area/private parts" game and tells you not to tell your Mom and Dad?
- E. What if...a neighbor sees you playing outside and invites you into their home for a special treat?
- F. What if...someone touches you in a way that makes you feel sad, confused or just plain "yucky?"

## HERE ARE SOME EASY "SAFE-SMARTS" REMINDERS:

- Safe grown-ups don't ask kids for help...(especially if you're by yourself!)
- You don't have to be too polite to anyone who gives you an "uh-oh" feeling...even if it's someone you know.
- No secrets from Mom and Dad...no matter what! If someone says "don't tell...TELL!"
- Always check first with the grownup in charge before: changing your plans, getting into a car, or accepting anything even if it's from someone you know. If you can't check first, the answer is NO.
- YOUR BODY BELONGS ONLY TO...YOU!

# BOOKS FOR KIDS & ADULTS

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## FOR KIDS

**No Trespassing - This is My Body!** - by Pattie Fitzgerald

**Super Duper Safety School** - by Pattie Fitzgerald

**I Said NO!** - by Kimberly King

**Some Secrets Should Never Be Kept** - by Jayneen Sanders

Jewish Books [ **Let's Stay Safe** - by Bracha Goetz, an initiative of Project Yes (English, Hebrew, Yiddish)

**Talking About Private Places** - by Bracha Goetz

## FOR ADULTS

**Protecting The Gift** - by Gavin DeBecker

**Predators and Molesters/100 Questions Answered by a Former Prosecutor** - by Robin Sax

Jewish Books [

**Abuse in the Jewish Community: Religious and Communal Factors that Undermine the Apprehension of Offenders and the Treatment of Victims** - by Michael J. Salamon

**Breaking the Silence: Sexual Abuse in the Jewish Community** - Edited by David Mandel & David A. Pelcovitz

**Sexual Abuse, Shonda and Concealment in Orthodox Jewish Communities** - by Michael Leshner & Dane S. Claussen

# SUPPORT RESOURCES AND SERVICES

## **ELI (IRGUN LHAGANAT YELADIM)**

(Hebrew) ELI offers high-level professional training courses, a hotline for parents, and workshops for children on personal safety, bullying, and other related topics.

Website: [www.eli.org.il](http://www.eli.org.il)

## **MOATZA LSHALOM HAYELED**

(Hebrew and English) The Moatza is an internationally acclaimed center that provides a legal aid program for victims, national level advocacy and extensive research in the area of child protection.

Website: [www.children.org.il](http://www.children.org.il)

## **MERCAZ NOGA**

(Hebrew and English) The Noga Legal Center for Victims of Crime was established to offer legal advice and representation to victims of serious crimes and to raise awareness in Israel of the needs of the victims. The Noga Center represents families whose loved ones have been murdered, rape victims, and children who have been physically, emotionally, or sexually abused.

Phone: 03-9299533

Website: [www.moked.noga.org.il](http://www.moked.noga.org.il)

## **TAHEL- CRISIS SUPPORT LINE FOR RELIGIOUS WOMEN AND CHILDREN**

(Volunteers in Hebrew, English, Yiddish, Russian, French, Spanish, and Amharic) Tahel provides support for women who have suffered abuse, as well as conducting workshops for children on personal safety, and staff training for educational institutions on preventing abuse and harassment.

Phone: 02-673-0002

## **WOMEN'S RAPE CRISIS LINE**

(Hebrew) 1202

## **MEN'S RAPE CRISIS LINE**

(Hebrew) 1203

## **BAT AMI- HADDASAH EIN KEREM (ALSO KNOWN AS CHEDER 4)**

Bat Ami is a department in Haddasah Ein Kerem hospital, located in a room immediately adjacent to the emergency room, where rape victims can receive the full medical examinations, treatments, and interventions they require.

Website: [www.hadassah.org.il](http://www.hadassah.org.il)

## **SHALOM BANAYICH**

(Hebrew) Individual and group treatment for child, adolescent, and adult perpetrators. Phone: 03-618-2525

## **MERCAZ TAMAR**

(Hebrew & English) Funded by the revacha, Mercaz Tamar offers trauma therapy to adult survivors of child sexual abuse. Phone: 02-622-1504

## **MERCAZ ALMA**

Chareidi (Hebrew) Funded by the revacha, Mercaz Alma offers trauma therapy to chareidi adult survivors of child sexual abuse. Phone: 02-630-8283

## **ELEM**

(Hebrew) Elem is an organization that works with youth at risk, with a department devoted to treatment of adolescent perpetrators. Phone: \*2866

Website: [www.elem.org.il](http://www.elem.org.il)

## **FORUM TAKANA**

(Hebrew and English) Forum Takana is a group of 30 prominent individuals from within the religious community committed to ending sexual violence and harassment by persons in positions of leadership in the community.

Website: [www.takana.org.il](http://www.takana.org.il)

## **VAAD RABBANIM YERUSHALAYIM**

(Hebrew and English) With professionals on staff, the vaad harabbanim in Yerushalayim can provide halachic advice pertaining to the laws and rules regarding child protection in Israel. They provide support and counseling, mediation when necessary.

Phone: 02-537-3408

## **ERAN**

(Hebrew, Russian, Arabic) Eran is Israel's only emotional first aid service and suicide hotline, and provides a confidential 24-hour hotline, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

Website: [www.eran.org.il](http://www.eran.org.il)

Phone: 1201

## **SHEKEL- FOR VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

(Hebrew) Shekel is an organization that provides assistance to individuals with special needs and their families, and has a specific department devoted to supporting individuals with special needs who have been the victims of any kind of violence or assault.

Website: [www.shekel.org.il](http://www.shekel.org.il)

Phone: 02-671-1710

## **ENOSH- THE ISRAELI MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION**

Enosh is committed to promoting the welfare and right of people dealing with psychiatric disabilities. They provide various therapies and programs for individuals with psychiatric disabilities and their families.

Website: [www.enosh.org.il](http://www.enosh.org.il)

Phone: 074-755-6100

## **MACHON ARGAMAN**

Offers sex education for individuals with developmental disabilities, with specific resources for those individuals who have acted out or perpetrated sexually.

Website: [www.machonargaman.co.il](http://www.machonargaman.co.il)

# REPORTING

## **FOR EMERGENCY (CHILD IN DANGER)**

Call police in each city at 100

## **MISRAD HACHINUCH (BOARD OF EDUCATION)**

For reporting suspected abuse or inappropriate conduct within a school, for parents and students, call: 1-800-222-003

## **FOR REVACHA (SOCIAL SERVICES)**

National Hotline: 118

To reach an office in your city: 106

## **MERCAZ HAGANA, BET LIN- JERUSALEM**

Call: 02- 644-8844

(Note- the full list of the Mercazei Hagana throughout the country can be found at <http://www.molsa.gov.il/populations/criminalvictims/pages/protectioncenters.aspx>)



If you need a referral for a therapist, are in need of support, or would like to report an abuser; please contact Magen at [02-372-4073](tel:02-372-4073) or [support@magen-israel.org](mailto:support@magen-israel.org) and we will do our best to help you. For more information visit [www.magen-israel.org](http://www.magen-israel.org)

#### TO SUPPORT MAGEN'S LIFESAVING WORK:

<https://www.jgive.com/new/en/ils/charity-organizations/2613>

#### Bank transfers:

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