



## Be Alert To Common Tricks



*Most child molesters are known to those they victimize in some capacity. In many cases the molesters are family members, friends, coaches, teachers, etc. Despite this circumstance, there are rare occasions when child molesters are not known to those they victimize. This flyer is intended to help keep children safe from potential molesters who are strangers.*

**THE BRIBE OR OFFER TRICK:** The victim is offered something he or she might want. A young child might be offered candy or a toy; a teen might be offered money, free food, a ride, or a trip to some place novel or exciting. Sometimes a predator will take a valued belonging and then offer to return it only if the victim goes with the person or allows sexual contact.

**THE ANIMAL TRICK:** The child/teen is lured away from others by an invitation to play with or receive the gift of a cute or unusual animal.


**THE EMERGENCY TRICK:** A predator pretends that a fire, accident, illness, death, or some other emergency has happened to the victim's family, home, or friend. The person may also say there was a change in plans and he/she is to pick up the victim because the prearranged ride fell through.

**THE HELP TRICK:** The child/teen is asked for help: directions, to use the phone, to carry heavy bags, to search for someone or something lost, like a pet, child, or money.

**THE FRIEND TRICK:** The predator pretends to know the family and says that the child's parents have asked him/her to give the child a ride home. With teens, the predator may pretend to have a mutual friend to lure and separate the teen from others.

**THE BAD CHILD TRICK:** The predator accuses the child/teen of doing something wrong. The child/teen is ordered to go with the person. Sometimes a real-looking badge or ID is shown as fake proof of the predator's official status. Sometimes a child/teen will be convinced by someone they trust that his/her parents do not want

more tricks →



him or her around anymore because the child/teen is a troublemaker, nuisance, or obstacle to the parents' happiness.

**THE FLATTERY TRICK:** The predator might ask the victim to go with him/her (posing as a photographer) so pictures or a video can be taken: team photo, newspaper story, acting, modeling, surveys, etc.

**THE OPEN THE DOOR TRICK:** The predator tricks the victim into opening the house door or car door. The person might look like a repair person or say he/she needs to use the phone, deliver a package, or needs help or directions. Sometimes a minor car accident is staged to get the victim to pull over and open the car door.

**THE SECRET TRICK:** Sometimes victims are warned to keep physical and sexual harassment or assault a secret because: no one will believe them, it is their fault, their parents and friends will be angry or reject them, or something awful will happen to them or loved ones if they tell. Often the victimization continues because the victim is afraid these threats might be true.

**NETWORKING TRICK:** Children and teens have been lured into dangerous situations by people using computer online services to make contact. The communications usually start as harmless exchanges, but then the predator asks for a face-to-face meeting or the messages become increasingly sexual in content.

More information is available from the following organizations:

Jacob Wetterling Resource Center 800-325-HOPE or 800-325-4673  
or 651-714-4673 [www.jwrc.org](http://www.jwrc.org)

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children 800-THE-LOST  
or 800-843-5678 [www.missingkids.com](http://www.missingkids.com)

Stop It Now! Minnesota [www.stopitnow.com/mn](http://www.stopitnow.com/mn)  
651-644-8515 [stopitnowmn@projectpathfinder.org](mailto:stopitnowmn@projectpathfinder.org)



For additional information about the Minnesota Department of Corrections, visit [www.doc.state.mn.us](http://www.doc.state.mn.us) or phone 651-361-7200, TTY 800-627-3529. This information will be provided in an alternative format upon request.  
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