

# Stage Four: Overcoming victim resistance

– this stage involves the offender making the child do what the offender wants

In the fourth and final step of Dr David Finkelhor's model of how perpetrators of sexual harm work, the potential abuser must overcome the child's possible resistance to being sexually abused.

Abusers may sense which children are good potential targets, who can be intimidated or co-coerced to keep a secret or otherwise manipulated. Abusers report that they can almost instinctively pick out a vulnerable child on whom to focus their sexual attentions while ignoring those who might resist.

At this stage, there are three possible outcomes for the child:

1

The child may resist by overtly saying no and running away, or covertly by displaying a confident and assertive manner which conveys strong messages to the abuser not to try for fear of detection or exposure.



2

The child may resist but still be abused through force or violence.



3

A child may resist but be overcome through coercion.



# Signs that an adult may be using their relationship with a child for sexual reasons:

The signs that an adult may be using their relationship with a child for sexual reasons may not be obvious. We may feel uncomfortable about the way they play with the child or seem always to be favouring them and creating reasons for them to be alone.

There may be cause for concern about the behaviour of an adult or young person if they:

- Refuse to allow a child enough privacy or to make their own decisions on personal matters.
- Insist on physical affection such as kissing, hugging or wrestling even when the child clearly does not want it.
- Are overly interested in the sexual development of a child or teenager.
- Insist on time alone with a child with no interruptions.
- Spend most of their spare time with children and have little interest in spending time with people their own age.
- Regularly offer to baby-sit children for free or take children on overnight outings alone.
- Buy children expensive gifts or give them money for no apparent reason.
- Frequently walk in on children/teenagers in the bathroom.
- Treat a particular child as a favourite, making them feel 'special' compared with others in the family.
- Pick on a particular child.

For more information, visit: [www.parentsprotect.co.uk](http://www.parentsprotect.co.uk)

## Always remember:

You need to take sensible precautions with who has access to your children. If the Police or social workers are warning you about a potential predator having access to your children, you must take it seriously. The potential outcomes for your child are not worth taking the risk. You must prioritise the safety of your child above your own need to be in this relationship.