

# GROOMING & TWO-DEEP LEADERSHIP



## GROOMING OVERVIEW

Grooming occurs when an adult targets a minor and works to earn the trust of the minor, the minor's family, and the community with the goal of engaging in misconduct.

Grooming can be subtle, some key warning signs include attempts to befriend the minor as a peer or "cool adult"; giving the minor gifts and special attention; talking to the minor about sexual experiences or desires; being helpful and non-threatening to the minor's family; volunteering for situations that involve spending time alone with the minor; and/or using status to have one-on-one interactions with the minor.

Grooming involves patterns in which someone: engages you and your child to build trust beyond their role by offering special treatment; isolates your child by setting up ways to be alone with them or interfering with their friend and family relationships; tests boundaries by blurring the line between inappropriate behaviors; and/or sexualizes interactions by pushing boundaries and introducing sexual topics and actions.

### Best Practices

As a parent or guardian to a minor athlete, you have the ability to protect your children from abuse and prevent situations that are conducive of abuse.

- Be aware of and well-versed in SkateSafe® and U.S. Center for SafeSport athlete protection policies
- Advocate for your child when you see concerning behavior from adult participants
- Keep lines of communication open with your child to ensure comfort
- Talk to your children about boundaries
- Ensure two-deep leadership is always followed

## TWO-DEEP LEADERSHIP OVERVIEW

Two-deep leadership is the cornerstone of U.S. Figure Skating's abuse prevention policies. Two-deep leadership is a mandatory policy that requires at least one other person to always be present when an adult and minor are interacting in private ("rule of three").

For example, a permitted private interaction would include two adults and one minor OR one adult and two minors. This policy specifically applies to ALL private interaction such as meetings behind closed doors, individual training sessions, electronic communication, and travel/lodging.

For more information about U.S. Figure Skating's Two-Deep Leadership policy, please refer to the [SkateSafe® Handbook](#).

## RESOURCES

U.S. Figure Skating is committed to preventing abuse of minor athletes and rely on the assistance of parents of minor athletes to ensure the awareness of the dangers of abuse are communicated in an educational and appropriate manner.

These conversations with your minor athlete can be uncomfortable, but they are necessary to prevent abuse. Here are some helpful resources for parents and guardians to have in your toolkit:

- U.S. Center for SafeSport Podcasts
  - [Understanding Grooming](#)
  - [Conversations with Your High School Aged Athlete](#)
  - [Conversations with Your Middle School Aged Athlete](#)
  - [Conversations with Your School-Aged Athlete](#)
- Training and Education
  - [What Parents Need to Know - Grooming in Sport](#)
  - [Parent and Guardian's Handbook for Safer Sport](#)
  - [SafeSport Courses](#)

Need assistance from SkateSafe® or the U.S. Center for SafeSport? Report a concern to SkateSafe® [here](#) and to U.S. Center for SafeSport [here](#).