

Pedophiles and Predators in the Entertainment Industry

Recently, Anne & I started on a path that has ultimately changed us as people, and also forever changed our views about some elements of the entertainment industry.

What began as what we thought was an isolated incident of business exploitation on Ebay turned into our discovery of multiple instances of inappropriate behavior by multiple individuals, yet each had a very clear similar pattern of questionable behaviors that we want all parents to be aware of.

Our purpose in providing this information is that we feel there are some unpleasant things your family needs to be aware of, and that you need to be able to recognize some of the behaviors that are suspect and unique to our children in the industry. As always, we advocate family rights and recognize that families will come to different conclusions and 'draw their line' in different places. We just want to feel that every family adopts some process in making these decisions.

We could not find an expert on pedophilia in our specific industry, so we set out to educate ourselves as much as possible by reading materials, books, articles. We viewed movies, and corresponded with experts. We retained an Intellectual Property Law Firm to assist us in preparation of our materials. We have boxes of information and records and assure you that what is written here is based solely on facts. We have also had so many parents help with researching, developing and proofing the tools, and sharing their stories - this is truly a group effort.

"Each new person that presents himself in your child's life (and yours) could be the best thing that ever happened - or the worst. He could contribute humor, joy, friendship, even heroism to your family - or he could contribute pain and regret. Parents who appreciate that these are the stakes make more careful choices". - Gavin De Becker

There are 2 major components to this message. 1. Defining the risks, and 2. Suggestions on how to best minimize them. In the bigger picture, all parents everywhere should be educated and aware of the changes the internet has brought about for children. As a society, there are a lot of educational efforts aimed at parents regarding their child's internet usage habits. However, there is another phenomenon related to the internet and children that is not as often discussed. That is pedophilia and it is alive and well in our industry.

Pedophilia is not a crime. Pedophilia, as defined by the American Psychiatric Association, is "sexual attraction to a prepubescent child; clinically, a person 16 years of age or older who is at least five years older than the child". Pedophiles will prefer males, females or both, but the pedophile is almost always male. A diagnosis can be made based on the act or fantasy on the subjects' part. It is considered an incurable mental disorder, although there is a movement within the pedophile community to remove the term from medical journals in an attempt to normalize it. Pedophilia is a diagnosis, a condition, a sexual orientation. It is not a criminal act.

Child molestation is a CRIMINAL term. A child molester is described as an older person, male or female, which experiences any type of sexual act with another person who is a child. The majority of child molesters (more than 95%) are male (www.crimelibrary.com). With *situational offenders*, the motivational factors are criminal in nature and they are not necessarily pedophiles. Their crime is based on the situation and the availability of the victim (abductions, for example). A second type of offender is the *preferential child molester*. This offender usually has

a sexual preference for children and maintains these desires throughout their life. They can have an astounding number of victims, they know the victim and they 'groom' them over a long period of time. In more than 90% of rapes of children less than 12 years old, the offender knew the victim (U.S. Dept of Justice). Simply stated, the preferential child molester is a pedophile who has carried his fantasies and desires into reality.

Child Pornography is the CRIMINAL term as defined by U.S. Law (each country defines the term differently which is important, since the internet is an international medium). Child pornography is "The production of such visual depiction involves the use of a minor (under 18) engaging in sexually explicit conduct (defined as any form of sex or lascivious exhibition of the genitals or pubic area); or such visual depiction of such conduct" (18 U.S. C. ss2252)

Child Erotica is a murky categorization of media that is not legally defined and is not necessarily illegal. Child erotica includes images of naked children that don't meet the strict legal definition of child pornography. Images may be of an apparently 'innocent' nature such as children in bathing suits, or may be considered "art". Since it is difficult to prove "lascivious intent" by the producer, which would be required to categorize the photos as pornography, these images by themselves are generally legal, although considered by most experts to be child exploitation.

According to author and police detective Mark Gado (All About Pedophiles and Child Molesters) pedophiles will "often have extensive collections of child pornography or child erotica that feed their fantasy world. These photos and drawings will typically be cutouts from newspapers and magazines that other people would find inoffensive or even innocuous. *Pedophiles will frequently videotape children from television shows and commercials.* They will also attend sporting events in schools and surreptitiously tape these events. These collections of pornography are often considered the pedophiles' most valued possession... Child erotica collections vary in quality and quantity...police have found that the older the pedophile, the more extensive the collection will be. Since true child pornography requires a clandestine effort to obtain, the majority of these collections will be erotic in nature as opposed to pornographic.

From a practical standpoint, collections serve crucial needs for the pedophile child molester. First, child erotica and pornography are used in his crimes. The pedophile will display this material to a victim to lower his inhibitions and introduce him to the possibilities of sex with an adult. This is a very important step in the seduction process. Secondly, the pedophile will use the material for their own gratification...still others will use photographs of the abuse to blackmail their victims."

The rules have changed with the increasing popularity of the internet.

"Modern technology in the form of the internet has made interaction between pedophiles easier than in the past. The computer, in fact, has turned out to be the greatest single advancement in the history of pedophilia." - Det. Mark Gado

Our children have risks above and beyond those in the general public.

The unique situations of young performers lives and their presence on the internet, which increase their risks, are :

- Seeking Employment
- Contests and Competitions
- Headshots - Publicity photos - Paparazzi
- Interaction with professional photographers (frequently)
- Fan Mail and Fan Contact

Professional coaches and classes
Websites - personal, authorized and unauthorized fan sites
Professional name (in most cases personal name)
Personal vs. Public identity and information

Pedophiles are IN and THRIVE in our world. Show business is a perfect fit!

The internet has made pedophile behavior easier - yet we have not risen to the same levels to use the internet resources to protect our children. It is a given that we assume some risks and lack of privacy by being in a very public industry. However, families should realize there are choices to be made, and should weigh the risks against the benefits.

As a group that is widely stereotyped (Stage Moms) - we are sensitive to and want everyone to be aware of potential stereotyping of individuals. You will find a Questionable Behaviors document on this website which outlines both the general risky behaviors, as well as a more specific industry related listing.

“You needn’t even totally exclude someone, but can simply change the rules of the relationship; heightened awareness on your part, limited access to your child. There’s no punishment involved in this, for the person you are uncomfortable about may have done nothing wrong - but if the signs are there that he might, that’s enough.” - Gavin De Becker

The internet is an entirely different, world wide, anonymous community, that wasn’t in existence a few years ago. It affects our children by having photos for sale, home videos for sale, less than reputable online modeling sites, and ‘special interest’ sites that openly discuss boys who are in the industry. It has become more and more common for photographers to represent a ‘project’ they may be working on as a job opportunity, while in actuality, they are simply taking photographs that they will sell to pedophiles. Specific people and instances that we have researched have included the following: Managers, Publicists, Photographers and Producers. Some of the cases and behaviors we reviewed have resulted in convictions.

Limit your risks by increasing your skills in the following areas:

- * Professional Awareness - what is acceptable as an industry standard?
- * Use tools -research the people involved in a project, especially if it is non-union or no pay
- * You have the choice and right to say NO!
- * Communicate your concerns
- * Monitor the work product for any inappropriate usage
- * Legal remedies, if necessary - including cease and desist letters, small claims court, or other legal proceedings.

Statistics

- *The average child molester victimizes between 50 and 150 children BEFORE he is ever arrested, even more after he is arrested
- * Nearly 90 percent of sexual abuse is committed by someone the child knows, NOT by strangers
- * The majority of child molesters, more than 95%, are male
- * Abusers don’t likely see a sexual encounter as a harm to all but rather as an expression of affection

General safety guidelines include monitoring the internet for information about your child. If you can find it, so can a stranger. The children should know that places like MySpace and Xanga are also frequented by pedophiles. Your family should decide what factual information, if any, your child is allowed to provide on these, and similar

sites. There are many documents and links on our website which will lead you to other resources and more specific information.

Equally important, but less dramatic, is the general business exploitation which takes place via sales of headshots, photos, squatting of domain names, etc. The rights fall under both Intellectual property law and Privacy Rights. Every family needs to vigilantly check to ensure their child's rights are not being violated.

You will find an Intellectual Property Primer on this website, which details the overlapping laws regarding rights related to photos, websites, photos posted on websites. You will also find a sample model release, that you might have a photographer sign. It clearly states who has what rights by law. (Note: Information is provided based on Federal Copyright laws, and California Publicity/ Privacy Laws)

Intuition - The root of the word intuition is 'tueri' which means to guard and protect.

A convicted molester speaks....

" You show the parents that you're really interested in that kid. You just trick the family into believing you are the most trustworthy person in the world. Every one of my victims, their families just totally thought there was nobody better to their kids than me, and they trusted me wholeheartedly with their children."

Please find the other information resources on our website. If we can assist you with a specific concern or situation, please feel free to contact us at BizParentz@aol.com. All communications are confidential.

We can not afford to let real or imagined career concerns overshadow our natural parenting instincts. Strangers are strangers - be they fans or a part of the child's career 'team' or someone offering them an employment opportunity. Good people don't think like bad people, and bad people lie. They are taking advantage of our children and outsmarting us. Children are, by nature, easily exploited, and the consequences of parents not taking this responsibility are unknown. Images on the internet are there forever, and this is a new concept. We must be vigilant in our efforts. This is our children's lives, and we share the commonality of being in the entertainment industry, and we can stand together and say NO! We must not count on someone else to protect our children for us - we are their first line of defense.