

NANCY GRACE

Monday-Thursday, 8pm ET



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Attention, parents! New app helps 'flag' predators

By **Diane Kaye**

updated 2:41 PM EST, Fri January 23, 2015

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NEED TO KNOW

- 90% of child sex abuse victims are abused by someone they know, according to the Justice Department
- SafeParent app helps parents recognize 'red flags'
- SafeParent quiz makes it easy for parents to talk to kids about sex abuse



According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, approximately one in six boys and one in four girls are sexually abused before the age of 18. And it may surprise you that 90% of those victims are molested by someone they know, according to the [Justice Department](#).

So what can parents do to protect their children from sexual predators?

A new app created by Jeff Herman, child advocate and attorney for victims of sexual abuse, may be the answer.

"Most children are groomed before they are sexually abused," Herman told HLN. "The grooming process follows typical patterns that can be identified as red flags. After representing hundreds of victims of sexual abuse it became readily apparent to me that many kids can be protected from sexual abuse if their parents

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recognized these red flags and responded.”

Herman said it’s not enough to simply teach our children about good touch and bad touch.

“A child is no match for a seasoned predator,” Herman explained. “Parents must be equipped with knowledge and be prepared to act.”

That’s where the SafeParent app comes in.

The app has a quiz for parents to take with their kids. The quiz contains a series of questions regarding “red flag” behavior about an adult in their child’s life. The answers are weighted based on the statistics relating to the seriousness of the red flag. When you’re finished, the SafeParent meter will score your answers and calculate a concern score ranging from low to immediate threat.

According to Herman, the key to getting the most from the quiz is taking it with your kids.

“One father told me he took the quiz himself regarding his son’s private tennis coach. After the quiz he felt that his child was safe,” Herman said. “The father then took the quiz with his son. Every answer was the same except for the question about whether the coach ever makes the boy feel uncomfortable. The father’s answer was no and the boy’s answer was yes.”

“The child explained that when the coach is showing him how to swing or hold the racquet, he touches him in a way that feels weird. The father was able to take steps to protect his son from potential sexual abuse.”

Herman says the score of the quiz is less important than learning about what is a red flag and whether the red flags are present in your child’s life.

“The most important message to parents is go with your gut and always err of the side of caution,” Herman said. “If someone makes you uncomfortable, do not ever let that person alone with your child.”

The free app can be downloaded [here](#).

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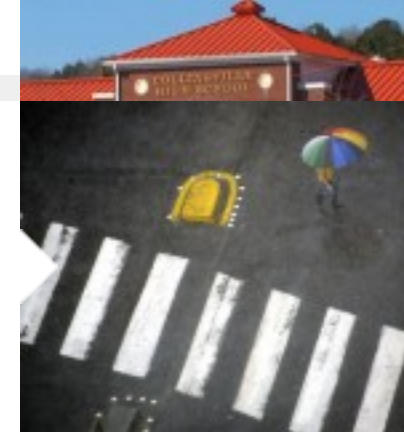
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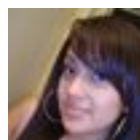
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