

## Michelle Peterson – Master Narrative

Michelle Peterson is a Midwestern mother who refuses to remain part of the silent majority. She is a steadfast defender of God-given rights, Christian values, and—above all—the protection of children.

In 2010, Michelle's son, Andrew, became the victim of grooming by a high school teacher. What followed was a brutal three-year legal battle marked by resistance, delays, and failures within the local State's Attorney's Office. Despite immense pressure to accept a plea deal, Michelle persisted—fighting not only for justice, but for her son's safety.

In August 2013, the accused was preparing to accept a plea deal that would have minimized accountability. Instead, the defendant abruptly chose to go to trial. The presiding judge openly rebuked both the prosecutor and the defendant, stating that the case could have gone to trial at that time, and expressing frustration that the delay was unnecessary. The judge admonished both parties for failing to move the case forward when it should have been tried that summer, instead of a revised date of October 2013 when Andrew's college semester had to be disrupted to testify in trial.

That same year in July, unlawful grooming became law in Illinois, and the defendant was ultimately charged and convicted of unlawful grooming and solicitation of a minor—the first unlawful grooming conviction in the United States, and, as of October 2023, it was still the only one of its kind.

In January 2023, Michelle met sex-trafficking investigator Amy Coello of Texas. Amy explained that her team relies on the unlawful grooming conviction secured by Michelle and her son as a legal foundation in trafficking prosecutions—because grooming must be proven to establish trafficking. At the time they met, Amy had just concluded work on the La Luz del Mundo case in California, which dismantled 123 separate sex-trafficking cells connected to the church-based cult.

From that meeting came a clear mandate: close the loopholes that allow grooming and trafficking defendants to plead down to lesser charges.

Michelle is now working on model legislation known as “Andrew's Law” with Illinois Representative Jed Davis and Illinois Senator Sue Rezin. The legislation would:

- Prohibit plea deals for individuals charged with grooming and/or trafficking
- Expand the sex-offender registry to restrict offenders from places that cater, in whole or in part, to children
- Expand the sex-offender registry to be lifelong rather than limited to 10 years

Michelle's advocacy has extended well beyond Illinois. She has worked with attorneys, legislators, and grassroots advocates in multiple states:

- Florida – resulting in the state's first grooming law (Apr 2024)

- Iowa – where the bill passed unanimously in both chambers (Apr 2024)
- Arizona – modeled after Florida and Illinois (May 2024)
- Georgia – through the efforts of mother-advocate Susan Cobb (May/June 2024)
- Montana – with the help of her cousin (fall 2025)
- Louisiana – where legislation was birthed from prior laws through the efforts of Brian Manix and others (Fall 2025)

According to Amy Coello, Michelle's persistence has helped protect thousands of children nationwide by strengthening the legal framework needed to stop grooming before it escalates into trafficking.

Michelle's story has been documented by investigative journalists and independent media and continues to inspire parents, lawmakers, and advocates across the country to take action on behalf of America's children.

How it began:

NBC 5 Investigates – Unlawful Grooming

<https://rumble.com/v3xue14-nbc-5-investigates.html>

In-depth interview:

And We Know – Michelle Peterson on Grooming Laws & Fighting for Justice

<https://rumble.com/v4vza3e-5.18.24-lt-w-michelle-peterson-on-grooming-laws.-fighting-for-justice-for-o.html>