

CHILD SAFETY



Discussing these safety tips with your children can help ensure a safe and happy childhood for everyone! Repetition, Repetition, Repetition is the key to safe habits!

- ☺ Teach kids the facts about child abduction early. If handled as another fact-of-life or just another safety skill – like buckling safety belts and wearing bike helmets – children need not be overly frightened.
- ☺ Teach your child to *always* ask for permission before going anywhere without you.
- ☺ Make sure your child knows his or her full name, parents' names, and address (house number, street name, and city). Practice reciting this information with your child.
- ☺ Kids should also know their phone number, area code, and that a "1" must be dialed before the number when calling long-distance. Practice with your child when you are outside of your normal calling area. Ensure that they know how and when to dial 9-1-1.
- ☺ Ensure your child plays in groups or uses the "buddy system" when having adventures outside the home. There is safety (and fun) in numbers!
- ☺ When at the mall, the park, or in other public areas, establish a place to meet if you become separated or lost. Role-play what the child should do if he or she gets lost in a public place.
- ☺ Remind your child that it is OK to say "NO!" to adults who make them feel scared or uncomfortable. Let them know that it is okay to be rude, make a scene, or hit and kick if they are in trouble. Practice with them what they should do if they find themselves in a crisis situation.
- ☺ Kids should be reminded which people are okay to approach if they feel unsafe or get lost in a public place. Police officers, firemen, store cashiers, and especially *other mothers with children* are good choices.
- ☺ Remind children that strangers are not necessarily strange-looking. Let them know that it is the way a person acts and makes a child feel (the "uh-oh" feeling) that are important, not a person's appearance.
- ☺ Teach kids that adults should not approach children for help or directions. Grown ups have grown up problems, and it is inappropriate for adults to request assistance or favors from children. Let children know that not assisting others in these situations is okay and is not rude, but simply common sense.
- ☺ Establish a family "code" word. Kids should never go with someone who doesn't know the code. Remind your child to always ask permission from the person in charge, even when they are given the correct code word.
- ☺ Do not put your child's name (or other personal information) in a visible place, such as clothing, a backpack, lunch box or personalized bicycle license plates. This can put a potential abductor on a first name basis with your child.
- ☺ If your child(ren) stay home alone, remind them *never* to open the door or tell anyone that they are home alone (this includes giving information over the phone or on the internet).