

IMPORTANT SAFETY TIPS FOR PARENTS

- Know everything you can about your children's activities and their friends. Monitor children's activities and participate with them whenever possible. Don't allow children to play alone in isolated areas.
- Teach your children about strangers AND to be aware of unusual behavior in people they know. Teach them to listen to their feelings and that it is okay to say no if any adults (including family members) ask them to do something that makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Teach your children to refuse anything from strangers, including money, gifts or rides. Know where new items come from.
- Teach your children how to safely answer the phone if they are at home alone such as stating the adult in the house is "unavailable" to come to the phone.
- Teach your children to keep a safe distance from strangers and not to give strangers directions or help: finding lost pets, etc. Adults need to get help from other adults.
- Teach children to use the buddy system when walking home from school, sports activities, etc. There's safety in numbers is a primary safety precaution.
- Use secret codes with your children (for use to positively identify each other or to ask for help).
- Teach your children (including teens) to check first with you before going anywhere. Children need to let parents know where they are going, how they will get there, who will be going along with them, and when they will return.
- Develop a family plan stressing where to meet if lost, when you are away from home. Do not have children meet you in the parking lot. Inside the store, shopping mall or amusement park are much safer places to meet. Teach them their phone number AND area code as soon as they can talk.
- Do not place your children's names on their clothing or the outside of possessions.
- Teach your children to say NO to anyone attempting to touch them on the part(s) of their bodies covered by a swimming suit.
- Teach your children to say NO, then GET AWAY, and TELL SOMEONE if a person bothers them.
- Join with other concerned parents to set up safety systems for your neighborhood.

Teach your children the difference between surprises and secrets and that some secrets have to be told if children and parents are to be kept safe.