

Additional Tips For Parents:

- ❖ Be sure to meet your neighbors while with your children and introduce yourself and the children. They could find other children to be friends with.
- ❖ Provide a list of emergency phone numbers in a visible spot, (refrigerator door) and be sure everyone knows it is there.
- ❖ Provide and clearly identify trustworthy backup people children can call if you are away.
- ❖ Be sure any new numbers are programmed into cell phones for both you and the children, if they have them.
- ❖ Tour the neighborhood with the children so they are familiar with roads, parks, and schools. Do not take short cuts through alleys, wooded areas, or play on or near railroad tracks, etc.
- ❖ Review with your children the safety rules when they are home alone.
- ❖ Caution children about giving out any personal information to telephone callers they do not know. Have them take a message and return the call.

- ❖ Always reassure children that you are there for them. Advise them to always tell a trusted adult of anything in your absence.
- ❖ Practice your own rules to reinforce them to your children.

Crime Prevention Tips From:
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Keeping Our Community Safe
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**NEIGHBORHOOD
SAFETY**



Would your children know what to do if they got lost at a shopping mall? Or if a nice looking, friendly stranger offered them a ride home after school? What if the babysitter or a neighbor wanted to play a secret game?

The great thing about children is their natural trust in people - especially in adults. It's sometimes hard for parents to teach children to balance trust with caution. But today children need to know common sense rules that can help keep them safe - and build the self confidence they need to handle emergencies.

What You Can Do

- ❖ Tell your children never to accept rides from someone they and you don't know well.
- ❖ Teach your children to go to a store clerk, security guard, police officer, or a mom with a child for help if lost in a mall, store or on the street.
- ❖ Take time to listen carefully to your children's fears and feelings about scary people or places. Tell them to trust their instincts.
- ❖ Encourage your children to walk and play with friends and to avoid places that could be dangerous—vacant buildings, alleys, playgrounds or parks with broken equipment and litter.
- ❖ Check out your children's school policies on absent children—are parents called to be sure an absence is excused?
- ❖ Check out daycare and after-school programs—look at certifications, staff qualifications, rules on parental permission for field trips, reputation in the community, parental participation, and policies on parent visits.
- ❖ For school bus riders, make sure the child is familiar where the stop is and the bus number, remind them to walk with others and not alone.

- ❖ Have a secret password that only you and your child know in the event your child needs to be picked up from school or other activities. Your child should ask the person for that password, and make sure it's correct before going with that person. If it is not correct, they need to immediately go to an adult and let them know what just occurred.
- ❖ Make sure children know their address and phone number by heart and the location of their house—also know the name of their neighborhood.
- ❖ Teach your children that if they are being followed to keep walking to a public place, like a library or a store. Talk to a grown-up at that place.
- ❖ Your children should know how to identify community people by badge and uniform.
- ❖ Check to see if your community has a protection program for children. Find out if they recommend fingerprinting or videotaping children.
- ❖ Be certain your children know that no adult should ask them to keep a secret and to tell you right away if someone does.
- ❖ Teach your children that no one should touch the parts of their body covered by a bathing suit.

Be sure to instruct your children to report to you or other adults (police, bus drivers) any unusual or confusing things they observe. Then investigate them and inform the child or your findings.
