

Being a parent is the most cherished and rewarding experience of our lives.
The unconditional love children share with us brings more joy than ever imaginable.
As parents we must take every step, carefully, to protect our children.

- ◆ Make sure your child knows his or her complete name, address, and telephone number with area code. It seems like a lot to remember, but this is one of the most important child-safety tips.



- ◆ Show your child how to dial 911. Most cities send the police whether or not a request is made, so let your child know this is for emergencies only, and not a game.
- ◆ Establish a code word for situations when your child is to be picked up by someone other than a parent or regular caregiver. Predators have tricked kids into telling the code word, so remind your child never to tell anyone.
- ◆ Teach your child that if it feels weird it probably is, and regularly remind the child that he or she can always talk to you about anything.

- ◆ Don't lose sight of your child in public places, especially when very crowded.
- ◆ Teach your child to go to a store clerk, security guard, or police officer if lost in a mall, a store, or on the street.
- ◆ Your child should never approach a car for any reason unless you have given your permission.
- ◆ Don't forget that child predators look like regular folks, so anyone you don't know is a stranger.
- ◆ If you must leave your child at home alone, remind the child to never open the door for anyone you have not approved or to answer the phone and reveal to the caller that he or she is home alone.
- ◆ Teach your child to always walk with someone. Make sure your child takes the safest routes to and from school or a friend's house. Walk the routes together and point out places to go for help.

- ◆ Don't put nametags on the outside of your child's clothing, books, or book bags, etc. A child abductor will use this for his or her advantage.
- ◆ Explain in a non-frightening way the tactics child abductors might use, "Can you help me find my lost puppy?"
- ◆ Teach your child that no one —not even a teacher or a close relative or friend — has the right to touch him or her in a way that makes him or her uncomfortable, and that it is okay to say, "No!" then get away, and tell a trusted adult.



- ◆ Have your child fingerprinted.
- ◆ Do you know your child's friends and the parents of the friends? You should keep a list of these names, addresses and telephone numbers for quick reference.

Remember, teaching our children to be aware of their surroundings is the best preventative medicine we can give them.