



What You Can Do to Protect Your Child

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Children are our nation's most precious resource, but as children, they often lack the skills to protect themselves. It is our responsibility as parents, guardians and teachers, to safeguard our children and to teach them the skills to be safe. This booklet is designed to help you talk to your children about how to protect themselves from harm.





Tips for parents to help their children stay safe

Safety at Home

- Children should know their full name, home phone number and how to use the telephone. Post your contact information where your children will see it (office phone number, cell phone, etc).
- Children should have a trusted adult to call if they're scared or have an emergency.

- Choose babysitters with care. Obtain references from family, friends, and neighbours. Once you have chosen the caregiver, drop in unexpectedly to see how your children are doing. Ask your children how the experience with the caregiver was, and listen carefully to their responses.

Safety in your Neighbourhood

- Make a list with your children of their neighbourhood boundaries, choosing significant landmarks.
- Interact regularly with your neighbours. Tell your children whose homes they are allowed to visit.
- Don't drop your children off alone at malls, movie theatres, video arcades, or parks.
- Teach your children that adults should not approach children for help or directions. Tell your children that if they are approached by an adult, they should stay alert because this may be a "trick."

- Never leave children unattended in a car. Children should never hitchhike or approach a car when they don't know and trust the driver.
- Children should never go anywhere with anyone without getting your permission first.

Safety at School

- Be careful when you put your child's name on clothing, book bags and lunch boxes. If a child's name is visible, it may put them on a "first name" basis with an abductor.
- Walk the route to and from school with your children, pointing out landmarks and safe places to go if they're being followed or need help. Make a map with your children showing acceptable routes to school, using main roads and avoiding shortcuts or isolated areas. If your children take a taxi/ maxi, visit the taxi/maxi stand with them and make sure they know which maxi/taxi to take.



What Your Child Can Do

The rules for younger children

Tick what you can do!

- I KNOW my name, address, telephone number, and my parents' names

- I always CHECK FIRST with my parents or the person in charge. I tell them before I go anywhere or get into a car, even with someone I know.

- I always CHECK FIRST with my parents or a trusted adult before I accept anything from anyone, even from someone I know.

- I always TAKE A FRIEND with me when I go places or play outside.



- I SAY NO if someone tries to touch me or treat me in a way that makes me feel scared, uncomfortable, or confused.

- It's OK to SAY NO, and I KNOW that there will always be someone who can help me.

- I KNOW that I can TELL my parents or a trusted adult if I feel scared, uncomfortable, or confused.

- I am STRONG, SMART, and have the right to be SAFE.



What Your Teen Can Do

The rules for older children

DON'T GO OUT ALONE.

There is safety in numbers. This rule isn't just for little kids, it applies to teens, too.

ALWAYS TELL AN ADULT WHERE YOU'RE GOING.

Letting someone know where you'll be at all times is smart. If you're faced with a risky situation or get into trouble, your family and friends will know where to find you.

SAY NO IF YOU FEEL THREATENED.

If someone—anyone—touches you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable, you have the right to say no. Whether it is pressure about sex, drugs, or doing something that you know is wrong, be strong and stand your ground.

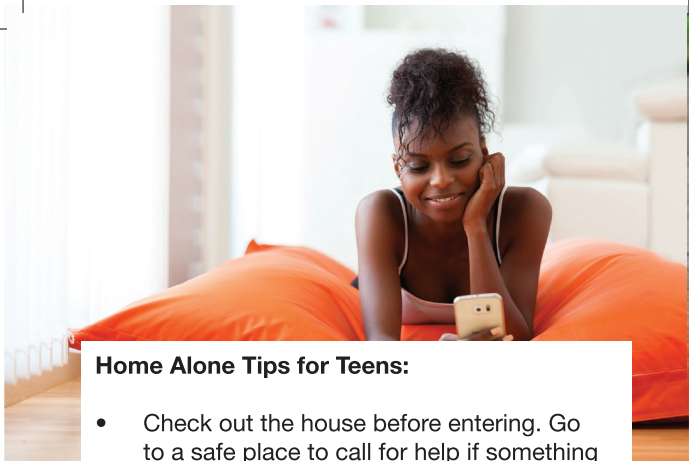


What Your Child Can Do at school and at home

School Tips:

- Always TAKE A FRIEND when walking to and from school. Stay with a group while waiting on a bus, maxi or taxi. It's safer and more fun to be with your friends.
- If anyone bothers you while going to or from school, get away from that person, and TELL a trusted adult like your parents, guardian or teacher.
- If an adult approaches you for help or directions, remember grown-ups needing help should not ask children for help; they should ask other adults.

- If someone you don't know or feel comfortable with offers you a ride, say NO.
- If someone follows you, get away from him or her as quickly as you can. Always be sure to TELL your parents or a trusted adult what happened.
- If someone tries to take you somewhere, quickly get away and yell, "This person is trying to take me away!" or "This person is not my father (mother)!"
- If you want to change your plans after school, always CHECK FIRST with your parents. Never play in parks, malls, or video arcades by yourself.
- If you go home alone after school, check to see that everything is okay before you go in. Once inside, call your parents to let them know that you are okay. Make sure you follow your "Home Alone" instructions.
- Trust your feelings. If someone makes you feel scared or uncomfortable, get away as fast as you can and TELL a trusted adult.



Home Alone Tips for Teens:

- Check out the house before entering. Go to a safe place to call for help if something doesn't seem right.
- Lock the door.
- Call your mom or dad when you get home to let them know you're safe.
- Never tell callers that your parents aren't home. Instead say that he or she can't come to the phone and offer to take a message.
- Don't open the door for or talk to anyone who comes to your home unless your mother or father has said it is okay.



What You Should Do In Case Your Child Is Missing

- Immediately report your child missing to the Police.
- Limit access to your home until the police arrives and has the opportunity to collect possible evidence.
- Give police investigators all information you have on your child, including most recent photographs, complete description and the facts and circumstances related to the disappearance.



What To Do In An Emergency

Numbers to call and
information to collect

Precautionary Measures:

Necessary Materials



- Keep a complete description of your child.



- Take colour photographs of your child every six months.



- Keep copies of your child's fingerprints. (Use finger paint and make copies of their print)



NUMBERS TO CALL

999, 911, 555



- Keep a sample of your child's DNA. (Take a piece of your child's hair and place in sealed bag)



- Know where your child's medical records are located.



- Have your dentist prepare and maintain dental charts for your child.



For More Information Contact:

Child Protection Unit Secretariat
621-2588/621-3160

or Call our Customer Care Hotline
800-TTPS (8877)

Also:

Children's Authority:

996 / 800-2014

ChildLine: 131 or 800-4321

Victim and Witness Support: 624-8853

Child Guidance Clinic: 726-1324

National Family Services Division:

624-8218 or 627-1163