

How parents can protect children from abduction

- Know where your children are at all times and who they are with.
- Never leave your child alone in a public place, stroller or car.
- Always accompany younger children to a public restroom.
- Teach your children not to accept rides and gifts from strangers.
- Always accompany your child on door-to-door activities, i.e. Halloween, school fundraising campaigns, etc.
- Establish a routine for picking your children up from school or other events.
- Agree on a simple code word for emergency situations. A trusted adult who knows the code word can pick up your child if necessary.
- Make sure your child knows their full name, address and phone number.
- Teach your child how to reach you (home, office, mobile)
- Teach your child how to call the police.
- Have a plan in case your child gets separated from you in public.
- Teach your child to stay in groups of friends when going anywhere .
- Tell your children about child abductions in simple and easy to understand terms. Awareness can help them protect themselves.
- Avoid clothing and toys with your child's name on it. A child may not fear someone who knows his/her name.
- Promote an environment in which your child feels free to talk to you.
- Let your child know that you will pick them up at any time, any place.
- Listen closely when your child talks about friends or acquaintances they spend time with in your absence.
- Check all potential babysitters and older friends of your child.
- Teach your child to recognize suspicious behavior and collect descriptions.
- Urge your child to think escape / survival if he or she were ever abducted.
- Speak to your local law enforcement agency to find out about neighborhood watch.
- Get to know your neighbors and the children in the area. Make sure your child's friends know your house is safe and they can seek help from you.
- Check with your local law enforcement to find out if there are sexual offenders in your area.
- Have a copy your child's photo available and know what clothing your child is wearing each day.
- Keep up-to-date medical/dental history and finger print cards.

How children can protect themselves

- Always tell your parents where you are going and who you are with.
- Never answer the door if alone.
- Do not invite anyone in the house without the permission of a parent or babysitter.
- NEVER get into anyone's car without permission.
- Don't tell anyone on the phone that your parents are not home. Instead tell them that your parents can't come to the phone and take a message.
- Don't go to restrooms in out-of-the-way places without a trusted adult.
- Don't take short cuts. Always use well-traveled streets.
- Never go to playgrounds or movies alone.
- Go to the nearest cashier if lost or separated from a parent in a store or mall.
- Do not take candy or other gifts from strangers without asking a parent first.
- Never hitch-hike.
- Stay away from isolated areas or abandoned buildings.
- If you do not know the driver of a car that slows down or stops near you. Run home, to the police department or to a public place where there are people. Do not run and hide.
- If an adult approaches to ask for directions, step back, tell them you don't know and walk away. Adults should ask other adults for directions.
- If forced toward a building or car, scream "help", scatter belongings and fight.
- No one has the right to touch any part of your body that a bathing suit would cover.
- If someone touches you in a way that feels uncomfortable, tell them in a loud voice that it is your body and they don't have the right to touch you, even if it is a relative or friend. Tell an adult you can trust and keep telling until someone believes you.
- If you see someone unusual hanging around a schoolyard or a park, tell your parents.
- Tell a parent about anyone who exposes themselves to you.
- Don't believe any adult who asks you to keep a secret from your parents.

Stranger Danger, tricks strangers use to lure children

- A stranger may quickly approach the victim. This element of surprise does not allow the child to think about what is happening and get away.
- A stranger may pose as an authority figure (police, firemen, security) and ask the child to leave with them.
- A stranger may try to bribe the child with money, candy, toys, cute pets, etc.
- A stranger may tell the child there is a crisis such as family illness and say a parent told them to pick the child up.
- A stranger may approach with compliments to appeal to child's ego.
- A stranger may approach with false caring, promise or knowing child's name if noted on child's possessions (shirt, lunchbox, toy).
- A stranger may suggest playing games.
- A stranger may ask for help, such as directions or to help find a lost pet.
- A stranger may fake injury requesting help
- Children often idolize adults, allowing false trust. Strangers prey on this false trust.
- A stranger may try to lure a child by asking the child to do work for the stranger.