

## Legislative Service Offices

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# Child Safety Tips



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As our children grow, we must teach them how to be safe in our homes and out in the world. All children need to know how to react to strangers, emergencies and other non-routine events in case they arise when you aren't around. The level of detail and responsibility you provide can get more specific as a child grows or as people and places in their lives change. Here are some basic tips to help your children stay safe.

## Safe at Home

- Prepare your child to be home alone without causing alarm. Tell them to keep doors and windows locked and not to answer the door unless it is someone they know well.
- If your child answers the phone, teach them to say you are unavailable rather than to tell an unknown caller they are alone.
- If your child has their own house key, provide a secure, hidden place to keep it.
- Be sure your child knows when and how to get out of the house in case of emergency and get to a safe location (a neighbor's home, out of harm's way).
- Use childproofing tools for outlets, cabinets and doors; put dangerous things out of reach, such as medication, liquor, sharp items, tools and chemicals.
- Teach your child what to do in the event of a medical or allergic condition affecting them, you, or other member of the household.
- Have an identification record for each child with photos, finger prints, dental records, etc. and update it every six months. Keep it somewhere secure but easily accessible in case your child is missing.

## Safe Online

- If you allow your child supervised access to a home computer to find information for homework or for games, music or social interaction, make time to monitor their use and restrict access to age-appropriate websites.
- If children have passwords, make sure they know not to share them with others. Instruct them to not set up any accounts without your knowledge, and do not include personal information such as their name, age, address or phone number in their screen name.
- Tell your children to never share personal information, secrets, pictures or any type of inappropriate information with anyone online.
- Bullying by way of a computer should be reported to a teacher or counselor at school or to you at home. Encourage your child to treat others with respect and to not engage in angry exchanges, name-calling or other unkind behavior online or off.

## Safe at School

- If your child walks, bikes or rides a bus to school, be sure they know a direct route with safe intersections, crossing guards and crosswalks.
- Notify your school or day care center in writing who is and who is not allowed to pick up your child, and be sure your child knows whose car they may enter.
- Talk to your school or day care staff if your child has any food allergies or medical issues.
- Make your child aware that no adult or older child should touch private parts of their body and, if someone tries, they should say NO and tell you or another adult immediately.
- Encourage your child to treat others with respect and to tell a teacher, counselor and you if a classmate is bullying them.

## Safe on the Go

- Know your neighborhood and be familiar with your children's friends, their friends' homes and their activities.
- If your children are walking in your neighborhood, encourage them to use the buddy system and not walk alone. Teach them to cross streets safely and avoid secluded places, abandoned properties and animals they do not know.
- Make sure your children know their full names, addresses, phone number, city and state, and teach them how to call the police, 911 and designated adults if they ever get lost, hurt or otherwise need help when you aren't around.
- If you allow your child to ride a bicycle, make sure they have and wear a helmet and teach them how to ride safely and visibly on neighborhood streets.
- Set rules for your children to seek permission to change their routine, such as going to a friend's house or to a store after school instead of going straight home. Remind them that home and school safety rules apply at friends' homes and in public places including inappropriate touching, bullying, computer access, wearing seatbelts and exposure to allergens.

**Finally,**  
**call the police **immediately****  
**if your child is missing.**