

IMPACT Personal Safety

Tips on Keeping the Kids You Care About Safe

The Two C's: Be CLEAR and CALM when talking to kids about safety! We teach kids to look both ways before crossing the street. We don't overwhelm them with fears about their ending up in the emergency room with crushed bones. Addressing concerns matter-of-factly and without anxiety will give children skills and confidence rather than unimaginable fear.

Say No to Denial. When children express worries or fears, avoid saying, "That will never happen to you." Find out more about their concerns, and together, find appropriate solutions. We want to help children with their fears, rather than invalidate them.

Honor Instincts. We must encourage children to speak up about what they like and dislike, from their favorite ice cream to whether they want a family member to not touch them. Adults need to listen. When they don't, a child's innate sense of comfort and discomfort is eroded, which makes it harder for safety instincts to become natural to children.

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What is a Stranger? Teach children that strangers are simply people who we do not know. Most strangers are good. However, it is hard to tell the difference between a good stranger and a "bad" one, so children must follow these stranger guidelines:

When with a trusted adult, always check with the adult when approached by a stranger. When unsupervised, follow these rules:

- Don't talk to strangers. Don't go anywhere with a stranger.
- Don't take anything from strangers, even your own things.
- Yell, "I need help" if anyone starts to bother you or you feel uncomfortable.

Learn Self-Defense. Consider taking a class to learn how to better protect your child. Or, have your child take a self-defense class. A child can surprise an assailant by physically resisting him or her. Knowledge of self-defense can also increase a child's self-confidence, which may make a person think twice about attempting to harm your child.

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