

SUMMER SAFETY TIPS

for parents

1. Be sure to go over the rules with your children about whose homes they can visit when you're not there and discuss the boundaries of where they can and can't go in the neighborhood.
2. Make sure children know their names, address, and telephone numbers and how to use the telephone. Be sure they know what to do in case of an emergency and how to reach you using cellular or pager numbers. Children should have a neighbor or trusted adult they can call if they're scared or there's an emergency.
3. Caution children to keep the door locked and not to open the door or talk to anyone who comes to the door when they are home alone. If you have arranged for a family friend or relative to stop by, make sure your child feels comfortable being alone with that person. Make certain that they understand not to tell anyone who calls that they are home alone.
4. Don't drop your children off at malls, movies, video arcades, or parks. These are not safe places for children to be alone. Make certain that a responsible adult supervises your younger children at all times when they are outside and away from home.
5. Teach your children in whose car they may ride. Children should be cautioned never to approach any vehicle, occupied or not, unless accompanied by a parent or trusted adult.
6. Make sure your children know to stay away from pools, canals, or other bodies of water without adult supervision.
7. Since daylight lasts longer, be sure your children know their curfew and know to check in with you if they are going to be late. If you allow your children to play outside after dark, make sure they have reflective clothing on and that they stay close to home.
8. Choose babysitters with care. Obtain references from family, friends, and neighbors. Many states now have registries for public access to check criminal history or sex-offender status. Observe the babysitter's interaction with your children, and ask your children how they feel about the babysitter.
9. Check out camp and other summer programs before enrolling your child. See if a background screening check is completed on the individuals working with the children. Make sure that there will be adult supervision of your children at all times, and make sure you are made aware of all activities and field trips offered by the camp or program.
10. Investigate daycare settings thoroughly before placing your child. Make certain that the center or family daycare home is licensed and that parents are free to come and go as they wish. Observe the personnel and activities several times before making your decision and visit unannounced after placement.
11. Be sure all custody documents are in order and certified copies are available in case your child is not returned from summer visitation.
12. Always listen to your children and keep the lines of communication open. Your children are your best source for determining if everything is okay. Teach your children to get out of dangerous or uncomfortable situations right away and practice basic safety skills with them. Make sure they know they can tell you about anything that happens to them that makes them feel uncomfortable.

1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678)
www.missingkids.com

Copyright © 1993 National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC). All rights reserved.

The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children is the national clearinghouse and resource center funded under Cooperative Agreement #98-MC-CX-K002 by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Points of view or opinions in this work are those of NCMEC and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice. National Center for Missing & Exploited Children® is a registered service mark of the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children.