

PERSONAL SAFETY FOR CHILDREN



WHAT ARE THE RISKS TO YOUR CHILD?

(Facts and figures on child abductions)

HOW TO TALK TO YOUR CHILD

(Tips for discussing child safety)

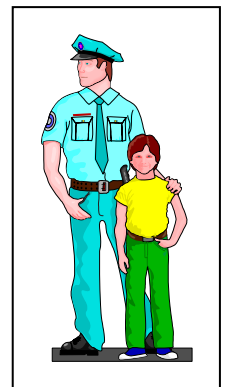
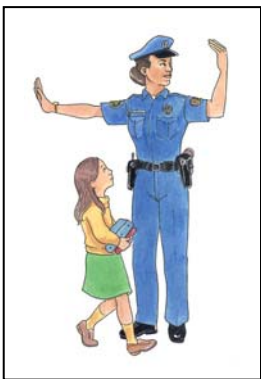
WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP YOUR CHILD *(Tips for parents to help their children stay safe)*

WHAT YOUR CHILD CAN DO *(In general, at home, and at school)*

WHAT TO DO IN AN EMERGENCY *(Numbers to call and information to collect)*

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR PARENTS AND CHILDREN

(Where to go for more help)



WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PROTECT YOUR CHILD

Introduction

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 and guardians, to safeguard children and to teach them the skills to be safe. This pamphlet is designed to help you talk to your children about how to protect themselves against abduction, exploitation, and painful experiences.

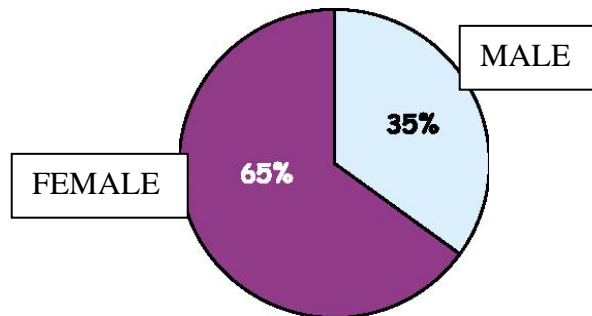
Every home should teach children about safety and protection measures. As a parent, you should take an active interest in your children and listen to them. Teach your children that they can be assertive in order to protect themselves against abduction, exploitation, and uncomfortable situations. And most importantly, make your home a place of trust and support that fulfills your child's needs. Together we can protect our Nation's children by teaching them to be smart, strong, and safe.



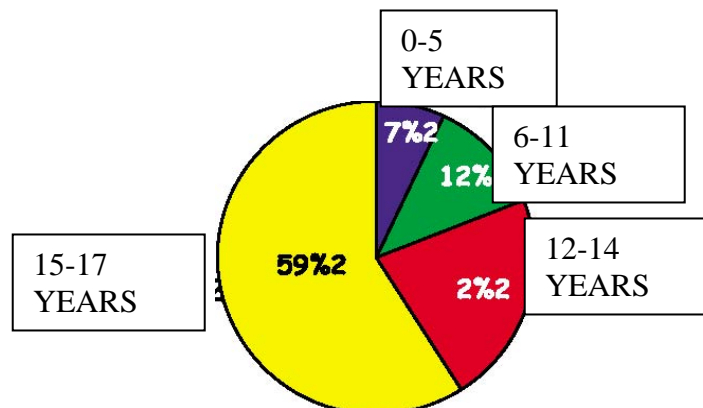
WHAT ARE THE RISKS TO YOUR CHILD?

Facts and figures on child abductions

Non-family child abductions by gender



Non-family child abductions by age



Approximately 203,900 children were abducted in 1999 in “family abductions” in which a family member was trying to deprive a caretaker of custodial rights.

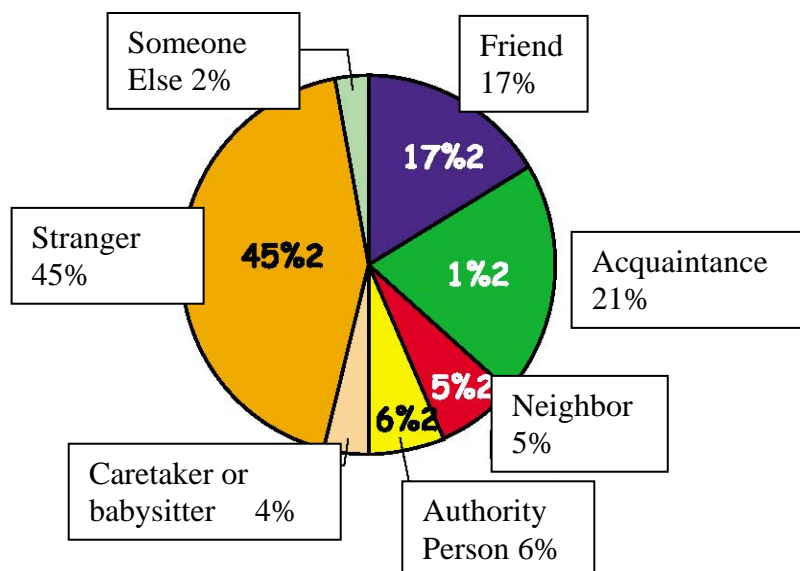
- 98% of these children were located or returned home.
- None of these children were killed.

There were approximately 58,200 (28.5%) “non-family abductions” in 1999. Abductions in this category involved forcibly moving or detaining the child for a relatively short period of time, usually in connection with another crime.

- 99% of these children returned home.
- Only 115 of these were the most serious and dangerous types of abductions — those perpetrated by strangers where the child was kept overnight, held for ransom, or killed.
- Almost 60% of these children were returned safely.

When the abductor is unrelated to the child, the abductor is just as likely to be someone **known** to the child or family rather than a **STRANGER**.

IDENTITY OF PERPETRATOR IN **NON-FAMILY** ABDUCTIONS



Be Alert: Over 50% of the children kidnapped in non-family abductions were taken from the street, in a vehicle, or from a park or wooded area. Almost 75% of those children kidnapped in family abductions were taken from their own or another's home or yard

HOW TO TALK TO YOUR CHILD

Tips for discussing child safety

Who?

You.

A parent or guardian is the best person to teach a child about personal safety.

What?

Effective personal safety skills.

Smart Thinking

Strong Character

Sticking Together

GOOD COMMUNICATION

When?

Now.

Age and maturity matter. There is no perfect age when parents should begin teaching children about personal safety. A child's ability to comprehend and practice safety skills is affected by age, educational, and developmental levels.



How?

LISTEN to your children.

Know your children's daily activities and habits. Listen to what they like and what they don't like. Encourage open communication. Let your children know they can talk to you about **any** situation. Reassure your children that their safety is your #1 concern.

TEACH your children. Set boundaries about places they may go, people they may see, and things they may do. Reinforce the importance of the "buddy system." It's OK to say "NO" – tell your children to trust their instincts.

PRACTICE safety skills with your child. Rehearse safety skills so that they become second nature.



GET INVOLVED.

- Know where your children are at ***all*** times.
- Your children should check in with you if there is a change in plans.
- There is no substitute for your attention and supervision.

REMEMBER: It is your responsibility as a parent to *be* a parent.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP YOUR CHILD

Tips for parents to help their children stay safe

Safety at Home

- * Children should know their full name, home phone number, when to call 911, and how to use the telephone. Post your contact information where your children will see it: office phone number, cell phone, pager, etc.
- * Children should have a trusted adult to call if they are scared or have an emergency.
- * Choose babysitters with care. Obtain references from family, friends, and neighbors. 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 the Neighborhood

- * With your children, make a list of their neighborhood boundaries, choosing significant landmarks.
- * Interact regularly with your neighbors. 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 an automobile. 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, backpacks, lunch boxes or bicycle license plates. 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 are 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 bus, visit the bus stop with them and make sure they know which bus to take.



WHAT YOUR CHILD CAN DO

The rules for younger children

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. I will tell my parents when this happens.

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**.

WHO IS THE ONE PERSON WHO IS ALWAYS WITH ME ALL THE TIME? IT'S NOT MOMMY OR DADDY. **IT'S ME!!!!**

WHAT YOUR CHILD CAN DO

At school and at home

School Tips:



Always **TAKE A FRIEND** when walking or riding your bike to and from school. Stay with a group while waiting at the bus stop. 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 or teacher.



If an adult approaches you for help or directions, remember grownups needing help should **NOT** ask children for help; they should ask other adults. If someone you don't know or one who makes you feel comfortable offers you a ride, say "NO!"



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 ARE GOING.

Letting someone know where you'll be at all times is smart. If you are 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. And tell your parents.

WHAT TO DO ABOUT BULLIES

Don't let bullies win. ALWAYS get away from them and ALWAYS tell someone what happened. The bully wins when you are silent and do nothing.



BE STRONG & STAND YOUR GROUND

CAUTION.
COMMUNICATION.
CONFIDENCE.



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!”



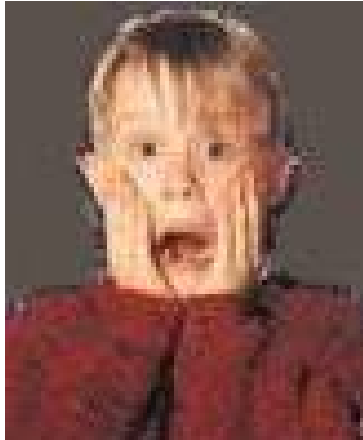
If you want to change your plans after school, **ALWAYS CHECK FIRST** with your parents. Never play in parks, malls, or video arcades by yourself.



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 home and OK. Make sure you follow your “Home Alone” tips.



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:

- Check Out the house before entering. Go to a safe place to call for help if something doesn't seem right.
- Lock the door. Everyone should do this as a matter of routine.
- 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 they can't come to the phone and offer to take a message. Better still; just don't answer the phone unless you know who is calling (caller I.D. or answering machine). There is no law that says you HAVE to answer the phone just because it rings. Everyone in the family should do this.
- Don't open the door to talk to anyone unless you know who it is and it is OK for them to be there. There is no law that says you HAVE to open the door when some knocks or rings the bell. Everyone in the family should do this.



WHAT TO DO IN AN EMERGENCY

Numbers to call and information to collect

Precautionary Measures -- Necessary Materials

- Keep a complete description of your child (height, weight, etc.)
 - * Take a color photograph of your child every six months.
 - * Keep a sample of your child's DNA (fingernails, baby teeth, hair with follicle....all in a clean baggie with their name on it).
 - * Know where your child's medical records are located.
 - * Have your dentist prepare and maintain dental charts for your child.



What You Should Do In Case Your Child Is Missing *

Immediately report your child missing to your local Police.

- * Limit access to your home until law enforcement arrives and has the opportunity to collect possible evidence.
- * Give law enforcement investigators all information you have on your child including fingerprints, photographs, DNA, complete description and the facts & circumstances related to the disappearance.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR PARENTS AND CHILDREN

www.fcgov.com/police (Ft. Collins Police) – Website with more information including a crime map. Sex offender list is not yet on line, but available at the police station, 2221 S. Timberline Rd., 970-221-6540.

<http://www.fcgov.com/neighborhoodservices> (Ft. Collins Neighborhood Resources) -- Neighborhood Services works to maintain and increase quality neighborhoods through Code Complaine, Mediation, the Community Liaison Program, and other community-building events. 970-224-6046.

www.larimer.org/sheriff (Larimer County Sheriff) – County information and registered sex offender list (unincorporated area). 970-498-5100.

www.cbi.state.co.us (Colorado Bureau of Investigation) – Records check on people (Babysitters? Contractors?), & statewide registered sex offenders.

<http://www.safekidslcc.org> (Safe Kids of Larimer County) – Safety tips for kids. Includes bicycle and car seat safety. 970-495-7502.

www.stopcriminals.org (Larimer County Crime Stoppers) – Report crimes and criminals and remain anonymous (970-221-6868 or from the website).

www.nsopr.gov (National Sex Offender Registry) – Country wide.

www.safe2tell.org (Statewide) -- Student Crime Stoppers Program. Anonymously report anything that is scaring you or endangering you, your friends, or your family (877-542-7233).

Some of the data on abducted children contained in this report is taken from The Second National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway, and Thrownaway Children, known as NISMART-2, funded under a grant from the Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. We are grateful to Heather Hammer, Ph.D., Temple University Institute for Survey Research, Principal Investigator of NISMART-2, David Finkelhor, Ph.D., University of New Hampshire, Crimes Against Children Research Center, and Andrea J. Sedlak, Ph.D., and Dana J. Schultz, M.P.P., Westat, Inc., for performing this special analysis.

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