



Keeping Our Children Safe: Help them become street smart.

We all have one thing in common, the safety of our children. One way to ensure our children's safety is to review the safety rules and help them become street smart. When children are street smart they know how to keep themselves safe when a parent or caregiver is not around.

Here are a few rules to review with your children.

Who are strangers?

Make sure your children can identify if a person is a stranger. Remember that it is impossible to tell if a stranger is a threat by appearance. A stranger who is a threat doesn't necessarily look mean. Always avoid strangers even if they know your name. Keep away from strangers. Leave the area if you see a stranger.

Tell a parent or caregiver where you are.

Always make sure your children communicate their whereabouts to the person who is responsible for them during the day.

Stay with friends.

Have your children walk to and from school, play, bike and travel with friends. It is important for them to be with a buddy or group of kids. Being with friends is more fun too!

Let grown-ups (and only grown-ups) help strangers.

Ensure that your children understand that it is not their responsibility to help a stranger. Under no circumstance should they feel they need to lend a hand, even if the stranger seems friendly.

Stay away from a stranger's car.

Do your children know what to do if a stranger pulls up in a car? Make sure your children understand that under no circumstance should they go near, look in or take something from a stranger's vehicle.

Make noise if you are scared.

Now is the time for your children to use their outside voices. If a stranger approaches your children or they feel threatened in any way they should make as much noise as they can. This will draw the attention of others.

Avoid places that are not safe.

Make sure your children can give you examples of isolated areas like the woods or dark streets. Tell them that they need to stay away from these places. Talk about safe places to walk, bike and play.

Trust your instincts.

Your children are smarter than you think. Make sure you let them know that it is right to follow their instincts. Help children understand that if a situation doesn't 'feel right' they should seek help.

By reviewing these rules and letting your children know that it is okay to make noise and find help if they feel threatened, we can help ensure their safety.

Resources: www.safekids.com, www.kidshealth.org