

PREVENTION STRATEGIES

(to protect minors from methods used by perpetrators)

1. Bathing suit zone: It's against the law for any adult to touch a minor in the bathing suit zone. (Exceptions include: doctor visit with parent or guardian present; injury to the privates; bath time for young children)
2. Parents should question the motives of adults who take extreme interest in their child.
3. Parents should monitor and participate in their children's activities.
4. Let your children know they can tell you anything and you will believe them.
5. Stress that there should be no secrets from you, particularly those involving an adult.
6. Children should never enter a home, building, or car unless accompanied by a parent or other trusted adult.
7. Inform children that, generally speaking, adults should ask other adults for help.
8. If someone in a vehicle slows down, pulls over or attempts to speak with them, youngsters should quickly take three giant steps back from the car and run in the opposite direction. (the direction that the car came from)
9. Give children permission to say "no" to authority figures when necessary.
10. Explain that a good secret, like a surprise party, is one that is eventually told. A bad secret is one that makes a child feel upset or that a child is afraid to tell. Bad secrets should be told to parents immediately.
11. Teach children not to accept gifts without a parent's permission. Parents: be alert to unexplained gifts. Find out who gave the gift: when, where, and why.
12. Parents should always attend children's outside talent pursuits; by law, a parent has to co-sign legal contracts for minors. Thoroughly verify the credentials of talent scouts.
13. Children should never allow anyone to handcuff them, tie them up, or place them in any restraint or isolation, even during a game.
14. Children should never open a door to strangers when home alone. Parents should put a door viewer at children's eye level.
15. Encourage children to tell a trusted adult of any abuse or any attempt at abuse.
16. Children should not trust or go with someone simply because the individual knows their name. Parents, if nametags are necessary on belongings, place them where they are not easily seen.

17. Explain to children the importance of getting parental permission before agreeing to perform any chore or job, including yard work, light construction, or helping with packages or groceries. Extra caution should be taken when selling or collecting door-to-door. Youngsters should never enter someone's home unless accompanied by a parent or guardian.
18. Get to know your youngster's friends and their families. A sudden strong dislike of a favorite place or person may indicate that some form of abuse has taken place. Be alert if your child constantly spends time at one friend's house, particularly when there is a single male or live-in boyfriend. If you feel at all uneasy, declare that home off limits.
19. If young children start acting out sexually, find out how, where, and with whom this behavior was learned.
20. When faced with force or a weapon, teach children to scream loudly and run to safety. Most predators will flee if faced with a noisy, attention-getting child.
21. Reinforce to children the concept of the "Bathing Suit Zone," and teach them to tell you if anyone shows them pictures that show people's bathing suit zones or someone tries to take a picture of their bodies.
22. Teach children never to divulge personal information over the Internet. They should never arrange to meet anyone in person whom they do not know. Parents should monitor the time their children spend online, especially in the evening and at night.
23. Computer sex offenders work hard at driving a wedge between a child and his/her family. They almost always contact victims initially in chat rooms. Parents, be alert to a child's withdrawing from the family. Speak openly with your child about the dangers of computer sex offenders and the methods that they use. Review what is on your child's computer.
24. Sexting and Cyber Bullying often take place during nighttime hours. A child who is already depressed from being the subject of these attacks may suffer from lack of sleep, which only compounds the strain. Computers should be in a public area of the house. Parents may consider charging their child's cell phone in their bedroom overnight.
25. The sex trade and human trafficking are serious dangers for runaways. Some signs of a potential runaway include struggling in school, becoming argumentative with authority, or expressing dissatisfaction with his/her current life situation. Speak to your child about the dangers that lie in wait for them in these instances.
26. Open communication between parent and child is the best line of defense against many types of harm.