



## PARENTING

### Informed Parents... ...Safer Kids

**Reducing the risk of your child becoming a victim**

#### Tips for Parents

**Keeping children safe is the most important job of any parent and loved one.** Because you cannot be in all places at all times, you must give your child proper guidelines for steering clear of sexual predators. Children need appropriate guidelines and they need to know how to handle specific situations.

**If children know in advance how to react**, they will have more power on their side to get out of most dangerous situations they encounter. Practice with them. In emergencies, we tend to do what we have been trained to do.

**Make time to talk with your children.** Let them know that sexual predators do exist. Make sure they understand why you are telling them about this. Not everyone is good and not everyone is bad. But, the bad do exist in this world and your children need to know it. It is important not to scare your child. If you talk as if this is a “fact of life,” your children won’t be frightened. We can help protect our children by teaching them awareness of dangerous people and the ways bad people lure children.

**Teach children that their bodies are special and private** and that they should never let anyone touch them inappropriately. Children (especially very young children) must learn to never undress in front of anyone aside from your specific instructions under certain circumstances).

**Teach your children to tell you immediately if someone asks them to undress**, tries to undress them, touches them or tries to touch their private parts. Let them know that they will not get in trouble for telling you this, that you love them.

**Give your children plenty of positive attention at home.** Spend quality time with your children. Know your child’s individual personality traits, habits and mood swings. The predator will!



## Reducing the Risk of Your Child Becoming a Victim

**Teach your children to never give out personal information to strangers.** This may be difficult for kids to understand because they often must give information to teachers, police officers or paramedics. To help them understand the difference, create pretend scenarios and ask them if they should or should not give information.

**Always let your children know that if someone ever took them away from you, you would not stop looking until you found them.** Don't assume your child knows this. Abductors often convince children that their parents don't want them so the children won't try to contact family members.

**Always keep current files on your children:** recent photos, physical descriptions, extra-curricular activities, friend's names, (addresses and phone numbers), finger prints, dental and medical records. Parents should carry child identification at all times. Always make a mental note of what your child is wearing.

**Be cautious when selecting someone to care for your children.** Meet them and always check their references. Check "websites for them. If your children must be left alone, teach them the proper way to answer the telephone and the door in your absence.

**Teach young children their full name, and yours.** Teach them phone numbers with area code; and address with zip code. Teach them how to make local and long distance calls; use a pay phone; call home and how to call 911 or dial "0" for the operator and ask for police help.

**Be sure your child knows what to do if you are separated** while shopping, at a theme part, anywhere! They should not look for you; they should go to the nearest clerk and ask for help.

**Explain the concept of "stranger"** and let children know that they should never enter a stranger's home, get into their car, or take gifts from them.

**Explain when a child has the right to say NO to an adult.** ALWAYS, always, be aware of anyone who pays an unusual amount of attention to your children. Always listen to your children and observe their body language if they don't want to be left alone with someone.

Families should choose a family code word and instruct your children never to go with anyone who does not know the code word. Change the code frequently.

**Again, up practice games to rehearse and reinforce the rules.**

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### \*Additional Information

A valuable publication on Internet Safety may be printed from the F.B.I. at:

[www.fbi.gov/publications](http://www.fbi.gov/publications)

You may search the Florida Department of Law Enforcements Sexual Offender and Predator data base, as well as print out Internet Safety information by going to their website:

[www.flde.state.fl.us](http://www.flde.state.fl.us)

Sexual Offender Unit: 1-888-357-7332

Found on the web is a national database:

[www.sexoffender.com](http://www.sexoffender.com)