

Safety Tip for of the Month: Stranger Danger

Who is a Stranger?

There are so many people in the world. Millions and millions of millions ! If you filled your whole room up with rice there would be more people here on Earth than bits-of-rice in your room! Wow! Loads of people!

And most people are nice, friendly and would never harm you. In fact nearly everyone is nice! Don't you think so? But some people are not nice. they are horrible and they could even try to hurt children. Now, you don't have to worry too much about these horrible people. Because there are million and millions and million of people in the world, you most likely will never meet a horrible bad person. You are safe. That is good. Relax! But it is better to be safe than sorry.

A stranger is a person whom you have never met before, a person you may have seen before, but whom you don't know anything about (like someone you've seen walking in your neighborhood), or a person whom your parents don't know well. Strangers can be men or women, young or old. They can have any color skin. Some are tall and skinny; some are short and fat. Some strangers are pretty and some are not so pretty. They can speak different languages. Most strangers are nice, but some strangers are mean. Because you don't know if someone is a good stranger or a bad one, you should not talk to anyone you do not know. Your neighborhood is a fun place to walk your dog or play with friends. Here are some tips to help you stay safe in your neighborhood:

Your neighborhood is a fun place to walk your dog or play with friends. Here are some tips to help you stay safe in your neighborhood:

1. **Always** walk or bike with a friend, never alone.
2. Know the way you're going **before** you start.
3. **Stay away** from empty buildings and unsafe places.
4. **Never** take anything from a stranger. If a stranger asks you a question, **don't talk! Run away!** Don't go anywhere with a stranger. Tell an adult you trust if you see someone that you think doesn't belong hanging around public rest rooms, playgrounds or schoolyards.
5. **Don't** play in deserted areas such as empty playgrounds, parks, construction sites or garbage dumps.
6. Stay with your mom or dad in public places or use the **Buddy System**. Play, walk, bike and skate with a friend.
7. If you are out somewhere with an adult and you lose them, **don't go looking for them**. If you are in a store, go to the cashier or security guard and ask for help. If you can't find a cashier or security guard and you are in trouble, look for a woman with small children for help.

8. **Stay alert** and trust your instincts. If something doesn't feel right, like you think someone is following you, you are probably right. Try to notice if an adult is hanging around your school playground, your park or yard, and then go to where you know you can find other people.
9. If you think someone is following you, cross the street and go into a store. Tell a police officer or a mother with a child. Don't try to hide — go to where you know you can find other people.
10. If someone tries to grab you, kick, punch and yell: "**NO! I don't know you! You aren't my Mom (or Dad)!**"
11. If the person is in a car, stay as far away from the car as you can. Go into a store or turn around, and walk or run in the opposite direction the car is going.
12. **NEVER**, ever hitchhike or accept a ride from someone. Don't go near a stranger's car. **NEVER** get into a car with someone you don't know, for any reason. Sometimes people use tricks — like saying your mom is hurt, or they lost their dog or kitten — to try and get you to go with them. **DO NOT GO WITH THEM!**
13. If someone does manage to get you in his or her car, do not put on your seat belt. Jump out when you see people and the car has to make a stop.

If you are trapped in an abductor's car:

1. Don't sit there quietly. The person is taking you somewhere and wants to hurt you.
2. If the car has back doors, try to quickly scramble to the back seat while the car is moving.
3. Try to jump out of a car that is going slow or has to stop. Try to open a window and scream.
4. Try to reach over and blow the horn, or grab the steering wheel. Scream as loud as you can while you do this.
5. If the car is stopped or slowed behind another car, reach over with your foot and quickly stomp on the gas pedal as hard and as long as you can.
6. This is a time you will be much safer if you cause an accident than if you behave.

Source: National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.