

Be Smart / Stay Safe
September 2008

Parenting *Rules!*

Personal Safety for Kids...

This issue of *Parenting Rules!* is designed to help you teach your children how to recognize and avoid potentially dangerous situations, especially when they are not with an adult. You can empower your children with the knowledge, self-confidence and assertiveness to protect themselves. Armed with these skills, your children will less likely be victimized. Remember, **adult supervision is the best defense!!**

Here are some tips on talking to your kids about personal safety:

- Talk to your kids in a calm and reassuring manner
- Be careful not to scare them by discussing the frightening things that could happen to them
- Make the area in which you discuss personal safety a place of trust and support
- An atmosphere in which your child feels comfortable may help him/her to be more open to this discussion
- Respond to questions or feelings that your child expresses in a calm, matter-of-fact way



For a free **Be Smart / Stay Safe Activity Book** for children and an accompanying Guide for Parents contact:

Prevent Child Abuse Rhode Island
500 Prospect Street Pawtucket, RI 02860
401-728-7920

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Staying Safe at Home...



Most children may be alone in their homes at one time or another. Knowing what to do in a variety of circumstances reassures children and prepares them to be able to take the right action.

Some ways in which you can help your children be prepared:

- Make an emergency phone number card and post one by every phone in the house.
- Create and practice an family emergency evacuation plan.
- Make a list of house rules to post on the refrigerator or another place children can see. Use pictures to make it easier for younger children to understand.
- Have your kids come up with suggestions for house rules. Children are more likely to follow rules they have had a say in developing.
- Discuss the types of activities they are allowed to do on their own and ones that they need an adult for.

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Staying Safe in the Neighborhood...

When children leave the safety of their home and go into the world, anything can happen. Giving children the skills and ability to handle dangerous situations is a good way to protect them. Knowing basic safety rules in order to avoid potentially dangerous situations is as important.



The key is to have lots of discussions with your kids about how to handle a variety of situations. Here are some topics and safety precautions you should talk with your kids about:

- Be sure your children know what places in the neighborhood they are and are not allowed to go in. Have them draw a picture of the neighborhood and identify those places.
- Talk with them about staying away from pools or other bodies of water.
- Teach them that they should come right home if their friends are making bad decisions and that its o.k. to say no to friends.
- Help them identify neighbors that they can go to for help, be sure these are people you know well and trust.
- Instruct them that they should never talk with adults or older kids that they don't know. Tell them grown ups should never ask kids for directions or to come over to their car.
- Tell them that it is safer for them to be in a group and they should always be sure they have a friend or adult with them.
- Teach them the importance of always telling you where they will be and who they are going to be with.

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Staying Safe on the Internet...



How does a parent or caregiver keep children safe from something as large as the Internet? Just like anything else in a child's life, there needs to be rules and guidelines to follow and you should always closely supervise your child's internet activity.

Talk with your children about the "5 Basic Rules of Internet Safety" and post a copy at each computer in the house.

The 5 Basic Rules of Internet Safety

I WILL **NEVER**

1. Give out my name or my parents' names
2. Give out my address or phone number
3. Send or receive pictures from anyone
4. Give my email address to anyone
5. Get together with anyone I meet on the Internet.

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Resources for Parents...

SAFE KIDS Rhode Island

55 Claverick Street Providence, RI 02903
401-444-5018 www.safekids.org/

The National Safety Council

1211 Spring Lake Dr., Itasca, IL 60143
(630) 285-2128 www.nsc.org

National Center for Missing & Exploited Children

Charles B. Wang International Children's Building
699 Prince Street Alexandria, Virginia 22314-3175
1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678) www.missingkids.com

Federal Bureau of Investigation – Parents Guide to Internet Safety

Cyber Division
Innocent Images National Initiative
11700 Beltsville Drive Calverton, MD 20705
www.fbi.gov/publications/pguide/pguidee.htm

ABOUT PARENTING RULES! E-NEWS...



Rhode Island
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Prevent Child Abuse
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Please share this information with the
families in your programs. Thank you!