

How to Prevent Child Sexual Exploitation

- Know where your children are at all times. Be familiar with their friends and daily activities.
- Be sensitive to changes in your children's behavior; they are a signal that you should sit down and talk to your children about what caused the changes.
- Be alert to a teenager or adult who is paying an unusual amount of attention to your children or giving them inappropriate or expensive gifts.
- Teach your children to trust their own feelings, and assure them that they have the right to say "NO" to what they sense is wrong.
- Give your children permission to say "No Thank You" to a touch they do not want to receive, such as a hug from a family friend or relative.
- Listen carefully to your children's fears, and be supportive in all your discussions with them.
- Teach your children that no one should touch them in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable. If someone does, parents should be told immediately.
- Be careful about babysitters and any other individuals who have custody of your children.

- **Share the following Safety Rules with your children**

- If you are in a public place, and you get separated from your parents, don't wander around looking for them. Go to a checkout counter, or the person in authority, and quickly tell the person in charge that you have lost your mom and dad and need help in finding them.
- You should not get into a car or go anywhere with any person unless your parents have told you that it is okay.
- If someone follows you on foot or in a car, stay away from him or her. You do not need to go near the car to talk to the people inside.

- Grownups and others who need help should not be asking children for help; they should be asking older people.
- No one should ask you for directions or to look for a “lost puppy” or telling you that your mother or father is in trouble and that he will take you to them.
- If someone tries to take you somewhere, quickly get away from him (or her) and yell or scream. “This man is trying to take me away” or, “This person is not my father (or mother).”
- You should try to use the “buddy system” and never go places alone.
- Always ask your parents’ permission to leave the yard or play area or to go into someone’s home.
- No one should ask you to keep a special secret. If he or she does, tell your parents or teacher.
- If someone wants to take your picture, tell him or her NO and tell your parents or teacher.
- No one should touch you in the parts of the body covered by the bathing suit, nor should you touch anyone else in those areas. Your body is special and private.
- You can be assertive, and you have the right to say NO to someone who tries to take you somewhere, touches you, or makes you feel uncomfortable in any way.
- **Adapted from “Child Protection,” National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. www.missingkids.com**