

Crime Prevention Tips

PREVENTING CHILD ABDUCTION AND EXPLOITATION

What you can do to help prevent child abduction and exploitation:

- Know where your children are at all times. Be familiar with their friends and daily activities. Teach your child that if he or she becomes lost to quickly tell a policeman that he or she needs help.
- Be sensitive to changes in your children's behavior; they are a signal that you should sit down and talk to them.
- 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.
- Listen carefully to your children's fears, and be supportive in all your discussions with them.
- Teach your children that no one should approach them or touch them in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable. If someone does, they must tell you immediately.
- Be careful about babysitters and any other individuals who have custody of your children. Obtain references from people you trust and see if you can have access to background screening information about these individuals. Many states give people access to sex offender registries and criminal histories.

Basic Rules of Safety for Children

As soon as your children can articulate a sentence, they can begin the process of learning how to protect themselves against abduction and exploitation.

Children should be taught:

- 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, the security office, or the lost and found and quickly tell the person in charge that you have lost your mom and dad and need help 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 should not get close to any car, unless your parent or a trusted adult accompanies you.
- Grownups and others who need help should not ask children for help; they should ask older people.
- No one should ask you for directions or for help looking for a "lost puppy", or tell you that your mother or father is in trouble and that he or she will take you to them.



Mishawaka Police Department

200 N. Church St.
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- If someone tries to take you somewhere, quickly get away from him (or her) and yell or scream, "This man (woman) is trying to take me away" or "This person is not my father (mother)."
- You should try to take a friend with you, and never go places alone.
- Always ask your parents' permission to leave the yard or play area or to go into someone's home.
- Never hitchhike or try to get a ride home with anyone unless your parents have told you it is okay to ride with him or her.
- 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 that would be covered by a bathing suit, nor should you touch anyone else in those areas. Your body is special and private.

Children should be taught:

- If you are in a public place, and you get separated from your parents, don't be afraid to get help immediately.
- 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, scared, or confused in any way.

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