

TEACH YOUR CHILD

Fire Safety

- ✓ Make sure your smoke alarms are functioning and your child knows what they sound like. Make sure they know escape routes from every room.
- ✓ Periodic fire drills are helpful.
- ✓ Teach your child what to do if their clothing catches on fire: **STOP, DROP to the floor and ROLL, until the fire goes out.**

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Safe Bike Habits

- ❑ always wear a helmet
- ❑ always ride to the right
- ❑ always stop at the curb, stop signs and red lights and obey all traffic signs
- ❑ always use hand signals
- ❑ always look both ways when crossing driveways and corners
- ❑ always watch out for pedestrians.

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Water Safety

Knowing how to swim doesn't prevent water accidents that can lead to drowning, at **any** age. Constant adult supervision of children around any amount of water is **always** necessary.

Enforce these rules...

- ◆ NO swimming alone
- ◆ NO swimming during storms or lightning
- ◆ NO diving except where permitted by an adult
- ◆ NO running or pushing others under water
- ◆ DO NOT permit your child to use an inflatable raft as a life preserver. They may slip off, or the toy may deflate.
- ◆ Spas and hot tubs are particular threats for young children. Make them off limits to your children.



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PROTECT YOUR CHILD

SAFETY TIPS FOR ACTIVE YOUNGSTERS

Who ever said being a parent was easy?

When a child is very young, his or her safety is the responsibility of adults - parents, guardians or caretakers. By age five, however, your child is learning to ride a bike, cross the street, and do other activities that take him out of your sight and immediate control.

You can no longer watch his every move. And even though a child may be a fast learner and may seem advanced for his or her age, children don't have judgment to help them avoid dangerous situations.

In today's society, our children are facing challenges and obstacles we never dreamed of. You must begin early to prepare your child for the realities of the world. Two of the biggest concerns of parents today are the prevention of serious accidents (the single biggest threat to school age children) and child abuse, exploitation and abduction.

Parents' most effective tool to keeping their child safe is **communication**. The first step is creating an atmosphere in your home where your child can ask questions, share experiences and feel comfortable in discussing sensitive matters.

The second step is to educate your child to exercise **caution** against certain situations without instilling **fear**.

I hope the Child Safety Tips in this brochure will help you guide your child through these growing and learning years so that both of you may enjoy the experience, and you can feel more comfortable with the new freedoms your child is discovering with the safety education you have given them.

Julie Harbart

State Representative
Mark Gillen

TEACH YOUR CHILD:

- ✓ To clearly say his name, full address and telephone number. The telephone number of your work place or of a grandparent or other adult may also be advisable.
- ✓ How to use the telephone. Teach them how to call home and how to dial 0 or 911 in case of an emergency. Keep a list of phone numbers for family and neighbors who may be called in an emergency near the phone.
- ✓ How to use a pay phone.
- ✓ To play in safe areas, away from traffic and parked cars.
- ✓ To always use the "buddy system" and never go places alone.
- ✓ To stop at the curb and look for traffic and to never cross the street without permission or supervision.
- ✓ To **never** accept a ride with a stranger without a prearranged signal or parental permission. Choose a secret word or signal with your child in the event that you have to send an unfamiliar adult to pick up your child. Use of the signal will let her know it is all right. Advise the day care center or school who is allowed to pick up your child.
- ✓ What to do if he is separated from you while shopping or in an unfamiliar public place. You can prearrange a meeting place or instruct your child to go to the nearest clerk, uniformed security person or lost and found and ask for help.
- ✓ To scream if he feels he's in danger, and run where people are and ask for help if someone is following or harassing him.

- ✓ **That guns are not toys.** Keep firearms **unloaded** and **locked** up. Keep ammunition in a separate place.
- ✓ That a stranger is someone you and he do not know. Not all strangers are bad, but your child must wary of strangers who offer candy or presents, ask a child to go with him or her, or ask a child to keep a secret. 'Good' strangers a child may ask for help if lost or in trouble may be moms with kids or persons in uniform.
- ✓ Strangers are not usually responsible in cases of exploitation - often the culprit is known to the child - a family friend, relative, neighbor, babysitter. May sexual exploitation situations begin with a "secret" the child is encouraged to keep through threats and bribes.
- ✓ That sometimes it's okay to say '**NO**' to an adult. Children are easily victimized because we teach them to be polite and respect adult authority. They must know that they have a right to say no if they feel unsafe or uncomfortable.
- ✓ That sometimes it's okay to share a secret. Secrets are a special part of childhood, but you have to help them learn the difference between a good secret and a "yucky" secret. Good secrets make a child feel good and happy. Secrets that make a child feel sad are not good secrets. Encourage your child to share their feelings and 'yucky' secrets with you or with a trusted adult.
- ✓ That their bodies are special and private and they have the right to say **NO** if anyone touches them in a way that frightens them or makes them uncomfortable. Encourage your child to tell a parent or adult immediately if any friend, family or stranger attempts to touch them in body areas covered by a bathing suit.

- ✓ To be aware of what's going on around him. By looking around when playing, riding or walking, your child is better prepared to react in case a stranger approaches him or a potentially dangerous situation is developing.
- ✓ to buckle her own seat belt and make sure it's done before you start the car. Set a good example and Buckle Up yourself too.
- ✓ If you must leave your child home alone, teach your child never to answer the door when alone and never to admit over the phone that he is home alone.
- ✓ Do not put your child's name on the clothing, book bags, lunch boxes bikes or other child possessions where it may be visible to a stranger.

