



C A L I F O R N I A C h i l d A b d u c t i o n T A S K F O R C E

Child Abduction Prevention Tips for Parents

by Georgia Hilgeman-Hammond

- Never assume your child can't be abducted.
- Never leave young children unattended.
- Teach children to always ask permission before going anywhere with anyone.
- Teach children to stay in groups or to stay close to caregivers in public places.
- Teach children to scream and make a scene when they are in danger. Tell them that it's OK to say "NO" or yell "HELP" when they sense danger.
- Make sure children know how to make telephone calls and dial 911 from home, a cell phone, or a payphone in an emergency.
- Children should know what to do when answering the telephone or the door. When they are home alone, children should know not to tell anyone that they are home alone or to give out personal information.
- Establish strict procedures regarding how your child will get home from school. Remember to be consistent!
- Be suspicious of anyone who showers your child with extraordinary amounts of attention or presents.
- Test children on their safety skills, repetition will help them remember.

Teach Your Children to be SAFE!

- Teach children that they cannot tell who may hurt or abduct them by a person's appearance.
- Teach children that most people are good but some people do bad things. Encourage them to listen to their instincts.
- Teach children that abductors can use tricks or bribes to get children to go with them.

Teach Children What to Do When Lost

- In a store teach them to call out the first name of the person they are with. If that person does not respond, they should go to a store employee (someone who is wearing a uniform or a nametag) and ask that person for help. They should never leave the store unless it is with the person with whom you came.
- On the street or in a public place they should use their cell phone to call you or your designee. If no cell phone, they should look for a police officer, a guard, or a parent with children. The child should tell this person they are lost. If there is no one around, they should go to a pay phone and dial 911. They should tell the person that answers that they are lost.

Get Involved and Talk with Your Children

- Establish solid communication with your children so they can confide in you.
- Know where your children are going and with whom.
- Know and talk with your children's friends and families.
- Work with your children on how to react and what to do in unsafe situations.
- Do not lecture your children and respect their feelings.
- Remind children that they have rights to their body. They have a right to feel safe, strong, and to say no when they feel endangered.
- Listen to your children when they make statements about family members that make them feel uncomfortable or scared.