

HOME SAFETY

Home is where children and families feel the safest. Take time to talk to your children about how to keep themselves and their siblings safe and secure. By following these tips, you can help them avoid dangerous situations.

- Make sure your child knows how and when to call 9-1-1 in an emergency.
- Instruct children to keep doors locked and not to open the door to anyone when they are home alone. Consider leaving your home alarm on even when you are home.
- Choose babysitters carefully. Obtain references, drop in unexpectedly and ask children about their time with their babysitter. Also be sure to check their social networking accounts (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
- Know your children's friends and the places they like to spend time when they are away from home.
- You should always know where your children are and ensure they are checking in with you regularly.
- Be involved in your children's activities, including making yourself known to coaches, schools and their friends' parents.
- Make sure your children are not just aware of "stranger danger," but that they know they have the right to say no to anything that makes them feel uncomfortable, even if it's a friend or someone they know. It's more important to be safe than polite.



THE DISTURBING FACTS...

- The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children reports that in 2014, there were 466,949 entries for missing children under the age of 18 into the FBI's National Crime Information Center.
- As of 2015, 767 children have successfully recovered as a result of the AMBER Alert program.

THE GOOD NEWS...

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) reports that in 84% of cases, the child escaped would-be abductors through their own actions. Teaching your children how to protect themselves works.

RESOURCES

**NetSmartz Workshop by the
National Center for Missing & Exploited Children**
NetSmartz.org/Parents

Swimming Pool Safety Tips
PoolSafely.gov

Arizona Amber Alert
azAmberAlert.org

Mesa Police Department Missing Persons Unit
MesaAZ.gov/residents/police/divisions/missing-persons

Phoenix Police Department Missing Persons Detail
Phoenix.gov/police/investigations/cold-case/missing-persons

Safe Kids



**Maricopa County
Attorney's Office**



- Home Safety
- Internet Safety
- Personal Safety



Dear fellow citizen,

Children are our most precious resource, and keeping them safe is one of the top priorities of my office. In this brochure you will find helpful tips and resources for protecting your kids at home, on the Internet, and in public.

This information will help you teach your children how to avoid dangers and what to do in threatening situations. Being aware of the potential for harm and knowing how to respond is the first – and strongest – line of defense for a parent or guardian.

I encourage you to share this information with your neighbors and anyone you entrust with the care of your children. By working together and sharing this information, we can all make our communities safer for children.

Sincerely,

Bill Montgomery

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SafeKidsAZ.org

INTERNET SAFETY

When your child spends time on the computer, do you know what he or she is doing, what websites they visit or who they are interacting with? There are benefits to children learning to use computers and the Internet, but it is important to protect them at the same time.

- Place the computer in a common area in the house, not in a child's bedroom.
- Monitor and control the websites your children are viewing by using parental control software.
- Use privacy settings on social network sites to limit unknown users from reaching your children.
- Make sure your children never give identifying information like name, address, or their school when online. Caution your children not to post online that they are home alone or leaving on a vacation with their family.
- One of the best ways to monitor your child online is to 'follow' them on social networking accounts.
- Encourage your children to tell you if they are contacted by anyone they don't know or someone who makes them scared, sad or nervous.
- Caution children about posting photos (appropriate or not) on their site or their friends' sites.
- Talk to your kids about cyberbullying. They should report if they are being bullied and never engage in bullying.
- Report inappropriate emails, texts and instant messages your children may receive to law enforcement.



PERSONAL SAFETY

Children often lack the skills or knowledge to protect themselves. It is our responsibility to help keep them safe and more importantly, teach them how to identify and avoid dangerous situations.

- Make sure your children know the route to and from school. They shouldn't take shortcuts or rides from strangers.
- Remind kids to always use the buddy system with a friend or sibling when walking to and from school, waiting at the bus stop and playing outside.
- Children should know to never approach a vehicle if they are not with a trusted adult.
- Practice "What if" scenarios with your children to find out what they would do in different dangerous situations.
- When in public places, make sure you identify a central location to meet in case you get separated from your children.
- Teach children how to get help in public places; don't be afraid to ask law enforcement, security guards or store clerks with name tags.
- Teach your children if anyone tries to grab them, they should make a scene by kicking and screaming and continue to make an effort to get away until someone notices.
- Make an Identity and DNA Kit for each of your children and keep it in a safe and easily accessible location in case it is needed.