



to learn more about child safety, visit [www.take25.org](http://www.take25.org).

## 25 WAYS TO MAKE KIDS SAFER

### AT HOME

1. Teach your children their full names, address, and home telephone number. Make sure they know your full name.
2. Make sure your children know how to reach you at work or on your cell phone.
3. Teach your children how and when to use 911 and make sure your children have a trusted adult to call if they're scared or have an emergency.
4. Instruct children to keep the door locked and not to open the door to talk to anyone when they are home alone. Set rules with your children about having visitors over when you're not home and how to answer the telephone.
5. Choose babysitters with care. Obtain references from family, friends, and neighbors. Once you have chosen the caregiver, drop in unexpectedly to see how your children are doing. Ask children how the experience with the caregiver was and listen carefully to their responses.

### ON THE NET

6. Learn about the internet. The more you know about how the Web works, the better prepared you will be to teach your children about potential risks. Visit [www.NetSmartz.org](http://www.NetSmartz.org) for more information about Internet safety.
7. Place the family computer in a common area, rather than a child's bedroom. Also, monitor their time spent online and the Web sites they've visited and establish rules for Internet use.
8. Know what other access your child may have to the internet at school, libraries, or friends' homes.
9. Use privacy settings on social networking sites to limit contact with unknown users and make sure screen names don't reveal too much about your children.
10. Encourage your children to tell you if anything they encounter online makes them feel sad, scared, or confused.
11. Caution children not to post revealing information or inappropriate photos of themselves or their friends online.

### GOING TO AND FROM SCHOOL

12. Walk or drive the route to and from school with your children, pointing out landmarks and safe places to go if they're being followed or need help. If your children ride a bus, visit the bus stop with them to make sure they know which bus to take.

13. Remind kids to take a friend whenever they walk or bike to school. Remind them to stay with a group if they're waiting at the bus stop.

14. Caution children never to accept a ride from anyone unless you have told them it is OK to do so in each instance.

### OUT AND ABOUT

15. Take your children on a walking tour of the neighborhood and tell them whose homes they may visit without you.

16. Remind your children it's OK to say NO to anything that makes them feel scared, uncomfortable, or confused and teach your children to tell you if anything or anyone makes them feel this way.

17. Teach your children to ask permission before leaving home.

18. Remind your children not to walk or play alone outside.

19. Teach your children to never approach a vehicle, occupied or not, unless they know the owner and are accompanied by a parent, guardian, or other trusted adult.

20. Practice "what if" situations and ask your children how they would respond. "What if you fell off your bike and you needed help? Who would you ask?"

21. Teach your children to check in with you if there is a change of plans.

22. During family outings, establish a central, easy-to-locate spot to meet for check-ins or should you get separated.

23. Teach your children how to locate help at theme parks, sports stadiums, shopping malls, and other public places. Also, identify those people who they can ask for help, such as uniformed law enforcement, security guards and store clerks with nametags.

24. Help your children learn to recognize and avoid potential risks, so that they can deal with them if they happen.

25. Teach your children that if anyone tries to grab them, they should make a scene and make every effort to get away by kicking, screaming, and resisting.



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## PERSONAL SAFETY ON AND OFFLINE

Does finding 25-minutes to talk to your kids or your busy tweens and teens about safety seem impossible? Try using the following discussion starters.

### KIDS (ages 5 to 8)

#### AT HOME

- Could you tell me our home address? How about our home number? My work number? My cell phone number?
- Has anyone ever called or knocked on the door while I was gone? What did you do?
- Let's make a list of 3 people whom you can call in case of an emergency if you can't reach me.

#### ON THE NET

- What is your favorite website? Could you show me?
- Does your screen name or e-mail address give clues about who you are, such as your name or age? If so, let's come up with a safer one.
- Who are the friends you talk to on the Internet? Do you know all of them in person?

#### GOING TO AND FROM SCHOOL

- If you felt like you were in danger while walking to school, where would you go for help? Let's walk to your school together and pick some safe places to go in case you need help.
- Do you and your friends stay together when you are walking to and from school?
- If someone bullied you at school, what would you do? Would you tell me?

#### OUT AND ABOUT

- If an adult approached you and asked for help, what would you do?
- If you got lost while we were in the park, at the store, or at a sports game, what would you do? Whom should you ask for help?
- If someone touches you in a way that makes you uncomfortable or tries to take you away, you should yell "NO!" at the top of your voice. Let's practice saying "NO!" Then, let's see how fast you can run away.

### TWEENS (ages 9 to 12)

#### ONLINE

- Which websites do you like to visit? Can you show them to me?
- Have you ever come across anything on the Web which made you feel uncomfortable?
- If someone sent you a mean text message or IM what would you do?

- What do you think about sharing passwords with your friends? Do you think it's okay to share your password with your best friend?
- When you come across pop-ups advertising offers or contests for free games, food or other prizes, do you enter your personal information to try to win them?

#### OFFLINE

- If something happened at school that made you feel bad or scared, who would you talk to? Would you tell me?
- Before you and your friends go out, do you know where to go and what to do if you are separated from them?
- How comfortable are you saying "no" to your friends when they ask you to do something that you don't want to do?
- Has anyone ever tried to get you to go somewhere or do something you didn't feel comfortable doing? What did you do?
- Has anyone ever touched you in a way that made you feel scared or uncomfortable? Did you know what to do?

### TEENS (ages 13 to 17)

#### ONLINE

- What kind of information do you feel is safe to share about yourself online?
- Do you feel comfortable with the information that you have posted online, knowing that it might be seen by anyone on your friends list, as well as employers, officials at your school, and college admissions departments.
- Have you and your friends talked about what types of pictures are okay to post online? What about the types of comments you leave on each others' pages?
- Do you know about the different types of scams that people run to try to gain your personal information?
- Have you ever been insulted, or traded insults with anyone, through texts, e-mail, or IM?

#### OFFLINE

- Do you and your friends stay together when you go out or do you split up? Do you know what to do if someone tries to touch or grab you inappropriately?
- Do you pay attention to your surroundings, especially when walking alone? What would you do if someone approached you on foot or in a vehicle?
- What would you do if the person who drove you had been drinking alcohol or made you feel uncomfortable?
- How comfortable are you saying "no" to your friends when they ask you to do something that you don't want to do?
- If you were bullied online or at school how would you react to the situation? Who are the trusted adults you could talk to if you were being bullied?