



Staying Safe

Talking to your child about how to stay safe should be an ongoing conversation. These talks should be given in a calm and reassuring way, just like how you explain why we use seat belts. The goal is to make your child feel like they know what to do in what could be seen as scary situations.

- **Explain to your child what strangers are and use examples** (“Is a police officer a stranger?”).
- **Be clear about who your child is allowed to go places with or talk to.** (for example, your child should never go anywhere, get in a car, answer questions, or accept anything from anyone they don’t know (a stranger). Unfortunately, many dangerous situations arise out of familiar people.
- **Identify people your child can go to** (even if they might be strangers) **for help.** For example, a police officer, salesperson, a mother with a child, or a crosswalk guard. Be sure they know that they can ask them for help in addition to people they know and trust.
- **Create safety situations to practice and role-play where safety is important.** “What would you do if the ice cream man offered to let you see inside his truck?”
- **Detail simple safety strategies** (like the no-go-tell system) to use if your child feels scared or in danger: No – say no, Go – leave the situation, and Tell – immediately tell a grown-up what happened.
- **Teach your child simple facts** like their first and last name, address, and phone number.
- **Make family plans** for what to do in case of separation in a public place (on the subway etc.).
- **Discuss and memorize family code words** that only your family knows to use when a family member feels unsafe.