

KNOW THE RULES...

SUMMER SAFETY TIPS

for parents and guardians

1. Be sure to go over the rules with your children about whose homes they may visit when you're not there and discuss the boundaries of where they may and may not go in the neighborhood.
2. Make sure children know their full names, address, and telephone numbers and how to use the telephone. Be sure they know what to do in case of an emergency and how to reach you using cellular or pager numbers. Children should have a neighbor or trusted adult they may call if they're scared or there's an emergency.
3. Caution children to keep the door locked and not to open the door or talk to **anyone** who comes to the door when they are home alone. If you have arranged for a family friend or relative to stop by, make sure your children feel comfortable being alone with that person. Make certain they understand not to tell anyone who calls they are home alone.
4. Don't drop your children off at malls, movies, video arcades, or parks. These are not safe places for children to be alone. Make certain a responsible adult supervises your younger children at all times when they are outside and away from home.
5. Teach your children in whose vehicle they may ride. Children should be cautioned to never approach any vehicle, occupied or not, unless accompanied by a parent, guardian, or other trusted adult.
6. Make sure your children know to stay away from pools, canals, or other bodies of water without adult supervision.
7. Since daylight lasts longer during the summer months, be sure your children know their curfew and to check in with you if they are going to be late. If you allow your children to play outside after dark, make sure they wear reflective clothing and stay close to home.
8. Choose babysitters with care. Obtain references from family, friends, and neighbors. Many states now have registries for public access to check criminal history or sex-offender status. Observe the babysitter's interaction with your children, and ask your children how they feel about the babysitter.
9. Check out camp and other summer programs before enrolling your children. See if a background screening check is completed on the individuals working with the children. Make sure there will be adult supervision of your children at all times, and make sure you are made aware of all activities and field trips offered by the camp or program.
10. Investigate daycare settings thoroughly before placing your children. Make certain the center or family-daycare home is licensed; completes full background screening for all employees at, volunteers of, and others affiliated with the facility; and allows parents and guardians to freely come and go as they wish. Observe the personnel and activities several times before making your decision and visit unannounced after placement.
11. Be sure all custody documents are in order and certified copies are available in case your children are not returned from a scheduled summer visit.
12. Always listen to your children and keep the lines of communication open. Your children are your best source for determining if everything is okay. Teach your children to get out of dangerous or uncomfortable situations right away and practice basic safety skills with them. Make sure they know they are able to tell you about anything that makes them feel scared, uncomfortable, or confused.



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Have a safe and fun summer!