

## WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PROTECT YOUR CHILD and PREVENT ABDUCTION OR EXPLOITATION

- Never leave your child unattended. Not even for “a minute.”
- Know where your children are at all times. Be familiar with their friends, friends’ parents or guardians, and daily activities.
- Be sensitive to changes in your children’s behavior and talk to them about what caused the changes.
- be alert to anyone who is paying an unusual amount of attention to your children or giving them inappropriate or expensive gifts. However, it is important to handle suspicions reasonably, since the interest and kindness may be genuine.
- Teach your children to trust their feelings and assure them that they have the right to say “NO” to what they sense is wrong. Teach them to get away quickly if the situation seems to be wrong.
- Listen carefully to your children’s fears and be supportive in all your discussions with them.
- Teach your children that no one should approach them or touch them in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable. If someone does, they should tell a parent or other trusted adult immediately.
- Carefully select the babysitters and any other individuals who have custody of your children. If you do not know them well, obtain references and check them thoroughly.
- Prior to allowing your child or visit an unfamiliar friend’s home without you, make it a point to get to know the friend and his or her parents. Depending on the age of your child, it may be appropriate to coincide a parent “get acquainted” visit with your child’s first visit.
- Ensure the school administrators, as a matter of policy, contact you immediately if your child does not appear at school (unless you notify them of his/her absence on a given day.)
- Watch your children while they are waiting at the bus stop. If you are not waiting with them, occasionally look out at them. A child should never wait alone at a bus stop, especially if the stop cannot be seen from your home.
- Avoid dressing your child in clothing that displays his or her name. A child may not realize that someone who knows his or her name may not necessarily be a friend.
- Do not allow your child to solicit (door-to-door) alone, even for school or church related fund-raiser.