



Personal Empowerment Safety Education®

FAMILY SAFETY MANUAL

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Personal Empowerment Safety Education®

**FAMILY
SAFETY MANUAL**

Letter to radKIDS Parents and Families

Dear radKIDS Parents and Families,

Welcome to radKIDS®, a not-for-profit educational organization dedicated to providing realistic choices and options to children and parents concerning overall safety in the world today. It is our mission to provide realistic choices, through education, for children to avoid and/or escape violence or harm in their daily lives.

The radKIDS® Personal Empowerment and Safety Education Program has been developed after years of research and refinement with dedicated education professionals, law enforcement professionals, sexual assault counselors, self-defense experts, and of course, concerned parents and their children.

radKIDS® are COOL Kids empowered in their own safety. This educational program incorporates many styles of presentation and is soundly based in accelerated learning theory. The program includes information and activities based on building confidence and self-esteem in the children so they truly gain the knowledge and confidence to make positive choices in their own safety.

In addition, the program is presented with parental participation whenever possible so a true partnership can be established between the child and their trusted grown-up. All parents receive this Family Manual so you can actively participate in your children's safety.

We also encourage you to visit our website at www.radKIDS.org, subscribe to radKIDS Parent newsletter *Teachable Moments: Through the Eyes of a Child*, and join us on Facebook [radKIDS -Children's Safety Education](https://www.facebook.com/radKIDS-Childrens-Safety-Education). These resources have been developed to provide you with additional information and resources regarding your family's safety.

Please remember our children can only make choices based on what they know and what they believe. Education and Personal Empowerment are the keys to success.

As one 10 year old radKID said to me in a realistic training drill, "You will not hurt me. No one will hurt me. I won't let them." Class was over. It was now her decision, and she had options. The look in her eye and feeling in her heart were her tools. In my role as bad guy, I knew I was in trouble. In my role as teacher, my work was done.

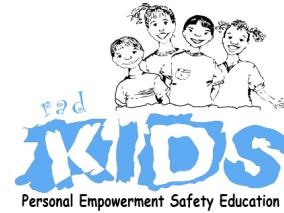
Always from the Heart,



Stephen M. Daley

CEO/Executive Director radKIDS®

"Together We Can Make a Difference One Child at a Time."



Building a Safer World
One Child at a Time

radKIDS, Inc.
9 New Venture Drive
Unit #4
South Dennis, MA 02660
508-760-2080 Office
508-760-2089 Fax
www.radkids.org



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PUBLISHED BY:
radKIDS, INC.
9 NEW VENTURE DRIVE
UNIT #4
SOUTH DENNIS, MA 02660



(508) 760-2080
fax (508) 760-2089
www.radkids.org
radkids@radkids.org

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radKIDS®, Inc. and our program instructors attempt to provide attendees with information, tactics, and considerations which we believe may be useful against various types of assaults, abuse and attempted abduction perpetrated against children. However, we cannot anticipate all of the situations or conditions under which this information may be used, nor do we know the specific skills, experiences, abilities, or limitations our attendees possess individually. Therefore, radKIDS, Inc., its instructors, and advisors cannot accept and affirmatively disclaim any liability for personal injury or property damage resulting from the application or adoption of any of the information presented during the course or within the printed manuals distributed. **NO WARRANTIES, WHETHER EXPRESSED OR IMPLIED, ACCOMPANY THE PROGRAM, THE PRINTED MATERIALS, OR THE INFORMATION OR TACTICS CONVEYED.**

Though we would like to guarantee 100 percent success of the radKIDS Personal Empowerment Safety Education™ Program, this is impossible. Legal, tactical, and moral responsibility demands a realistic approach to such a sensitive issue. Realistically, the vast number of confrontation scenarios available to today's criminal prohibits any guarantee of success.



radKIDS®
9 New Venture Drive
Unit #4
S. Dennis, MA 02660
(508) 760-2080
www.radkids.org
radkids@radkids.org

radKIDS® Family Safety Manual

CONGRATULATIONS!!



Your instructor has granted you the opportunity for extended personal safety development.

This policy encourages you to return and practice your skills at any radKIDS® Program offered anywhere, regardless of instructor.

Please return as often as you wish, completely cost free until the date of your 13th Birthday.

Instructor Signature

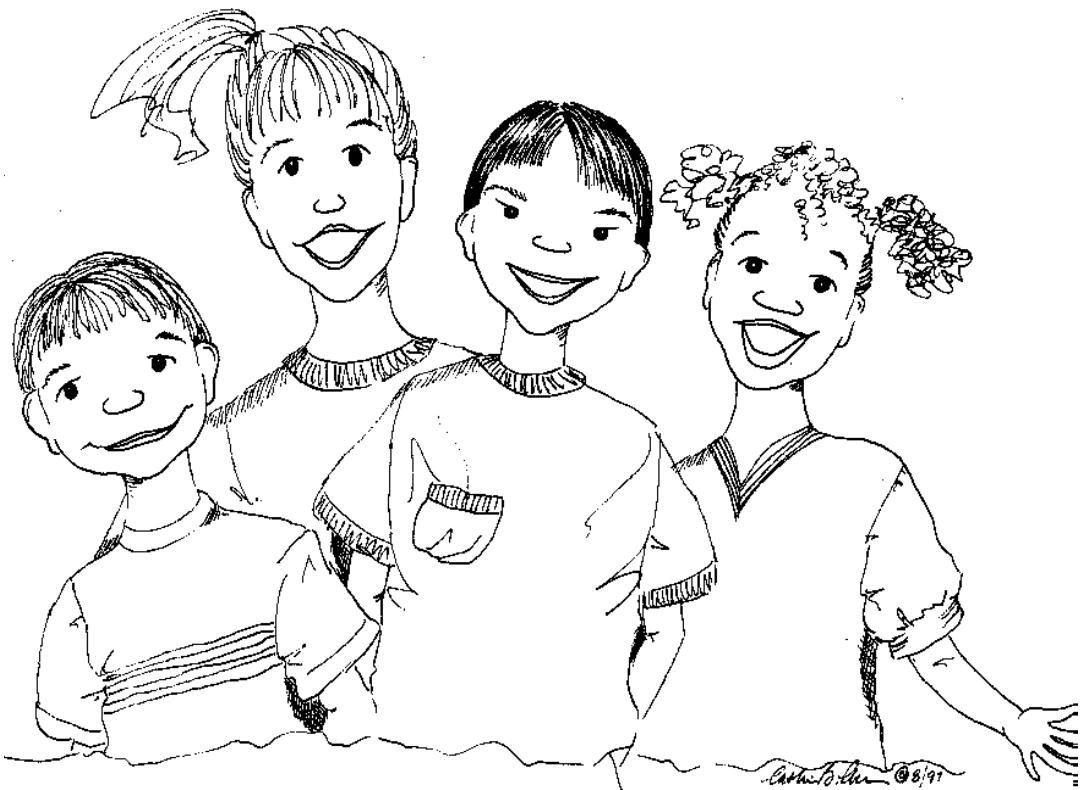
Today's Date

Expiration Date (month/year)

The above signed Instructor is currently certified by radKIDS Inc. Any signature other than that of a currently certified Instructor indicates a violation of applicable copyright law.



INTRODUCTION



HI! WELCOME TO radKIDS®! We think it's really great you have decided to learn more about safety. Safety is important, and there is so much to learn. We are radKIDS too, and we're here to help you. Each one of us has important information to share about all sorts of things. We hope you have fun using this manual and that you will remember to use what you learn with radKIDS everyday.

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S. Dennis, MA 02660
(508) 760-2080
www.radkids.org
radkids@radkids.org

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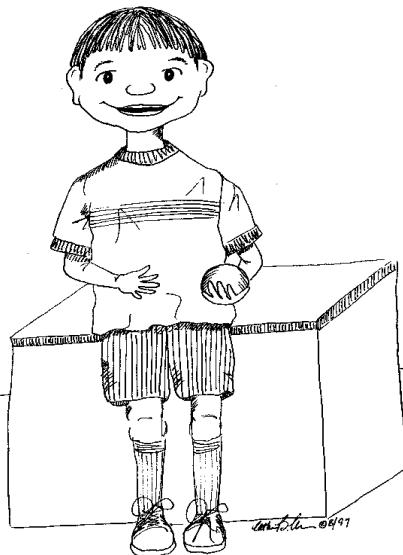
I



MEET THE KIDS

HI! MY NAME IS SAM.

I am 5 years old and in Kindergarten. I am going to be talking to you about Vehicle Safety; that is safety around cars and buses and trucks and stuff. I'll even get to talk to you about my favorite... bike riding! I am also going to talk to you about friendship and sometimes when other kids are really not your friend.



HI! I'M JAZZ.

I am 7 and in the second grade. I will be talking to you about the rad-KIDS Class Rules and, since I love school, I asked if I could be the one who tells you about staying safe there. So, you'll find me there too. See you in a couple pages.



HI! COREY

HERE.

I am 10 and in the fourth grade. I am going to be giving you tips on how to stay safe at home and when you go out to the mall, playground, parks, the fair, or to the beach ... just out-and-about in general. See ya then.



HELLO! MY NAME IS

JENNIFER. I am 12 years old and in the sixth grade. I am going to talk to you about safety words like: **radKIDS** **Plans**, 9-1-1, strangers, personal space and personal touch, private parts and some other things in a section called "Definitions." I will also be talking to you about something that happened to me a while ago. See you there!

CLASS RULES



CLASS RULES

1. Walk, Don't Run.
2. Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself.
3. Use a quiet voice.
4. Raise your hand and wait to be called on, don't interrupt.
5. Follow directions of your instructor/teacher.
6. Be polite and respect others.
7. Ask questions.
8. Do not use equipment without permission.
9. No competing or practicing with classmates.
10. Report any injuries right away.
11. No horseplay.
12. When you see the closed fingers raised, be quiet.

**HI! IT'S ME JAZZ AND I'M HERE TO
TALK WITH YOU ABOUT RULES.**

Just like there are rules at school, there are rules here in radKIDS class. And, like at school, the rules are there so that everyone stays safe and has the chance to learn. If you have any questions about the radKIDS Class Rules, ask a parent or your instructor.



We are really glad that you are joining us so that you can become a **radKID** too. Do you know what a **radKID** is?

A **radKID** is a cool kid that doesn't let anyone hurt them!

You know why? Because **radKIDS** know three things that only **radKIDS** know. We call them our **radKIDS** rules. Now that you are a **radKID** you need to know them too, and the first one is;

“No One has the Right to Hurt You because you are special.” You are so special that we don't even know what you are going to be when you grow up, and that is cool because you can be anything you want to be.



radKIDS also know that, as a radKID, you don't have the right to hurt anyone else, **UNLESS** someone is trying to physically hurt you, and then you have the right to **STOP THEM**, and radKIDS learn how to stop anyone who tries to hurt them.

The last thing that all radKIDS know is probably the most important thing.

Do you know what it is?

All radKIDS know that if anyone ever tries to hurt you or has hurt you before, **“IT IS NOT YOUR**

FAULT.” It's never your

fault when someone hurts

you, tricks you or makes you

feel bad inside or out. It's

their fault for hurting you. So,

since it's not your fault **YOU**

CAN TELL.

As a radKID, you can tell because NO ONE has the right to hurt you, and

it's not your fault, so **you can keep telling** until someone helps you.



That's what all radKIDS know. Cool huh? Well, now that we know this, let's see what else we can learn to stay safe.

radKIDS®
9 New Venture Drive
Unit #4
S. Dennis, MA 02660
(508) 760-2080
www.radkids.org
radkids@radkids.org

radKIDS® Family Safety Manual

DEFINITIONS

Hi everyone! It's me Jennifer. I am here to talk to you about some safety words and phrases that many of you may know but as radKIDS, we will know more.

radKIDS Plans

We are going to talk a lot about these plans in radKIDS. A radKIDS Plan is our plan about the things we can do in a certain situation to avoid or escape danger. It's important to know what to do if an emergency happens.



Do you know what an emergency is?

An emergency is something that happens that you need to get help for right away. Some examples of emergencies are: ① someone gets very sick or badly hurt and needs a doctor fast; ② you need a police officer; ③ you need a fireman; or ④ you are scared, alone, and need help. Remember, **YOU** are always the most important emergency.

A radKIDS Plan will help you to prepare for emergencies and avoid or escape danger and all radKIDS have their own plans.



9-1-1

Have you ever heard of 9-1-1? I bet you have. You probably know that it is the number you dial on the phone to get help in an emergency. Do you know how to use the phone at home or a pay phone on the street to call for help?

- 1 Dial 9-1-1 or “0” for the operator. If you are at a pay phone you won’t need any money to call these numbers
- 2 Stay calm.
- 3 Speak slowly.
- 4 Give your full name.
- 5 Tell the person what is wrong.
- 6 Tell the person where you are. If you don’t know where you are, just stay on the phone and they will find you.
- 7 Follow the 9-1-1 person’s instructions very carefully.
- 8 Stay on the phone until help arrives.

What might a 9-1-1 operator ask?

Pretend someone you don’t know tried to grab you in front of your home, and see if you can answer the following questions...

9-1-1 operator. What is your location?

What is your Emergency?

Do you know where you are? (your address)

What is your name?

Are you OK? Were you hurt?

How old are you?

Is the person still around?

What did the person look like?

Just hang on the line, help is on the way. Don’t hang up.

8



- Homework Drill
- Parents Cell Phone Emergency Drill

Do you need money to call 9-1-1 or “0” from a pay phone?

□ No. Because a radKID is special and 9-1-1 is their personal phone number if they need help right away.

What if you need to call from your mom’s or another grown-up’s cellular phone (that’s the one she carries in her purse or leaves in the car)?

□ First, make sure to turn the power ON. Then, dial 9-1-1 and hit the “SEND” or “ENTER” button. It usually has green letters. If they have a cell phone, ask the grown-up(s) you live with to show you how to dial 9-1-1 SEND on their cell phone.

ESCAPE ROUTES

An escape route is the path that you follow to get from some sort of danger to a safe place. Most of you probably have an idea of what an escape route is from your fire drills at school. In school fire drills, your escape route would be the path you follow through the hallways to get to the nearest exit.

Escape routes are important because they lead you from danger to safety or what radKIDS call a Safe Zone. Most of the time safety means exit to a safe zone or a trusted grown-up. When you are out, try to make a radKIDS Plan on how to get from where you are to your safe zone or a trusted grown-up should you need them.



STRANGERS

Do you know what a stranger is? Most people think a stranger is anybody that you don't know very well, but radKIDS know more. radKIDS know strangers are just two types of people; Good or Bad, and people can come in all shapes and sizes. They can be young or old, pretty or plain, tall or short. They can be 5-105 years old. I used to think people weren't strangers if I knew their names; now, I know that's wrong. You can know someone's name, but still not know them well. **radKIDS know that it is not what people look like that make them scary or dangerous, it is what they do and how they treat us that makes them good or bad.**

Most people you don't know are nice and won't do anything to hurt you. You just need to be careful and learn to trust your radKIDS feelings about people, and watch the things they do. If anybody does something that makes you feel bad, uncomfortable, confused, or hurts you, you can say "No" and run and tell because all radKIDS know it is not their fault. As radKIDS we know there really are no strangers, just good people and bad people and no one gets to hurt us; If they do, they are bad people.

Good people are people who don't try and hurt us or make us feel bad and they don't ask us for help or give us anything without Mom or Dad's permission.. A Bad person is **anyone** who tries to hurt us, trick us or make us feel bad inside. They can be 5-105 years old. They even can be someone you know, a friend, someone in your family, even a stranger.

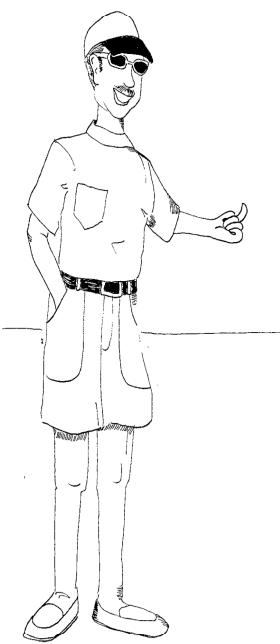
All radKIDS know that anyone who tries to hurt them



- radKIDS ON...
What's the Password?
- radKIDS Homework
assignment Password

trick them or make them feel bad inside is bad and radKIDS rule #1 NO ONE gets to hurt you.

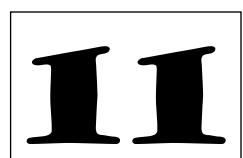
If anyone asks you to help them or offers you free stuff without Mom's or Dad's permission, radKIDS say, "NO," and run to a safe zone/grown-up they trust. It's not a radKIDS job to help a grown-up. It's a grown-ups job, so run and get a grown-up. You can and should trust your instincts. If you think anything is not right, run and tell someone you trust. If they don't believe you, keep telling until someone does. Always remember radKIDS Rule #3: it's not your fault if anyone hurts you. It's their fault and you can tell!



TRICKS

When we talk about tricks in radKIDS we're talking about the things people say or do to make you believe something that isn't true. They try to trick you so that you will do something they want you to do that may not be good for you and may even be dangerous. They may tell you they lost a cute pet and want you to help them find it so that you will follow them away from safety. Or they may tell you there is an emergency at your house, and they were sent to get you, again so that you will follow them away from safety. It's important to know about the different kinds of tricks people may play so you can avoid dangerous situations. We will talk about those tricks and others later in the manual along with our radKIDS Plans for what to do if someone tries them on you.

For now, you should know: It's OK to say "NO" to a grown-up.



Remember: If anyone asks you to do something you're not sure of or you don't want to do then you should say "NO!", GET AWAY FAST and TELL a trusted grown-up what happened. No one gets to hurt a radKID and no one gets to hurt or trick you.

PRIVATE PARTS



Have you ever heard of **private parts**? Do you know what they are? Private parts are the parts of your body that are private. That means those parts of your body that are yours and yours alone, and no one is allowed to touch them without your permission.

They are the parts of your body that are usually covered by a bathing suit. If anyone ever tries to touch your private parts or wants you to touch theirs you should say "NO" and tell a grown-up you trust.

radKID Family Note: Feel free to take this opportunity to introduce your child to the proper private parts terminology should you feel it appropriate.

PERSONAL SPACE/PERSONAL TOUCH/ UNWANTED TOUCH



We will talk more about good, bad, and unwanted touch in their own section later in the manual. But for now let's define the terms.

Good touch is a hug (that isn't too tight) or a high five from Mom that makes you feel good inside.

Bad touch is a touch that hurts. It may hurt your body, or it may make you feel bad on the inside.

Unwanted touch makes you feel strange on the inside—kind of yucky—like when someone touches you and you just don't want them to, or asks you for a hug or when a grown-up tells you to hug someone you don't want to. radKIDS know they don't have to let anyone touch them if they don't want them to. You can say NO and get away if they don't stop or you can run and tell someone because it's not your fault.



REVIEW: Here's our first radKIDS Plan:

What is our
radKIDS Plan if...

you need to use the phone to call for help in an emergency?

- ▶ Dial 9-1-1 or "0" for the operator.
- ▶ Stay calm.
- ▶ Speak slowly.
- ▶ Give your full name.
- ▶ Tell the person what is wrong.
- ▶ Tell the person where you are. If you don't know where you are, just stay on the phone and they will find you.
- ▶ If you can't stay on the phone or talk don't hang up, leave the phone off the hook.
- ▶ Follow the 9-1-1 person's instructions very carefully.
- ▶ Stay on the phone until help arrives.

radKIDS®
9 New Venture Drive
Unit #4
S. Dennis, MA 02660
(508) 760-2080
www.radkids.org
radkids@radkids.org

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RISK REDUCTION

SCHOOL SAFETY

Hello Boys and Girls!

My name is Jazz. School can be lots of fun. But, it's important to do what you can to stay safe there. Here are some of my favorite **Safety Tips** all radKIDS know: Walking to School or to a Friend's



① We always take a buddy

along when walking to and from school.

② We take the safest way to school and take the same route every day. Don't walk near deserted lots and alleyways.

radKIDS Know More At School

① We never leave a schoolyard during school hours without first getting your parent's and teacher's permission.

② We never leave school with someone you don't know. Always tell a teacher or trusted adult if anyone you don't know or someone you haven't been given permission to leave with, asks you to leave school for any reason.



- ③ radKIDS don't take drugs, alcohol, or cigarettes from anyone. Always say "NO" and get away fast.
- ④ radKIDS can tell a trusted adult if anyone touches you or makes you feel scared or uncomfortable.
- ⑤ We should let your parents know if you must stay late after school. When leaving school, go straight home. Do not stop to play with friends unless you have permission first.
- ⑥ radKIDS can yell, "NO" and run to safe zone if anyone you don't know offers you candy, gifts, or to take you for a ride. Then tell your teacher or trusted adult.

radKIDS ON Bullying

- ① radKIDS know that a bully is **anyone** who means to or tries to hurt them or their friends with words, threats or physical actions (pushing, shoving, hitting) whether in person, on the computer (internet), around friends or behind their back. radKIDS know "No One" gets to hurt them.
- ② radKIDS don't let bullies hurt them, if they say they are sorry you can forgive, but if they do it again that is an "on-purpose" and they are not our friends. They are trying to trick you. Friends don't hurt friends on purpose.
- ③ radKIDS also know they do not have the right to hurt the bully either but they do have the right to "STOP THEM" (Block /Run/ Tell) .
- ④ radKIDS also don't let other kids get hurt. When they see others being bullied they can run and tell because it is not their fault and they know the difference between **Tattling and Telling**. **Tattling** is when you try to get someone in trouble. **Telling** is when you try and help yourself or others from danger or harm.



- radKIDS ON... Bullying
- radKIDS ON... School Violence

radKIDS Say “NO to Bullies”

⑤ Taunting and teasing can hurt friends and make them feel bad.

If someone is teasing and you both think it is funny, then that is not teasing, that is joking. But once someone feels bad or is hurt and you don't stop, then it becomes **verbal bullying** and radKIDS don't tease, hurt or bully anyone. When someone does not stop teasing or tries to tease you to make themselves look better we call them bullies.

⑥ radKIDS can and should stop bullies, because we know it is not our fault and we have a plan.

radKIDS Plan for Bullying

Avoid Them- They are not our friends

Ignore Them- They don't get your attention –Talk to the hand

Move Away – No One gets to hurt you

Ask Them/Tell Them To Stop —The radKIDS way

Leave & Tell a Trusted Adult, Teacher or Parent – It is not your fault. It is theirs and “No one gets to hurt you.”

radKIDS Know Even More

radKIDS can “Physically Resist”, Not Fight, but “STOP THEM”
and Get Away from Anyone Trying to Hurt Us
We Can “BLOCK / RUN / Then TELL

If a bully traps you and you cannot get away, you can Yell Loud, "STOP IT" and if they try and hit, you can use your radKIDS Skills to **Block /Run and Tell** Always remember: "YOU" have the right to "STOP THEM", Not Fight, but "STOP THEM" and Get Away because no one has the right to hurt you. And you can tell a trusted or responsible grown-up because it is not your fault.



What is our
radKIDS Plan if...
someone offers you
drugs, alcohol or
cigarettes?
.....

- Always say NO!
- Get away fast!
- Tell a trusted
grown-up

WHAT IS OUR radKIDS Plan

IF... a person you don't know shows up at school and tells you there is an emergency at home and you need to go with him or her? Saying there's an emergency may be a trick!

★ We never leave school with someone you don't know. Always tell a teacher or trusted adult if anyone you don't know, or someone you haven't been given permission

to leave with, asks you to leave school for any reason.

- ★ We can talk to our parents about what will happen if there's a real emergency. Who will they send for you? You may want to make up a secret password that only you and your parents know about. If there's a real emergency the person they send should be able to tell you what the password is.

radKID Family Note: You may want to take this opportunity to discuss your Family Emergency Plan with your child.

radKIDS ON... Passwords

HOME SAFETY

Hi! It's me, Corey, and I am here to talk to you about being safe at home and when you go out-and-about.



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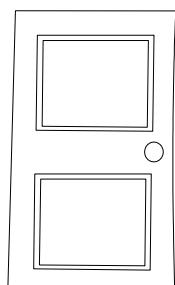
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One of my jobs at home is to help my dad and mom with our home safety and security. At first, I didn't think this would be any fun, but then they explained they couldn't do it without me. So, we all work together and they were right; sometimes I do have to remind them about things. Here are some of the things I've learned about Home Safety:

WINDOWS AND DOORS

- Windows are great, but we need to be careful not to play near them or push on them or the screens...you could get hurt.
- We don't go into your house or apartment if things don't look right— if there is a broken window, ripped screen, or opened door. ► Quickly go to a neighbor's house. ► Call your parents or tell a trusted adult what is wrong. Call 9-1-1 in an emergency. Remember 9-1-1 is *your* phone number in an emergency.
- radKIDS never open the door without looking to see who it is. If it is a grown-up, do not open the door without your parent(s).



If there is a grown-up at the door, then a grown-up should answer the door. It is not a radKIDS job. One of my favorite things to do with Mom and Dad is the “Answering the Door” drill.

Every week my mom or dad will try to get me to open the door without checking to see who it is.



Last week I heard a knock on the door. I went and asked “Who is it?” There was no answer. I asked again—“Who is it?” I heard a man say “Delivery. Is your mom or dad there?” Mom was downstairs, so I yelled through the door “Hold on. Someone will be there shortly.” Then I went to get my mom. She came and looked through the peephole and saw DAD on the other side of the door. We opened the door, and I got the delivery Dad had; it was some M&Ms for doing the right thing.

CLOSETS AND CUPBOARDS

Closets and cupboards can be fun places to hide but they may also contain hidden dangers. Sometimes cleaning supplies are stored there and many cleaning products are poisonous. Our cabinets used to have cleaning supplies, but we now have a new **radKIDS Rule**: If you see it out then, **SHOUT** and if you can smell then, tell a trusted adult.

GUN SAFETY

radKIDS know that guns can be very dangerous and you need to go to a special school to learn about guns. **radKIDS** have a rule. The **radKIDS Rule**: If we see a gun we yell “**GUN**”, run and tell someone. See a gun outside, yell “**GUN**”, run and tell. See a gun inside, yell “**GUN**”, run and tell someone. If we see a gun all **radKIDS** run and tell someone.

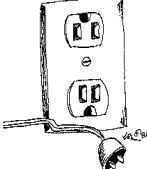
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radKIDS® Family Safety Manual

IN THE KITCHEN

- When Dad is cooking, I don't play in the kitchen. There are many things that can hurt me in the kitchen including the burners on the stove, pots and pans, glass and radKIDS don't hurt themselves.
- I always thought the microwave was OK because it doesn't get hot, but what comes out of the microwave *is* usually hot so it's important to be careful.

ELECTRIC SAFETY

 All the plugs in our house have safety caps, but once in awhile I find one off and when I do, I tell my parents. Electricity can hurt you. Never play with the outlets and NEVER try to stick anything in them. Watch out for the long cords in the house; they have electricity running through them, and you can trip on them. Oh yeah, and never use any electric stuff around water without a parent's supervision.

FIRE SAFETY

This is one of my favorite things to do with Mom and Dad. Once a month, I get to be the Fire Chief. We go through the house and check all the smoke detectors, then go over our Fire Escape Plan and have a Fire



Drill. We go slowly, but we pretend it's real. To do this at home, you'll need to figure out the best Escape Routes, it's a good



- radKIDS ON... Fire Safety
- radKIDS Homework Home Fire Safety Plan diagram

idea to have more than one, (at least two ways out) and you will need to agree on a Safe Place to meet once you're outside.

Also, if you're in your room with the door closed, and you see smoke coming in around the door, don't open it! Feel it first with the back of your hand. If your door is hot to the touch, don't open it— find a window if possible, stay low to the ground and call out for help. If the door is cool you can open it. Have a plan for both situations.

radKID Family Note: When developing your Fire Escape Plans please remember to plan for window escapes from your child's room(s) and other bedrooms. Determine a safe way to get from window level to ground level.

radKIDS ON... Home Fire Safety

Other fun safety drills we can do are Drop and Roll and Low Crawl.

- ❶ The DROP AND ROLL is what you would do if your clothes ever caught fire ... You just *drop* to the ground and *roll* until it's out.
- ❷ The LOW CRAWL is practice for getting around in a house that is filled with smoke or when we hear the smoke detectors. The air is clearest near the floor so it's easier to breathe if you're in a low crawl position, on your back or stomach .

* And of course Fire is not a toy so radKIDS never play with fire!



radKIDS®
9 New Venture Drive
Unit #4
S. Dennis, MA 02660
(508) 760-2080
www.radkids.org
radkids@radkids.org

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PHONE SAFETY

My mom and dad let me answer the phone sometimes. The phone is fun, but we need to be safe on the phone. When you answer, say "Hello." After that if you don't know the caller then ask them to hold on and get a parent. Never tell them where your mom or dad is, just say "I will ask them to call you." Take a message for Mom or Dad and remember if there is a grown-up on the phone they should be talking to a grown-up.



INTERNET SAFETY

The internet is a fun place where we can learn a lot of cool stuff and we can even do our homework by working on the internet. radKIDS know that there is no such thing as privacy on the internet. If we see something on the internet that we don't understand or know we're not supposed to see, we should leave and tell someone because it is not your fault. The internet can be a trick and radKIDS don't let people trick us. Remember people can pretend to be anyone or anything on the Internet so remember the radKIDS Rule; If we don't know who we are chatting with on the computer then we don't chat and we never tell anyone who we are or anything about us. If anyone asks, we should tell a grown-up we trust.

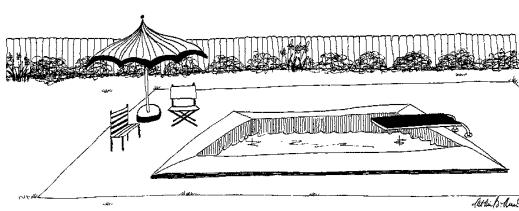
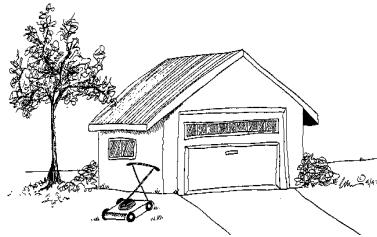
OUTSIDE SAFETY

When I play outside, I am always careful around the DRIVEWAY, the GARAGE, the POOL, and the LAWNMOWER.

1 The DRIVEWAY is a fun place to ride my bike and to play ball, but I have to watch out for adults. As soon as I see a car coming (or going), I get out of the driveway. I can usually see them but they may not see me; so, I have to be careful and get out of their way. **radKIDS Rule:** If there is a car coming in the driveway, I get out of the driveway. And if there is a car backing out of my driveway, I get out of the driveway.

2 The GARAGE is a fun place to play too, but there are some dangers there like tools, poisons, and cars. My dad also keeps lots of his “junk” in there, and I stay clear of that too.

3 When my dad is mowing the lawn, I stay away from the LAWNMOWER. I also try to keep my toys off the lawn so he doesn’t run them over.



4 I love the POOL, but safety is real important there. Remember the **rad-KIDS Rule:** If there is no adult at the pool then there is no ME at the pool.



What is our
radKIDS Plan if...
there's a fire at your
house?

.....

- Be prepared. Have a fire drill at your house. Remember, you need an Escape Route or two and a Safe Place to meet once you're outside.

WHAT IS OUR radKIDS® Plan

IF... someone you don't know knocks on your door?

★ radKIDS never open the door without looking to see who it is. If it is a stranger or grown-up, do not open the door without your parents. **AND WHAT IF...** he/she says they are with the police department or the water or electric company or they have a delivery for you?

★ He/she is still a stranger or grown-up and you shouldn't open the door without a parent. If they are who they say they are, they should understand. If they get mean and you feel scared and you're home alone, you can always call for help. Remember 9-1-1 is your phone number.

OUT-AND-ABOUT SAFETY



Now that we've talked about staying safe in and around your house, let's talk about being safe when you are away from home. There are lots of places I like to go with my mom or dad, and it's very important to have safety rules when you go Out-And-About.

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MALLS, MOVIE THEATRES, STORES, AND PUBLIC PLACES

These are some of my favorite places, but they are also some of the favorite places for bad people who may try to trick and hurt us. Always remember the radKIDS Rule when there are lots of people around like in malls, stores, and public places.

What is the radKIDS Rule?

■ Remember SIGHT-SOUND-DISTANCE

Whenever I am out, I am always in SIGHT of my mom/dad or friend. I am always close enough to hear Mom/Dad or my friend (SOUND) or for them to hear me. Lastly and most important, I am always within SIGHT and no more than 3 seconds away from my mom/dad or friend (DISTANCE). (Someone to watch my back).

- radKIDS ON...What to do if Your Child is Missing
- radKIDS ON...Amber Alert

I know you will always do your best to follow the radKIDS Rule but ...

What if you got lost? What would you do?

■ Don't panic.

■ Go to a safe zone and say "Help, I lost my mom and dad."

- ▶ Find a cash register with a clerk at it.
- ▶ Find a Uniformed Police or Security Officer.
- ▶ Find a phone and dial 9-1-1.

- Rehearse a plan with your parents on what to do and where to go if you get lost or separated from them.

What is your radKIDS Plan if someone was trying to trick you or take you away?

- **YELL LOUD**—“NO!”,
“HELP,” “THIS IS NOT
MY DAD/MOM” and keep
repeating it!



- If you break free and the bad person is chasing you,
MAKE A SCENE! ► Yell!
► Knock things off shelves! ► Scatter books belongings, garbage anything that you can find.

★ If you have trouble breaking free, remember your radKIDS Skills you learned in radKIDS. Yell Loud, Hit Hard and Run Fast. If you can, pepper, hammer, or shin kick the person in the shins. Pick up something and throw it real hard at the person. Whatever it takes to break away. **(Remember there is nothing more valuable than you in that store.)**

- **KEEP MAKING A SCENE**
- **RUN!**
- Run to a place where there are people, tell someone you need HELP, and point to the person who is trying to take you away; or get to a phone and dial 9-1-1.



PLAYGROUNDS, PARKS, FAIRS, AND BEACHES

Just like at the Mall, other areas we play at need safety too. BUT, the lucky thing is we get to use the same radKIDS Rule — remember **SIGHT-SOUND-DISTANCE** with a trusted grown-up or safety partner. (Someone to watch your back).

If Mom, Dad or your safety partner is not right there with you, always remember to be careful around people you don't know. If you don't know who someone is, then DON'T talk to them and KEEP your distance. If you want to play with someone, be sure to ask your mom, dad, or safety partner first.

Here are some other important radKIDS Playground Safety Rules and Plans:

- ❶ Make sure your parents, sitter, friend or whoever is watching or is with you, gives you permission to go to the playground. They might even take you.
- ❷ We tell them what playground you are going to and make sure you don't leave that playground and go somewhere else.
- ❸ We leave the playground at the time your parents tell you to and go straight home. Don't stop to play with friends.
- ❹ We take a safety partner along with you. Stay with him/her. Play with your buddy or other friends or group of children.
- ❺ We don't let anyone join in with you while you are playing unless you have your parent or sitter's permission.



radKIDS know more than other kids about “Tricks”

Like when someone you don't know wants to play catch with you or challenges you to a race or asks you for help when they should be asking another grown-up, radKIDS say, “NO” run and tell because it is not your fault and no one gets to trick you.

► Like in a FOOT RACE CHALLENGE—it's always fun to race, but never race with someone you don't know.

⑥ radKIDS never let anyone touch you if you don't want them to.

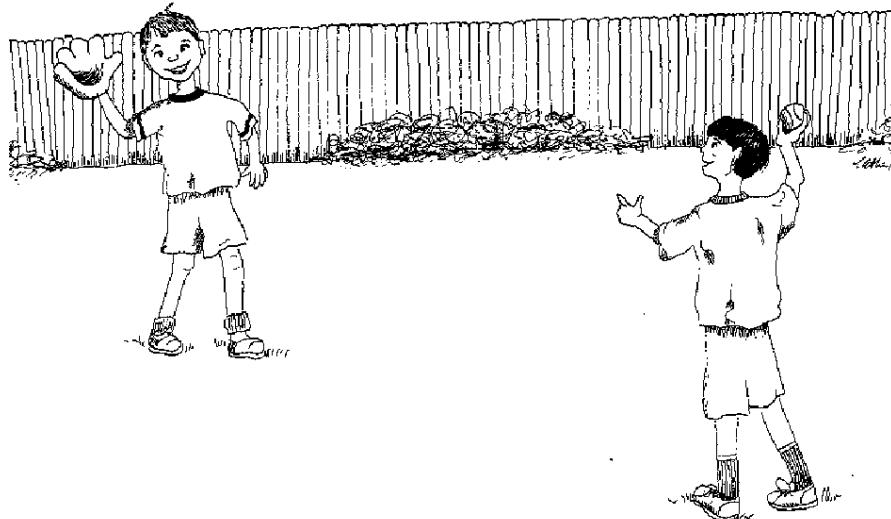
Point out to a trusted adult anyone that bothers you or your friends.

We never leave a playground with someone you don't know. It could be a trick. Sometimes a grown-up you do or don't know may ask you to help them with something without Mom's and Dad's permission, or ask you to come see something, or even give you candy to go with them. Remember: it is not your job to help a grown-up so tell them “NO,” nice and loud then RUN and TELL a trusted adult what the person asked you to do.

⑧ If you see a friend leaving a playground with a grown-up or anyone else you don't know, tell a trusted adult right away.

⑨ radKIDS never go to a public bathroom alone. Take your buddy or parent with you.

⑩ radKIDS don't play in playgrounds or parks after dark.



radKIDS PLANS TO PLAY SAFELY

To be safe when we play:

- ❶ We take a buddy (safety partner) along when you are outside playing.
- ❷ We never play in deserted buildings, vacant lots, alleys or any area where there is no one around. Make sure your parent(s), sitter, or trusted adult can see you at all times. (Sight, Sound & Distance).
- ❸ We never go anywhere with someone you don't know. And even if you know the person, always get your parent's permission before going anywhere.



DOG DEFENSE

I like dogs, but my mom told me not all dogs will be nice to me. I laughed when she told me about a dog chasing her into a tree. Then she helped me with the following Dog Safety Rules that all radKIDS know:

- ★ We never approach or tease a strange dog, especially if he or she is on a chain or behind a fence.
- ★ If there is a bad dog around, we leave the area and tell a grown-up.
- ★ We don't get too close to any dog when either of you are eating.
- ★ If a dog comes toward you, we remain CALM and FREEZE. If the dog wants to sniff you, let it—most times the dog will sniff you and leave. (Freeze Drill)
- ★ We DON'T SCREAM, RUN, or TURN OUR BACK on the dog. Look for safe places to wait for help, something higher than the ground. Most dogs can't climb fences or trees.
- ★ If the DOG IS BITING, feed him your jacket or lunch box. And if you fall down, curl up in a ball using your arms to protect your face and throat.



What is our
radKIDS Plan if...

you are Out-and-About with your mom or dad?

.....

► Remember the Sight-Sound-Distance Rule
Whenever I am out, I am always in SIGHT of
my mom or dad. I am always close enough to hear
Mom or Dad (SOUND) or for them to hear me.
And lastly and most important, I am never
more than 3 seconds away (DISTANCE).

WHAT IS OUR radKIDS Plan IF... someone you don't

know comes up to you on the playground?

- ★ We keep a safe distance when a grown-up or anyone you don't know approaches you and begins to talk to you.
- ★ If you are with a trusted grown-up, go to them or call to them.
- ★ We tell the person or grown-up you can't talk to them and get away fast. radKIDS know it's not our job to help a grown-up we don't know.

WHAT IF... he/she asks to play a game with you?

- ★ radKIDS don't let grown-ups or real old kids join in with us while we are playing unless we have our parent or sitter's permission.

AND WHAT IF... he/she asks you to help them find something, come see something (they may have a cute picture of a puppy or kitty they say they lost or want to show you) or offers to give you something if you go with them?

These are all tricks. Tell them “NO” in a nice loud voice, move AWAY quickly, and tell a trusted adult what the person asked you to do. Always remember it is not your fault.

AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, WHAT IF...



someone grabs you or tries to take you away?

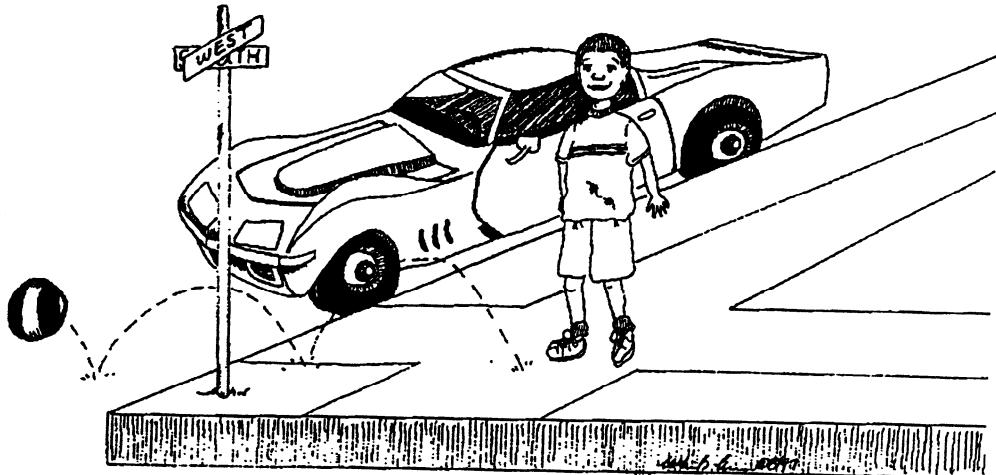
- ★ **WE YELL LOUD**—“NO!” “HELP!”
- “THIS IS NOT MY DAD/MOM! ”**HIT HARD!** (Pepper, Hammer, Kick).
- ★ If you break free and the bad person is chasing you, ► **MAKE A SCENE!**
 - Yell! ► Knock things off shelves!
 - Scatter books, belongings, garbage, anything that you can find.

If you have trouble breaking free, remember your radKIDS Skills. “Yell Loud, Hit Hard and Run Fast” if you can, pepper, hammer, shin kick the person in the shins. Pick up something real hard and throw it at the person, whatever it takes to break away. **Remember there is nothing more valuable than you.**

- ★ **KEEP MAKING A SCENE**

- ★ **RUN** to ► a place where there are people and tell someone you need HELP. Point to the person who is trying to take you away ► get to a phone and dial 9-1-1.

VEHICLE SAFETY



Hi! Remember me? I'm Sam, and I am here to talk to you about vehicle safety; that's safety around roads, including cars and trucks, buses and other stuff. Let's start with safety near the road. I bet you already know a lot about how to stay safe there.

What is your radKIDS Plan to cross the street safely?

1 We never cross the street without a grown-up or a grown-up's permission; **2** We stop at the curb; **3** We look both ways and look again (left, right, and left again)—listening helps too, sometimes you will be able to hear a car coming before you see it. All Clear? Then, **4** We then cross carefully.

What do you do if your ball rolls into the street?

1 We never chase a runaway ball into the street. **2** We follow the steps for crossing the street, above, before retrieving the ball.



DO YOU RIDE A BUS TO SCHOOL?

If you do, what are some of the safety rules you have to follow?

Do you know these Plans all radKIDS know?

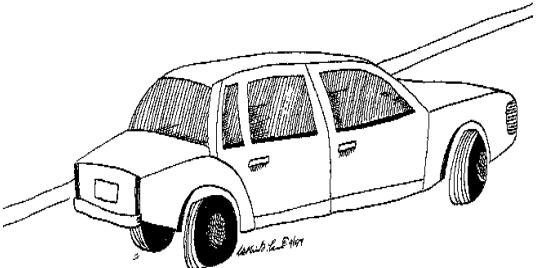
- ❶ We stay at least 3 giant steps back from the curb as the bus approaches;
- ❷ We wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before getting on or off the bus; ❸ We never walk behind the bus; ❹ If we drop something near the bus, we tell the bus driver. We never try to pick up anything near the bus because the driver may not be able to see us. radKIDS also know that no one gets to hurt us on the bus so we use our radKIDS plan for bullies on the bus including Block-Run and Tell if needed.

DO YOUR PARENTS HAVE RULES FOR RIDING IN THE CAR? WHAT ARE YOUR radKIDS PLANS TO STAY SAFE IN THE CAR?

Some may be: ❶ We always wear our seatbelt; ❷ We sit still in our seat; ❸

We lock our door; ❹ We keep hands, feet, and objects to our self; ❺ We

wait until the driver says it's OK to get out before opening the door; and ❻ We don't distract the driver.



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radkids@radkids.org



- radKIDS ON...
Your Bicycle Helmet

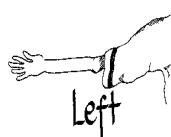
DO YOU RIDE A BIKE?

Riding my bike is one of my very favorite things to do. But, it's important to ride safely.

What are some radKIDS Plans to follow when riding our bike?



1 radKIDS always wear a helmet—and it's not enough just to wear it, you

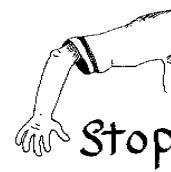


have to make sure it fits properly. Ask your parents to make sure yours is on right. **2** We stay on the right hand

side of the road—traveling in the same direction as traffic.



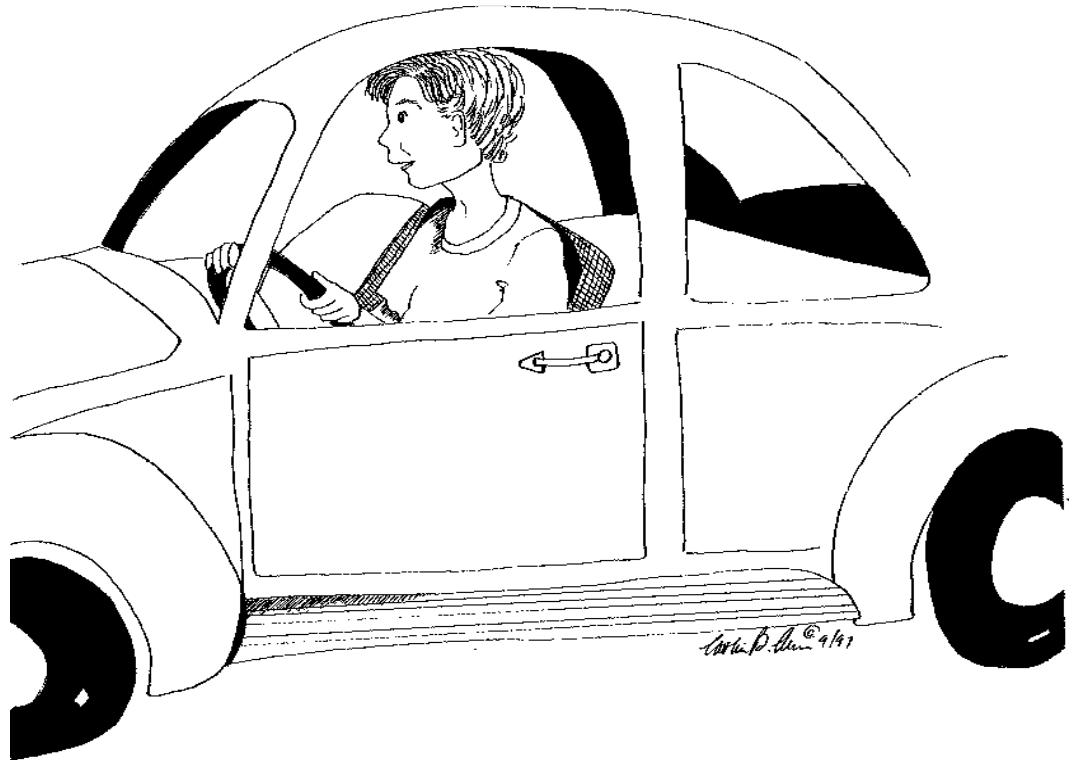
3 We obey all traffic signs and signals. **4** We always are careful when moving into the street from a driveway or sidewalk and we never ride into the street from between parked cars.



5 We use hand turn signals. **6** We watch out for potholes and obstacles on the road in front of us. **7** We are respectful of other bikers, cars, and people on the road. **8** We don't ride after dark. **9** If riding with friends, we stay in a line, one behind the other.

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WHAT ABOUT PEOPLE IN CARS? RADKIDS KNOW MORE.

❶ We never get into the car of a stranger or a grown-up we don't know, no matter how nice he or she acts and no matter what he or she offers or says to you. ❷ We always keep a safe distance away (at least 3 giant steps back). ❸ We walk/run in the opposite direction of the car. ❹ If the person inside the car tries to talk to us or asks us questions, we say "NO" and get away fast. ❺ radKIDS never go near anyone we don't know who is in a car and is asking for help or anything else. ❻ We tell a trusted adult what the person said or asked and we try to give them a description of the car and the person. ❼ If the person follows us, we run to a public place and yell "HELP!" ❽ If we are unable to break away, and the person gets



you into his or her car take a deep breath, keep calm, and begin to look for creative ways to escape. Remember, No one has the right to hurt you, so stop them, use your radKIDS skills (Hammer, Kick, Pepper, Yell) break free, and get out of the car. No matter what, never ever give up because you can stop them and get away, and someone is coming to find you.

What is our
radKIDS Plan if...

you are riding your bike?

.....

Always wear a helmet

Stay on the right side of the road

Obey traffic signs and signals

Be careful moving into the street

Use hand signals

Watch the road for obstacles

Be respectful of others

Don't ride after dark

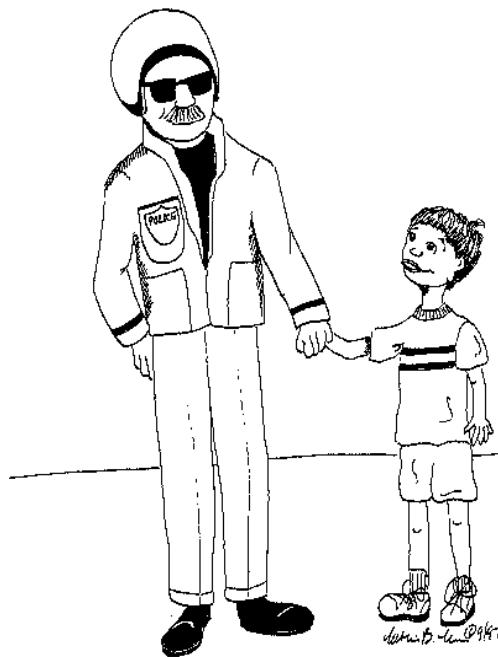
When riding with friends, stay in a line

WHAT IS OUR radKIDS Plan IF... someone you don't know approaches you in a car?

- ★ Remember our 3 Giant Steps — always keep a safe distance away.
- ★ We walk or run in the opposite direction of the car.
- ★ If the person follows us, run to a public place and yell "HELP!"
- ★ We can tell a trusted adult that someone we don't know approached us in a car. ► try to be able to give them a description of the car and the person .

WHAT IF... he/she asks you for directions or for help?

- ★ radKIDS never go near anyone we don't know in a car (no closer than 3 giant steps) who is asking for help or anything else.



- ★ Grown-ups shouldn't be asking kids for help. We can go tell a grown-up what happened.

AND WHAT IF... he/she tries to get you into the car with them?

- ★ We never get into anyone's car without your parent's permission, no matter how nice the person acts, and no matter what he or she offers or says to you.

- ★ If the person tries to force you into the car YELL, BREAK AWAY, (remember your radKIDS Skills: PEPPER, HAMMER, KICK) and RUN to TELL a trusted grown-up what happened.

- ★ If you are unable to break away and the person gets you into his/her car take a deep breath, keep calm, and begin to look for creative ways to escape (PEPPER, HAMMER, KICK AND GET OUT OF THE CAR.) Remember no one has the right to hurt you.



PERSONAL SPACE- PERSONAL TOUCH / UNWANTED TOUCH

Have you ever fallen down and hurt yourself? I have. And when it happened to me the first thing I did was run to my mom for a hug. Her hugs make me feel better. That is what Good touch is— hugs or hand holding even high fives that make you feel warm and good inside.

Bad touch is kind of the opposite. It's a touch that hurts. It may hurt your body, like if someone hits you. Or it may make you feel bad inside, like once a friend of mine pushed me because she wanted the toy I was playing with. That hurt my feelings and made me angry.

There's another kind of touching too, that is Uncomfortable or Unwanted touch. Like if someone you don't know very well or like very much



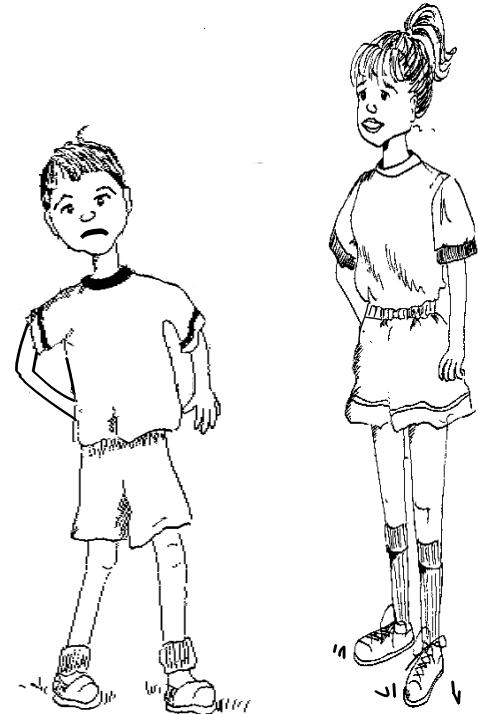
tries to give you a hug. It may not hurt you, but it makes you feel strange on the inside— kind of yucky. If anyone tries to touch you in a way that makes you uncomfortable, it's OK to say "NO," "I don't like that" or "Please don't do that." Do you know why? Because

your body is your very own, and you are a radKID so no one should touch you if you don't want them to. It's even OK to tell your parent(s) "NO" if you don't want a hug.

Another time touching can be confusing is if someone touches you and then asks you or tells you to keep it secret. They may say bad things will happen if you tell. That's a trick. And if that happens to you, I hope you will find a grown-up that you trust and tell them about it. Secrets that make you feel bad inside are ones you probably need to share.

SAM'S SECRET

It was a beautiful day outside. The first truly spring-like day of the year. Jennifer was at the playground kicking the soccer ball around when Sam came by and asked to join her. They played and chit-chatted for awhile, then decided to go play in the sandbox. While there, an older boy walked by, and after saying "Hi" to Sam, continued on his way.



"Do you know him?" asked Jennifer.

"Yeah, he plays with Corey and I sometimes," Sam replied.

"Oh," Jennifer said. "Is he nice?"

"Wellll...Kind of, but not really," said Sam.

“What do you mean?”

“Just be careful if you ever play with him,” Sam told her. He was beginning to feel uncomfortable.



Jennifer could see that Sam was upset. She asked again, “What do you mean?” “I can’t really tell you,” he said, “But just don’t play with him. OK?” “Why not? What can’t you tell me?”

Jennifer asked. Sam was really getting upset. The boy had told him he had to keep it secret, but Sam felt really bad and wanted to share this with someone. He had tried to tell another friend awhile ago, but that boy hadn’t believed him. “He said I had to keep it secret,” Sam finally told her.

“Sam,” Jennifer responded. “If a secret makes you feel bad inside, it’s one you probably need to share.”

Sam was scared, but he decided to be brave and tell again.

“Sometimes, when we’re playing, he takes me to the grove and when we’re alone, he touches my private parts and does stuff with his private parts. Then he says if I tell, he won’t be my friend anymore.”

“Gosh Sam, if he’s doing that stuff to you, he’s not really your friend at all. He’s trying to trick you,” Jennifer responded. She was very angry at that boy. “You have to tell your mom and dad.”



Sam was relieved that she had believed him, but he was scared about telling his folks. "But I don't know what they'll do," he said. "What if they get mad at me?"

"They won't get mad at you. You know how I know?" Jennifer asked.

"No. How?"

"Because something a lot like that happened to me." Jennifer told Sam.



"Really?!" Sam asked. He was surprised.

"Yes, really," she replied. "It was a few years ago. A friend of my dad's was staying at our house. One day, when my parents were out, he started touching my private parts."

"Wow Jennifer! Was he an old guy?" Sam asked.

"He was my dad's age," she replied. "But people who do this can be any age. They can be 5 or 105. And it can be someone you know, a friend, someone in your family, or a stranger."

"I didn't know that," said Sam. "What did you do?"

"Well, what he did made me feel awful inside, and I didn't know what to do. He said, if I told, we would both go to jail. I believed him and kept the secret. But it happened again and again, and I felt worse and worse. I thought somehow it was my fault. I pictured being handcuffed and taken off to jail. I pictured telling my mom and her



having a heart attack. But, finally, I couldn't take it any more, and I told my mom. And you know what?"

Sam shook his head "No."

"She wasn't mad at me, and she didn't have a heart attack. She told me it wasn't my fault. I had done nothing wrong, and I was definitely NOT going to jail."

"She really wasn't mad?" Sam asked.

"No, she really wasn't," Jennifer replied. "As a matter of fact, all of my family and friends were real supportive. They all said they were sorry it happened to me, and that it was really brave of me to tell. I felt much better. And you would too if you told."

"Would you come with me when I tell?" Sam asked.

"Sure, if it will help. And Sam, I'm really proud of you for telling."



EPilogue

Hi everyone. It's me, Sam. I thought you'd like to know I did tell my mom and everything worked out. My mom and I talked, and we decided to call the police. My mom pointed out that if he was doing that to me, there was a chance he might be doing it to other kids too. She also said that if he was doing it, he needed help. I was nervous about talking to the police at first, but the officer turned out to be really nice. And you know what? I even got to talk to a detective, and she was nice too, and real supportive. And the boy is going to be punished and get help. So, if anything like this ever happens to you, you should tell like I did. Even if you're uncomfortable or scared, you should still be brave and tell.



REMEMBER

If anyone touches you in a way that makes you uncomfortable, it's OK to say "NO".

If they tell you bad things will happen if you tell, don't believe them, it's a trick.

If they tell you to keep it secret, don't. Secrets that make you feel bad inside are the ones you need to share.



- radKIDS ON... Responding to Disclosure

If you tell someone and they don't believe you or don't help you, you need to keep telling until you find someone who does.

Always remember; IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT.

WHAT IS OUR radKIDS Plan IF... someone touches your body in a way you don't want to be touched?

- ★ Move away
- ★ Say "NO!", "STOP!", "DON'T DO THAT TO ME!"
- ★ Tell a trusted adult right away

WHAT IF... he/she asks you to keep it a secret or tells you something bad will happen to you or someone you love if you tell?

- ★ Those are tricks and radKIDS say, "NO" to tricks and run.
- ★ Tell a trusted grown-up what happened. Because it is not our fault.

TOP 10 RESPONSES TO TRICKS

What is our radKIDS Plan if...

1. Anyone touches your body in a way you don't want to be touched?

★Move away. ★Say “NO!”, “STOP!”, “DON’T DO THAT TO ME!” ★Tell a trusted adult right away.



2. A person touches you and then asks you to keep it secret or tells you something bad will happen to you or someone you love if you tell?

★ radKIDS don't fall for those tricks.
★ Tell a trusted grown-up what happened. It is not your fault!

3. Someone shows up at school and tells you there is an emergency at home and you need to go with him or her?

★Saying there's an emergency may be a trick. ★Never leave school with someone you don't know or don't want to, for any reason!
★Tell a teacher or trusted adult. ★ Talk to your parents now about what will happen if there's a real emergency.

4. Somebody knocks on your door?

★Never open the door without looking to see who it is.
★If it is a grown-up or anyone you don't know, we do NOT open the door without your parents. ★Even if they say they are with the police department, water or electric company, or that they have a delivery for you. It is a grown-ups job to answer the door if there is a grown-up there otherwise just tell them to go away.

5. A gown-up or older kids comes up and try to talk to you?

★Keep a safe distance when anyone approaches you. ★ If you are with a trusted adult go to them or call to them. ★Tell that person you can't talk and move away fast.

6. Someone you don't know asks to play a game with you?

★Don't let anyone join in with you while you are playing unless you have your parent or sitter's permission.



7. If anyone asks you to help them find or come see something or offers to give you something if you go with them?

★ These are all tricks. Tell them "NO!" in a loud voice, move AWAY quickly and TELL a

trusted adult what the person asked you to do.

8. Someone grabs you or tries to take you away?

★Yell LOUD "NO!", "HELP!", "THIS IS NOT MY MOM/ DAD"! ★If you break free and the bad person is chasing you, MAKE A SCENE (► Yell ► Knock things off shelves ► Scatter books, belongings, garbage, anything you can find). ★If you have trouble breaking free, remember your rad-KIDS Skills. "Yell Loud, Hit Hard and Run Fast" if you can, pepper, hammer, shin kick the person in the shins, or pick up something real hard and throw it at the person. Whatever it takes to break away. **Remember there is nothing more valuable than you.**

Run to a place where there are people and tell someone you need help; or, to a phone and dial 9-1-1.

9. Someone you don't know approaches you in a car and asks you for directions or for help?

★ Always keep a safe distance away (at least 3 giant steps back).
 ★ Never go near anyone who is in a car and is asking for help. ★
 Tell them "NO" or that you can't help them and go get a grown-up.

10. If anyone tries to get you into a car or other vehicle with them?

★ Never get into any car without your parent's permission no matter how nice the person acts and no matter what he or she offers you! ★ If they try to grab you YELL, BREAK AWAY Pepper, Hammer , Kick, RUN and TELL. ► If you are unable to break away and the person gets you into the vehicle take a deep breath, keep CALM, and begin to look for creative ways to escape then stop them use your **rad-KIDS** Skills, Pepper, Hammer , Kick , break free and RUN to a Safe Zone.





What is our radKIDS® Plan if...

TOP 6 SAFETY TIPS

What is our radKIDS® Plan if...

1. You need to use the phone to call for help in an emergency?

- Dial 9-1-1 (Your phone # in an emergency) or “0” for the operator. ► Stay calm.
- Speak slowly. ► Give your full name. ► Tell the person what is wrong. ► Tell the person where you are (If you don't know, just stay on the line, and they will find you). ► Follow the 9-1-1 operator's instructions very carefully. ► Do not hang up until help arrives.

2. Someone offers you drugs, alcohol, or cigarettes?

- Say “NO”! ► Get away fast.
- Tell a trusted adult.

3. There's a fire at your house?

- Be prepared. ► Have fire drills at your house. ► Remember you need two Escape Routes and a Safe Place to meet once you are outside and only the firefighter goes back in.



4. When you are Out-And-About with your family or friends?

- Remember the radKIDS Sight-Sound-Distance Rule: Whenever I am out, I am always in SIGHT of my mom, dad or friend.

I am always close enough to hear Mom/Dad/friend (SOUND) or for them to hear me. Lastly, and most important, I am always within sight and not more than 3 seconds away (DISTANCE) from Mom/Dad/friend.

5. If you get lost?

- Don't panic. ► Go to a safe place and say "Help, I lost my mom/dad/Safety partner", (find a cashier or uniformed Police or Security Officer).
- Find a phone and dial 9-1-1. ► Whenever you go Out-And-About rehearse a plan with your parents on what to do and where to go if you get lost or separated.



6. You are riding your bike?

Remember the radKIDS Bicycle Safety Rules. ► Always wear a helmet. ► Stay on the right side of the road. ► Obey traffic signs and signals. Be careful moving into the street. ► Use hand signals. ► Watch the road for obstacles. ► Be respectful of others. ► Don't ride after dark. ► When riding with friends, stay in a line.

7. Dealing with a Bully?

Remember no one has the right to hurt you. If they do, they are not your friend. Friends don't hurt friends on purpose.

- If trapped by a bully and they try and hit/hurt you; You do have the right to STOP THEM, not fight them, but STOP THEM from hurting you (Block / Run/ Tell). ► You then RUN and TELL because it is not your fault. It is their fault and "NO ONE" gets to hurt you or any of your friends or classmates. Remember, TELLING is to help. TATTLING is to get someone in trouble.

ADDITIONAL PARENT HANDOUTS

radKIDS On...





radKIDS ON...

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radKIDS®

9 New Venture Drive
Unit #4
S. Dennis, MA 02660
(508) 760-2080
www.radkids.org
radkids@radkids.org

radKIDS® Instructor Manual/Section 6



radKIDS ON...

WHAT'S THE PASSWORD?

Have you and your child discussed what will happen if for some reason you are unable to pick him/her up from school, sports, etc.? Who will you send in your place? Do you have a password?

WHAT IS A PASSWORD?

A password is a word that is used as a safety check should you need to send another adult for your child due to an unforeseen emergency. The purpose of the password is to protect your child from going with someone under false pretenses. It is a quick and easy way for your child to identify someone who is there for him/her legitimately, and someone who is trying to trick him/her.

The password you and your child choose should remain a secret between the two of you until an emergency arises. At that time, you share it only with the adult you are sending on your behalf. That person should be someone you have already told your child will be sent for him/her in an emergency. Any grown-up sent should be able to give your child the correct password when asked. If the person can not, your child should move away quickly and seek the help of a trusted adult.

HOME EXERCISE

A password is only good if your child can remember it, keep it secret, and ask for it when appropriate. To help with these things we encourage you to do the following when establishing a new password:

- 1) Decide on a password. The password you choose should be easy to remember, simple-not complicated, and not obvious to people familiar with your child.
- 2) On a separate sheet of paper make the password a minor art project. Work with your child, tracing the letters, coloring them, repeating the word over and over. (It will help you remember too.)
- 3) To reinforce the need for secrecy, you and your child can take the paper and tear it up into little pieces. As you do this, talk about why it is important not to tell anyone else what the password is.
- 4) Take a few minutes to practice password use with a role play game. Play different roles such as stranger, anticipated / legitimate emergency adult, unanticipated / legitimate emergency adult and anticipated / illegitimate emergency adult. In role, you approach your child and tell him/her there is an emergency and he /she should go with you. They should get into a defensive stance and ask for the password. The stranger and illegitimate emergency adults will not be able to give the proper password, and your child should move away quickly and seek the help of a trusted grown-up. The anticipated and unanticipated/legitimate emergency adults will know the password, but still encourage your child to seek permission and verification from the grown-up in charge (teacher, coach, sitter...) before accompanying that individual.



radKIDS ON... **BULLIES**

THE PROBLEM

Bullying is frequent and systematic harassment. It is often dismissed as part of growing up but is actually an early form of violence. Bullying employs a power imbalance to display dominance and exert control. The abuse can be very stressful for the victim who may develop a dislike of school and lose interest in studies or other activities such as sports. Depression or physical illness may develop in extreme cases.

WHAT BULLYING LOOKS LIKE

Bullying can take many forms. It may be verbal, emotional, or physical; and it can be perpetrated by individuals or groups. Bullying can include many different behaviors such as: verbal taunts, name calling and put-downs, exclusion from groups or games, racial slurs, threats and intimidation, extortion or stealing of money or possessions, and physical violence.

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO

- Build confidence and self-esteem. Bullies almost exclusively target younger, smaller, more timid children with underdeveloped social skills.
- Create a safe environment for your children to tell you about being bullied. Children are often too scared or embarrassed to tell parents what has happened. Initiate conversations about bullying and ask about their experiences. Watch for symptoms, such as: withdrawal, depression, drop in grades, torn clothing, need of extra money or supplies, and increased absenteeism (feigned illness).
- Reinforce that a victim is not at fault. If your child is being bullied, offer to help with a complaint procedure. Stress that it can be done in confidence.
- Notify teachers. Perhaps they could initiate a classroom discussion about bullying. They may be able to more closely monitor social interactions and intervene if bullying is apparent.
- Be prepared to be persistent with school authorities. Insist that they implement policies to deal with bullying (several programs/models are available) or enforce existing policies.
- Don't teach kids to hit or fight back; it will only make matters worse. Talk to them about alternative strategies. Play "what if" games that will help them develop a plan of action, making them more confident and assertive should they experience bullying behaviors.

radKIDS Plan for...DEALING WITH BULLIES

Avoid-walk or play with a friend or group
Ignore- don't react to bullies
Move away- walk calmly away
Ask to stop
Tell firmly to stop
Tell a trusted adult



radKIDS ON...

TALKING WITH YOUR CHILD ABOUT BULLYING

More than 160,000 U.S. students stay home from school each day from fear of being bullied.

While much of the current prevention-based thinking centers around bystander intervention, radKIDS focuses on empowering the targeted child because no one has the right to hurt a radKID (radKIDS rule #1).

radKIDS also know (radKIDS rule #2): radKIDS don't have the right to hurt anyone else UNLESS someone is trying to hurt them, then they have every right to defend against the aggression and stop the assault (supported by law in every state). radKIDS are not only given permission to stop anyone from hurting them they are taught to use the Block, Run and Tell ® technique learned in class in a context which clearly explains that radKIDS don't FIGHT the bully but they CAN STOP the assault by-standing firmly in their radKIDS stance, using their voice to activate an alert system and block to protect themselves from physical assault (see below *Zero Tolerance? Think Again*) until they can get free enough to find a SAFE ZONE and get help by telling an adult who can advocate and mediate the conflict.

radKIDS know that being bullied is not their fault and it's not only OK for them to tell a trusted adult, (radKIDS rule #3) it is encouraged. While "telling" may sound easy, without the essential groundwork in place, this can be difficult for a child if not impossible unless the foundation has been laid and systems are in place.

BUILDING THE FOUNDATION (ground work) that will enable your child to communicate bullying activity before things get out of control.

Has your child ever come to you and told you that someone at school is being mean to them?

What was your reaction? The most typical parent responses are 1. Tell your teacher and 2. Fight back. Let's look at these solutions Through the Eyes of a child.

Tell your teacher: Unless the conflict has escalated to a significant level, there is a high probability that the teacher will minimalism the situation with a mild scolding and redirecting the children to the tasks at hand. *"You two need to stop bickering. We don't have time for this. We've got things to do. Ok? Good!"* somehow believing that the conflict is resolved.

In this scenario the bully wins knowing that he has laid the groundwork and will follow-up later, on the playground or after school. Further the bully has reinforced *to both of them* that even if the teacher is aware, little or no protection will be afforded the bullied child.

So, so far the child being victimized has told a parent and an adult at school and the result is that his/her vulnerability has only increased by challenging the bully and by receiving little or no support, his/her resources are quickly being diminished tipping the power balance in favor of the bully.

Fight Back: I think we all can agree that while this has historically been considered "the best" chance to deter a bully, escalating violence is not the solution. It's a risky

(MORE)



radKIDS ON...

TALKING WITH YOUR CHILD ABOUT BULLYING

(CONTINUED)

choice considering the potential imbalance of physical abilities and with Zero Tolerance policies in place in most school districts, the consequences only re-victimizes the bullied child. (See *Zero Tolerance? Think Again.*) When your child comes to you, we suggest you don't tell them to fight back. When you do he/she is thinking *"Won't I get suspended? Aren't you going to get mad if I get suspended? What will my classmates think of me when I get suspended?"* and more importantly *"What if I lose the fight? I could DIE!"* (through the eyes of a child).

So what's the right answer?

Remind your child to activate their radKID plan for bullying: Avoid-Ignore-Move Away-Ask/Tell Them to STOP - Leave (using block, run tell if necessary) and Tell a Trusted Adult.

We know that bullies tend to pick on people who they can get a reaction from; they choose kids who get upset and who take the teasing personally. They also look for kids who won't stand up for themselves, or who they view as someone they can overpower. *Telling* is an important part of the plan because it lets the child know that there is a team in place and they are not alone. Telling will happen a lot sooner if the bullied child has a level of comfort and expectation of what is going to happen when they tell.

Take time now to let your children know what to expect when they tell you they are being bullied:

It's critical to let your child know that being bullied is not their fault. It's nothing that they have done wrong. It's the bully's fault and the changes need to be made *in the bully* not in your child.

Remind your child of the differences in Telling vs. Tattling. Telling is to help and Tattling is to get someone in trouble and that by "Telling" the bully will get the help they need to change whatever is going on inside him/her.

Let them know that you will listen to what he/she has to say and be supportive when he/she is talking.

If you are upset or angry, that it's at the situation, not at him/her. Because no one has the right to hurt them. Try not to over react. When you react too strongly to what your child is saying, he/she might stop talking because he's afraid he's going to upset you more and he/she needs to be able to count on you for "rational thought."

Finally, Don't ask your child why he's being bullied. That implies that he/she knows what the bully is thinking. It doesn't matter why. It's not acceptable. Don't try to find a reason for it; there is no good reason or excuse for what's happening. If your child is being bullied, he/she is the *victim*. Ask instead what the circumstances are and focus on developing a plan with your child that he/she believes has merit and will work.

Communication between you and your child during this time is essential and can be an opportunity to build resiliency and a trusted partnership between you both. Together you can make a difference.



radKIDS ON...

ZERO TOLERANCE vs. ZERO VICTIMIZATION

Zero Tolerance is the most widely implemented school discipline policy in the United States. While specific Zero Tolerance policies and practices vary from school to school, according to data from the U.S. Department of Education and the Center for Safe and Responsive Schools, at least 79 percent of schools nationwide had adopted Zero Tolerance policies by 1997. To say that that number has grown in the last 15 years is an understatement.

WHAT IS ZERO TOLERANCE?

Zero Tolerance policy in schools as they relate to bullying are commonly interpreted and enforced by a practice of punishing “any infraction of the rule, regardless of extenuating circumstances, mistakes and maybe most importantly the right to protect yourself when in imminent danger.” In many cases, punishment for a violation under the policy is severe, such as suspension or expulsion from school. These policies have been implemented at the school, district, and state levels with the intended goal of ensuring the safety of students and staff. In theory and hope, Zero Tolerance would deter students from violent or illegal behavior because the punishment for such a violation is harsh and certain.

***Zero Tolerance as interpreted in many schools
(and through the eyes of adults) means***

“You don’t get to hurt anyone, because we don’t allow it.”

***However, through the eyes of a child,
Zero-Tolerance means***

“I am going to get in trouble especially if I defend myself!”

WHAT IS BULLYING?

According to stopbullying.gov, a federal government website managed by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Bullying is defined as “unwanted, aggressive behavior among school-aged children that involves a **real or perceived power imbalance**. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.”

Every 7 minutes a child is bullied. A Bullying scenario typically involves multiple players: The bully (or bullies), the targeted child (or children) and bystanders (friends or adults, even teachers).

IMBALANCE OF POWER

Real or perceived, there is little question that one of the *main ingredients* in any bullying scenario is an imbalance of power. It is one of the key components in the very definition of bullying so then **does Zero Tolerance (equal punishment to all parties involved no matter what) make ANY sense? Especially from the prospective of the child who is being bullied?**

(MORE)



radKIDS ON...

ZERO TOLERANCE vs. ZERO VICTIMIZATION (CONTINUED)

Here's how bullying looks...

THROUGH THE EYES OF A CHILD:

The **Bully** selects their "**Victim**" looking for someone who may appear weak, small, different, or insecure. The bully provokes engagement (taunting or teasing) from the targeted child, making demands of their victim and analyzing the victim's response. If the targeted child reacts with an unempowered fear-based response, (showing signs of intimidation, yielding control, complying, crying), this is the signal to the bully that (s)he has found his/her target. The bully many times will then survey the landscape looking for "passive acceptance" of others, silence or even encouragement from bystanders. Ideally, a bully's target child is a child who fails to gain **Bystander** support and one they perceive as one who "can't stop them."

On the other hand, the targeted child has done nothing wrong, certainly hasn't asked to be chosen as a target, or has been selected because of a real or perceived weakness. When looking for help at home the targeted child is often directed to fight back or tell the teacher (see article on *Talking with your Child about Bullying*). When looking for assistance at school most of the time (85%) the targeted child is alone, has very little chance of being assisted by a fellow classmate (11%) and even less of a chance of getting help from a teacher (4%).

So I ask you...

Is it ok with you if your school has a policy that punishes the bullied child with equal punishment that is given to the bully? And in addition, Doesn't the child being bullied and victimized have the RIGHT to defend themselves against this predatory behavior and possible physical harm?

In radKIDS we believe that these Zero Tolerance policies are unjust and contributory to the bullying pandemic we are experiencing today. In fact, in many cases these policies can and do violate a child's right to defend themselves which is supported by law in all 50 states. We advocate strongly for

BYSTANDER INTERVENTION

The current prevention-based thinking weighs heavily on Bystander Intervention yet in peer-to-peer bullying incidents in education today, Adult intervention (Teacher) occurred in only 4% of the cases, Peer intervention (Friend/classmate) occurred 11%, which left the victim alone to fend for him/herself 85% of them time.

THROUGH THE EYES OF A CHILD:

If a bystander is scared of the bully, how can we expect them to intervene or help someone else when in truth, they are probably just grateful that it is not them being targeted?!

Why don't bystanders intervene?

- ▶ Fear of the bully themselves or retaliation at a later time;
- ▶ Fear of getting caught in the middle and being hurt, bullied, or punished through Zero Tolerance policy enforcement;
- ▶ Believe that adults will not be of help and in fact may make the situation worse;
- ▶ Believe that telling an adult about bullying is a form of "tattling" or "ratting" (Snitches get stiches);
- ▶ Benefit in some way from the victimization of a student (e.g., gain a possession or social status or feel empowered).

(MORE)



radKIDS ON...

ZERO TOLERANCE vs. ZERO VICTIMIZATION (CONTINUED)

change and we are not alone. Recently in an educational webinar, the United States Secretary of Education Mr. Arne Duncan declared that "Zero Tolerance policies in regards to Bullying behaviors have failed and do not work."

ZERO VICTIMIZATION

Instead of a Zero Tolerance school culture of, "You will be punished if you defend yourself physically", radKIDS advocates for a change to a common culture and climate of "**Zero Victimization**" a unified policy and practice that is grounded in this statement "**NO ONE GETS HURT HERE.**"

THE CHANGE

For Zero Victimization to succeed a couple of changes must be considered; first a child needs to be given permission to "STOP" anyone from hurting them and then taught how to do it (radKIDS). As we stated earlier in this article 85% of the time a child is being bullied they are the only ones that know about it (No intervention). The only real thing that will stop anyone who wants to bully is to make them, "STOP". Once the imbalance of power is equaled through personal empowerment (self-value and self-worth) including an understanding that, "No One has the right to hurt you" and "that you will not be punished if you resist" the power will truly shift to the child who is being bullied. When you couple this with activity based training on realistic physical resistance skills to stop anyone from hurting you, we can realistically have an expectation of behavior and a Zero Victimization environment.

If after that, one child chooses to bully another, the only thing that should be considered is, "Did this student intend to engage in behavior that is defined as bullying?" If the answer is yes, then punishment is applied due to the choice made by the bully to try to hurt or intimidate another child.

THE radKIDS WAY

As many of you know in radKIDS our focus is on the child, by empowering the child to recognize, avoid, resist and if necessary stop and escape violence or harm; we can and are changing the cycle of bullying violence in schools and communities across the nation. **The radKIDS Curriculum and physical skills development class does not teach or empower a child to fight**, but we do empower and teach a child to "STOP" potential violence or harm in their daily lives and with this education we shift the power imbalance back and give a child the opportunity to escape violence or harm because no one has the right to hurt a radKID or any child.

We ask you all to take a look at Bullying -- through the eyes of a child -- and if the concepts in this article create thought and make sense to you, we encourage you to share conversations with your friends and even your schools leadership and PTA's / PTO's. Maybe even beginning that conversation with a few questions like:

(MORE)



radKIDS ON...

ZERO TOLERANCE vs. ZERO VICTIMIZATION (CONTINUED)

Do we have a bullying problem?

What do our children say?

Is our school policy a "Zero Tolerance" policy in regards to bullying?

Can we help make a change?

If you find that your district has a Zero Tolerance policy, might it be better to empower our children within a Zero Victimization educational environment (where we declare that, "No One Gets Hurt Here") rather than try to control our children within the expectations of a Zero Tolerance mandate (that states "We Will Not Allow Bullying") and in the eyes of children means, "*If I do anything to defend or protect myself, I will get in trouble and be punished (re-victimized)?*"

Is it time to make a change for our children and our future? Sadly many children today are not only losing hope they are giving up, when you see that children as young as 9 years old are so hurt that they consider suicide a real option to stop their pain and suffering, the answer is clear. What kind of school do you want your child to attend? One that clearly states and supports a culture and climate where, "No Gets Hurt Here" or one where children are afraid to protect themselves for fear of getting in trouble, (We Don't Allow that here). The choice is ours and so is the responsibility.

We standby to help in anyway we can and we thank you for taking the time to think about a change.

radKIDS®

9 New Venture Drive
Unit #4
S. Dennis, MA 02660
(508) 760-2080
www.radkids.org
radkids@radkids.org



radKIDS ON... **GUN SAFETY**

According to the latest data from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention 3,042 children and teens died from gunfire in America in 2007 – one child or teen every three hours, eight every day, 58 every week. 2,161 were homicide victims, 683 committed suicide. 198 died in accidental or undetermined circumstances involving a gun. Almost six times as many children and teens – 17,523 – suffered non-fatal gun injuries.

The number of preschoolers killed by firearms in 2007 (85) surpassed the number of law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty (57). The CDC estimates that nearly two million children live in homes with loaded and unlocked guns.

It is truly frightening to think of. How, as parents, can we best protect our children? As with many things, communication and education are essential. Unfortunately we hear the stories in the news all too often. We strongly urge you to talk to your children about guns and firearm safety today. Use those news stories as opportunities (Teachable Moments) for discussion. Have they ever seen a real gun? Do they know what to do if they ever do see one? Below are some radKIDS firearm safety rules you can share with them.

radKIDS FIREARMS SAFETY RULES See a Gun Yell, Run and Tell Someone

- 1) Yell "GUN!!"
- 2) Run to Safe Zone.
- 3) Go tell a trusted adult or dial 911.

We certainly hope children will follow these rules and steer clear of firearms, but to be realistic we must also address the fact that children are curious by nature and telling them look and don't touch may not be enough. It is also important to discuss the realities of guns and violence.

- Let your children know there is a big difference between what they see on TV and the real world.
- Be sure they understand striking out with a fist or weapon is never a good way to resolve conflict, and that they know appropriate, non-violent ways to deal with strong emotions like anger and fear.

If you have made a decision to keep a firearm in your home, please reduce the risk to your children and their playmates by following safe gun handling guidelines:

- Remove ammunition from guns.
- Secure unloaded firearms with a gun lock, gun alarm or other type of tamper-proof device.
- Store unloaded guns in a gun cabinet, safe, or locked gun vault.
- Place a locked storage case where children can't find it.
- Place ammunition in a locked location, separate from guns in a secure place that is out of sight and reach of children.
- Keep gun storage keys away from the "every day" keys.

The risks to our children from unsafe gun storage practices are significant. The way a gun is stored can make the difference between life and death.



radKIDS ON...

MEDIA and VIOLENCE

Media violence – from cartoons, to books, music, television (including the news), movies and video games – has caused parents, professionals, and people in general much concern regarding its impact on children and the correlation between violence with real-world aggression. Recent events no longer allow us to keep our heads in the sand. They leave us desperate to find answers to the *why* questions and more importantly *what* can we do to stop the violence.

Research tells us that eight to eighteen-year-olds spend more time with media than in any other activity they participate in with the exception of sleeping — an average of more than 6 1/2 hours a day, seven days a week. The TV shows they watch, video games they play, songs they listen to, books they read and websites they visit are an enormous part of their lives, offering a constant stream of messages about families, relationships, values, and violence among other things. Clearly media has a role in children's lives but does the violence associated with it direct behavior? The truth is, half of studies conducted show that there is some link between media and aggression, whereas the other half do not find a link between consuming violent media and subsequent violence.

So, while we are not saying that violence in the media causes violent behavior in children, we are saying that media plays a significant role in children's lives and parents are the primary influencers ensuring the right balance is achieved based on other factors already present in their child's life.

We suggest that you consider these variables when determining the appropriate balance of time and level of violent content you allow your child access to.

- **Time Spent Viewing Violence.** Consider that the time your child spends viewing media violence is taking time away from other more positive messages to be "inputted".
- **Quality of Interaction.** Is the time that your child spends "playing" healthy and competitive (or aggressive or desensitizing)? What are your instincts telling you about the level of aggression your child is exhibiting while playing? Keep in mind that children may behave differently when around different people (parents vs. friends vs. alone).
- **What is the balance** of other interests that your child has (or is (s)he "addicted")?
- **Behavior.** Does your child's tendency lean toward violent aggressive behavior when dealing with real life situations (interaction with siblings, others at school)?
- **Coping Skills.** Does the child exhibit healthy coping skills when things don't go his way or when life throws curve balls?

Talk to your child. Explain the "real-life" consequences of violence. What would ACTUALLY happen if?...(whatever the violence is).

Teach conflict resolution skills. radKIDS rules 1 and 2: No one has the right to hurt you but you don't have the right to hurt others. Use your words and radKIDS defensive skills and strategies first instead of resorting to reactive and violent measures.

Do the research. Have a good handle on what your kids are being exposed to. Pay attention to video/movie ratings system. They are put there for your information but also are also a way for the entertainment industry to absolve themselves from responsibility. There are many tools and resources available at your fingertips. These two will get you started:

The **Entertainment Software Rating Board** (ESRB[®]) rating system is a tool providing helpful guidance about the content and age-appropriateness of computer and video games and will guide you through decoding the rating system that (http://www.esrb.org/about/news/downloads/ESRB_PTA_Brochure-web_version.pdf)

Common Sense Media is a non-partisan, not-for-profit organization, providing trustworthy information and tools, as well as an independent forum, so that families can have a choice and a voice about the media they consume. (<http://www.commonsensemedia.org>)



radKIDS ON... HOME FIRE SAFETY

The National Fire Protection Association estimates that approximately 80% of all fire deaths in Canada and the US occur in the home, with roughly 11 people dying each day in house fires. Given these statistics, one cannot ignore the need for a home fire escape plan. Involving the entire family in making and practicing the plan can only increase its effectiveness.

THINGS TO REMEMBER WHEN MAKING YOUR ESCAPE PLAN

- Plan two exits from each room in your home, especially bedrooms.
- If you must exit from a second story window, know how you will get to the ground.
- If you live in an apartment building, ensure your plan includes routes to exit stairways.
- Plans for high rises should use the stairs, *never elevators*
- Establish a meeting place a safe distance from the home.
- PRACTICE!! Begin with everyone in bed. Set off the alarm so children will recognize the sound. Roll out of bed onto the floor and crawl to the door. Touch the door, is it hot or cold? Carry on with your plan depending on the answer.
- Teach your children what to do if they can't get out. Stay in the room with the door closed and the window open just enough to let air in and/or attract attention. Sit on the floor next to the window so they can breathe fresh air, and so the firemen can find them when they come. (If smoke pours into the room when the window is opened, they should close it with a sheet or some clothing hanging out to attract attention.)
- Take your child to the fire station in your community so they can see the protective equipment firefighters wear and learn not to be afraid of it.

HOME EXERCISE

Work with your child to draw a floor plan of each level of your home. Show at least two exits from each room. Encourage your children to choose one day each month to be fire safety day and run through your plan from start to finish. Pretend the fire is in different locations so that different escape routes will have to be used. An escape plan that sits on top of the refrigerator collecting dust is of no use to anyone, and there will be no time to find it and read it during a fire. Encourage your child to decorate their plans and post them on the front of the refrigerator for everyone to see.

radKIDS®

9 New Venture Drive
Unit #4
S. Dennis, MA 02660
(508) 760-2080
www.radkids.org
radkids@radkids.org



radKIDS ON...

CREATING AN ON-LINE SAFETY CONTRACT

It is very important that both parents and children take an active role in minimizing the opportunities for unwanted contact online. We recommend you take time as a family to create an Online Safety Contract establishing the guidelines you and your children will follow when surfing the Internet and World Wide Web. Below are some things you may want to include.

CHILDREN'S SECTION

- I will tell a trusted adult immediately if I find something that makes me feel uncomfortable or is scary.
- I will not go into chat rooms without a trusted adult sitting with me or with out my parent's permission.
- I will never give out my name, age, address, telephone number, password, town, parent's name, or school information to anyone over the Internet.
- I will not send my picture to anyone without my parent's permission.
- I will let my parent know who my online friends are and their nicknames.
- I will never meet with someone whom I have met online without my parent's permission and escort.
- I will not enter sites that charge or buy anything without my parent's permission.
- I will not use bad or dirty language.
- I will not download or open any games or programs without first showing my parents.
- I will only visit sites my parents approve.
- I will open e-mail only from people I know.

PARENT'S SECTION

- We will research the dangers that are on the Internet and World Wide Web and discuss them with our children so they will know how to react if they come across them.
- We will take an active role in our children's participation in online activities.
- We will set up and monitor the times when our children may use the Internet to explore, learn and have fun.
- If our child approaches us about something he or she has seen online and feels uncomfortable about, we will take the time to listen, trust them and their judgment, and take appropriate action.

The contract, once signed, should be placed in a visible spot near the computer as a reminder to everyone about online safety.



radKIDS ON... **PLUGGED IN**

THE “NET”

More and more, the Internet is becoming a part of our daily lives, at home and at school. It is a teacher, a tour guide, a communicator and a window to the world. It is a wonderful and powerful entity with applications beyond our imaginations.

The Internet is an amazing connection of millions of computers around the world, but it is only electronic, it has no conscience, no morality and no ethics. It is, indeed, wonderful and powerful but it is also unrestricted and unregulated. It presents all information impartially, drawing no distinction between beauty and ugliness, moral and immoral, or legal and illegal.

The Internet is rife with web pages, chat rooms and electronic bulletin boards that present subjects unsuitable for children. There are sites and forums promoting hatred, racism, cults, pornography, terrorism, and other objectionable and illegal material, accessible to all with a click of a mouse button. The Internet also provides a relative anonymity that hides the interests and activities of those who target children. The on-line “10 year-old girl” looking for a pen pal may be a 30 year-old male.

SOME RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH UNSUPERVISED ACCESS

- Exposure to inappropriate material – a child may access material of a sexual, violent, illegal or otherwise inappropriate nature, both graphic and textual.
- Physical harm – a child might provide information or arrange an encounter that could pose a risk to themselves or other family members.
- Cons and scams – a child might provide information that may pose a financial risk (i.e. credit card numbers).
- Harassment – a child may become a target for harassing, demeaning or hate mail messages or literature.
- Computer viruses – a child may inadvertently download a file that contains a virus which may corrupt, damage, or delete files stored by your computer.



radKIDS ON... **PLUGGED IN** (Continued)

SOME RISK REDUCTION STRATEGIES

- Instead of a child's bedroom, consider placing the computer in the family room or den where privacy is not an issue and activity is more easily monitored.
- Make and discuss reasonable rules regarding computer use and Internet access with your child.
- Restrict your child's access to appropriate forums.
- Stay in touch with what your child is doing. Spend some time "surfing" with them. Have them show you the services they access and what they do on-line.
- Talk to other Internet users and your service provider.
- Research available software to monitor and screen offensive material and sensitive information.

BE AWARE AND INVOLVED

Being aware of the potential risks and employing risk-reduction strategies is the best way to avoid a negative on-line experience. Although children need a certain amount of privacy, they also need supervision. As with other aspects of their lives, children need to balance increasing independence with parental involvement.



radKIDS ON... **NetSmartz**

Thirty million children under the age of 18 use the Internet in the United States on a regular basis.¹ While the Internet holds tremendous potential for our nation's youth, the misuse by predators is a serious problem. It is critical that we teach our children what to watch out for and how to recognize and take steps to prevent victimization of themselves and others.

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) has developed NetSmartz; an extensive line of entertaining Internet safety presentations, resources, activities, and animated videos to teach children of all ages (and adults) about online safety. These safety materials are downloadable from the NetSmartz website (www.netsmartz.org) and cover a wide range of topics.

The radKIDS Family Manual outlines the radKIDS Internet Safety Curriculum and includes the following 2 activities:

Drill on the Fly: Web Activity

Have the children sit in a circle. Explain how being in a circle helps you talk to each other, see each other, and share information just like you can on the world wide web.

Put a parent volunteer (or your radKIDS dummy) in the middle of the circle then have the children turn around and face outward.

"Now you can't see the others in the circle, but you can still talk to them. You can't see if someone joins or leaves the circle. This is like the world wide web. You can talk to anyone in the world who is online, but you don't always know who that person is. And you don't always know if people online are actually who they say they are."

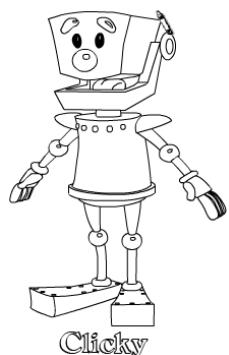
"Why do you think the world wide web is called "the web?" Have the children turn around, facing back into the circle so now they can see each other with parent (dummy) in middle. Take the ball of yarn and give one end to a child. Instructor takes ball of yarn into middle of the circle wrapping yarn around parent (dummy). Bring yarn to a second child across the circle. Repeat this process criss-crossing until all the children are connected creating the world wide web. "This is what the World Wide Web looks like."

Ask the children across the web. "Can you see each other?" (Children answer YES)

Instructor says "Yes, BUT who is in the middle? (The bad guy!). The bad guy can always be in the middle on the internet. You just don't know for sure so radKIDS know the safety rule":

radKIDS Internet Safety Rule

If we don't know who we are chatting with on the computer then we don't chat and we never tell anyone who we are or anything about us. If anyone asks, we should tell a grown up we trust and we never ever meet in person somebody we've met online,



NetSmartz Homework Drill

For 5-7 age group: Students are instructed to access the NetSmartz web site (www.netsmartz.org), print or draw a picture of Clicky and bring it to next class.

For 8-12 age group: Students are instructed to access the NetSmartz website(www.netsmartz.org) and play the UYN:Internet Safety Game. Bring 3 safety concepts to next class.

¹More Online, Doing More. Washington, DC: The Pew Internet & American Life Project, 2001, page 2.



radKIDS ON... Cyber Bullying

Often motivated by anger, frustration, or revenge, Cyber bullying is defined as frequent threats or harassment of victims using interactive technologies such as cell phones, Instant Messaging, Text-Messaging, chat rooms or insulting websites. The harassing messages may be sent directly to a victim or may be a rumor, photo or public polling site posted causing repeated embarrassment, humiliation, or harm.

Cyber-bullying is particularly dangerous because the bully has access to his victim 24/7 and right in their own home (where traditionally children have been able to go to escape bullying)! There are no physical signals for a parent to see; no bruises or no ripped clothing and because of the anonymity of cyber-bullying, the bully never has to witness the effects of their actions. Moreover, essentially no boundaries or solid consequences currently exist to deter them.

In a national survey conducted by i-SAFE America, 35% of students have been threatened online with 5% saying it happens "quite often." Additionally, 58 percent of students who were threatened have not told their parents or another adult. Why, because the inherent "knee-jerk" reaction of most parents is to shut down the computer. Adults view the computer as merely a tool whereas, to young people, taking away their computer is like locking them up in a tower. It takes away their primary communication system with their friends, so kids just won't tell.

radKIDS Plan: House Rules for Dealing with Cyber-bullying

Avoid: talking to "strangers". On line everyone is a stranger. No opening messages from people you don't know. No sharing of personal information including: Your name, address, phone number, school name, team name, your e-mail address, your PIN numbers, passwords, or photos of yourself.

Ignore: Take a deep breath and walk calmly away from your computer, turn off your cell phone for a minutes if someone sends you an upsetting message. No flaming back allowed. (flaming - a nasty or abusive message)

Move Away: Sometimes the easiest remedy for repeated cyber-bullying is to simply BLOCK the bully.

Alert a trusted adult to the situation

Take action: If the messages continue and you feel that you are being physically threatened, take action. It's time to get the professionals involved. Police and school officials can help. Remember: Do not delete messages; they can be used as proof in taking action.

Trust your instincts, if it doesn't feel right it's probably not.

What Parents Can Do

•Create a safe environment for your child to tell you when trouble begins online. Children are often too scared or embarrassed to tell parents what is happening. Don't blame your child or react out of fear by shutting down your child's link to the outside world.

•Monitor your child's online surfing. Initiate conversations ask about their online experiences and activity.

•Watch for signs of cyber-bullying

- Secrecy about internet activity
- Trouble sleeping, nightmares
- Depression, signs of stress, mood swings; highly emotional, crying for no apparent reason
- Feigned illness
- Abrupt changes in friendships, isolation; Anti social behaviors
- Lack of interest in school; Falling behind in homework
- Stories that don't seem to make sense

•Notify teachers or school administrators so they can watch for in-school bullying.

•Notify your Internet Service Provider (ISP) or Cell phone service provider when cyber-bullying occur.

•Google your child's name to find out what information is available about your child on line.



radKIDS ON... **WATER SAFETY**

Safety around water is the key to accident prevention. Whether at a pool, lake, river, or ocean, water safety helps to keep children safe while having fun.

Always remember our radKIDS Rule:
If there is no adult by the pool then there is no radKID by the pool.

radKIDS Safety Tips

Swimming

- **NEVER SWIM ALONE.** Always swim with a buddy.
- Only swim where a lifeguard or parent can see you.
- Never try to save a friend in trouble. Instead, yell for help!
- If someone needs help, call 911.
- Obey all rules and posted signs.

Sun Safety

- Wear sunscreen.
- Drink plenty of water regularly and often even if you do not feel thirsty.

radKIDS Parental Tips

- Training is the key. Enroll your child in local swimming classes.
- Safety Equipment -Only use Coast Guard approved lifejackets.
- NEVER leave your child unattended at pools, open water, or the bathtub. The second you turn around will be the second that an accident will happen no matter what skills your child has acquired and no matter how shallow the water.
- Take pool covers completely off before allowing children into pools and spas. Children like to play under things.

Emergency Response and General Guidance

- Know how to prevent, recognize, and respond to emergencies.
- Install a phone by the pool or keep a cordless phone or cell phone nearby so that you can call 9-1-1 if needed.
- Post CPR instructions and 9-1-1 or your local emergency number in the pool area
- If you have a boat, find a boating course in your area that teaches about navigation rules, emergency procedures and the effects of wind, water conditions, and weather.
- If a child is missing, check the pool first. Go to the edge of the pool and scan the entire pool, bottom, and surface, as well as the surrounding pool area.

#1 radKIDS Parental Rule

Water Safety is a partnership always maintain constant supervision. Watch children around any water environment (pool, stream, lake, tub, toilet, bucket of water). No radKID in any water without a parent/lifeguard to help.



radKIDS ON...

RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURE

Following are some guidelines for responding to your child if he or she discloses sexual abuse or assault. Bear in mind, you are not alone and there are resources available to help you and your family through this difficult time.

INITIAL RESPONSE

1. If your child tells you he/she has been touched inappropriately listen to him/her and believe what is said. Find a quiet spot to talk about and clarify what happened.
2. Be aware of your facial expressions and body language; your child is anxious about how you will respond. Inside you may be experiencing a number of feelings (rage, shock, anguish...) try not to let them show. If you do, make every effort to explain you are not angry or upset with your child but with the perpetrator.
3. Be careful not to question his/her judgment or criticize your child's actions. Emotional responses like "What were you doing there in the first place?" or "Why didn't you tell me right away?" can increase the guilt and shame your child is already experiencing. Instead, stress your child is not to blame and assure your child he/she did nothing wrong.
4. Be sure to praise his/her decision to tell. Words like "I am proud of you for telling" reassure the child he/she has done the right thing.
5. If he/she is afraid of repercussions from the perpetrator, assure your child you will keep him/her safe.
6. Gather your resources. Bear in mind, incidences of sexual abuse MUST be reported to the police and possibly to a social service agency. You may also need to consider medical attention if your child has sustained physical injuries in the incident(s).
7. Once you have come to a decision about how to proceed, sit down and share them with your child. Talk to him / her about what you want to do and why. Most children understand what happened to them was wrong and want to help others avoid similar hurt.

THE DAYS AHEAD

In the days and months following disclosure, it can feel like you are caught up in a whirlwind. Remember your child's well-being is always your primary concern. Focus on them and their welfare, and the rest will follow. Most states have adopted court procedures designed to protect child victims. Be sure to ask what your rights and the rights of your child are with regard to the proceedings. Consider counseling for both your child and yourself. Both of you will be experiencing emotions out of the "normal" range and may need help sorting through them and determining how best to move forward. There is no shame in asking for help.



radKIDS ON... WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CHILD IS MISSING

It is every parent's worst nightmare-to find your child is missing. We have all had those moments when we turned to find ourselves separated from our children. In those brief moments between the *Where are they?* Panic, and the *Thank God, there they are* relief lies out deepest fear. The longer the gap between the two thoughts, the deeper out terror. What do you do if the space between those moments stretches? GET HELP... FAST!

AT HOME

If your child is missing at home search the house, phone neighbors, and if you are still not able to locate your child call the police immediately to report a missing child. There is no waiting period.

OUT-AND-ABOUT

Most stores now have emergency procedures that are followed when a parent reports a lost child. If you get separated from your child and are unable to immediately locate him/her go straight for help at the front of the store. It is helpful if you carry a current photo in your wallet. *Do not delay*, or wait in line. Time is critical- let it be known you are a parent and your child is lost. They should seal the doors at that time to be certain no one leaves with your child. Then all employees search the store for your child combing bathrooms, aisles, stockrooms, etc. until the child is located.

MAKE A PLAN NOW

You may want to create an emergency packet with any information that would assist you should you find your child missing. In it might include the following

- A good, clear current photo of your child (preferably taken every 6 months).
- Descriptive notes about your child's distinguishing features (birthmarks, scars, braces, any identifying characteristics) with photographs if possible.
- Fingerprints of your child. If you contact your local police department they should be able to assist you in obtaining a set.
- A copy of the guide book published by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention titled "*When Your Child is Missing: A Family Survival Guide*." It spells out exactly what to do and expect in the critical first 48 hours. It is available over the Internet at <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/publications/PubAbstract.asp?pubi=11627> or you can order a copy to be mailed through Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse at Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse/NCJRS, P.O. Box 6000, Rockville, MD 20849-6000.

Your ability to not panic, focus, and execute your plan may make all the difference.



radKIDS ON... **AMBER ALERT**

WHAT IT IS

In 1996, 9 year old Amber Hagerman disappeared from her Arlington, Texas neighborhood while riding her bicycle. A neighbor was able to give some details of the car involved, but no system was in place to get that information to local residents quickly. Tragically, Amber's body was found four days later.

Hoping to prevent such tragedy from happening again, outraged area residents suggested the media relay kidnapping information the same way severe weather warnings are issued: using emergency system broadcasts across numerous media outlets. Thus, the "Amber Alert" was born.

WHY WE NEED IT

In recent months, there have been incredible stories of children recovered because the Amber Alert was activated immediately after an abduction.

One of the more striking cases of the Amber Alert's effectiveness happened when two teenage girls were kidnapped by a convicted rapist in Lancaster, California. The police issued the first California Amber Alert, and two astute individuals paid close attention. One wrote down the license plate number of the abductor in the dirt where he was working and scratched it on his lunch pail. Both individuals reported the suspect's whereabouts to police and the abductor was fortunately stopped just seconds before he could further harm the girls.

If this story wasn't enough to convince state officials that the Amber Alert is necessary, then the additional 41 children saved because of successful Amber Alerts will.

NEXT STEPS

Since the August, 2002 launch of the Polly Klaas Foundation's "Amber Alert Now" campaign, we are pleased to announce that 23 additional states have adopted state-wide alerts. Although 37 states have Amber Plans, other states are shockingly slow to act. There is no excuse for delay when Amber Plans are a proven, inexpensive tool that saves lives.

Please help us convince the states that have not yet adopted a statewide plan by logging into our campaign website at www.AmberAlertNow.org and taking action.

Along with encouraging your state to participate in saving children's lives, we also need federal legislation to ensure national coordination. Legislation has been drafted and introduced for consideration this congressional session. As of January 21st, this crucial legislation passed the Senate, but we still need cooperation in the House. Please contact your local House Representative and ask for their commitment to the National Amber Alert Act of 2003 introduced by Congresswoman Jennifer Dunn (R-WA) and Congressman Martin Frost (D-TX): <http://www.house.gov/writerep>.

THE POLLY KLAAS FOUNDATION and radKIDS Inc.

radKIDS, Inc. formed an alliance with The Polly Klaas Foundation in 2002 to establish a unified alliance toward making the world a safer place for our children. As an agency that works to find missing Children and striving to prevent children from going missing in the first place we see radKIDS as a natural fit to making this happen.

In our efforts together, we have trained 14 instructors in and around Sacramento County California in the hopes of reaching every possible child. In coming months we will again work towards bringing an Instructor's Training program to the area to increase the number of children we can train.

We will continue to do all we can to Make America Safer for All Children.



radKIDS ON... **SCHOOL VIOLENCE**

Parents are becoming increasingly concerned about school violence. Recent shootings lead us to wonder if it could happen in our children's school, and most of us recognize it could. This brief article will look at what we have learned about school shootings, and some of the things we can do to reduce the risk of it happening in our communities.

WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED

In October 2000, the United States Secret Service's National Threat Assessment Center issued *An Interim Report on the Prevention of Targeted Violence in Schools*.* The report "studied 37 school shootings involving 41 attackers...[It] reviewed primary source materials such as investigative, school, and mental health records... [and] interviews with 10 of the attackers." Researchers found in the majority of instances (75%) the attackers *planned* the attack. The lag time between development of the plan and execution of the plan varied, but more than half had a lag time of at least two days. They also found, in the majority of cases, the attacker *told* someone about his interest in attacking the school, many told more than one person (as many as 24 people in one case). Over 2/3 of the cases involved an attacker who felt bullied or threatened. "In a number of cases, attackers described experiences of being bullied in terms that approached torment." No true "profile" of school shooters was found to exist. They can be good students or poor ones, popular or loners, from intact families to foster homes with histories of neglect, aged 11-21. Experts caution that focusing on a checklist of traits, behaviors, or "warning signs" may cause people to overreact to a child who poses no threat or dismiss one who does.

WHAT WE CAN DO

Talking and listening to our kids is an obvious, good first step in reducing their risk. Try to create a home environment where they feel safe talking to you about anything that concerns them or their friends. radKIDS provides an excellent opportunity to begin a true safety partnership with your child. We encourage you to use this opportunity to establish a strong communication link. You can talk to them about the difference between tattling and telling. You want to encourage them to trust their instincts, so if a friend says something that makes them feel scared, concerned, or uncomfortable they will recognize it as something they should share with you. If you hear any talk indicating a violent inclination on your child's part or that of your child's friends, please don't hesitate to seek appropriate assistance from local law enforcement and school authorities. It is also clear that it is important to address the issue of bullying. We should do all we can to improve the climate in our children's schools. Our children should know nobody has the right to hurt them, nor do they have the right to hurt anyone else. Please stress with them saying mean things to someone causes that person hurt and is not OK. You can also talk to them about appropriate responses to bullying behavior (see *radKIDS On ... Bullying and Family Manual* pages 16 & 17), and alert school authorities if problems persist. Don't give up.

*www.treas.gov/usss/ntacUSSS_Safe_School_Initiative:_An_Interim_Report_on_the_Prevention_of_Targeted_Violence_in_Schools,_October_2000.pdf



radKIDS ON...

COPING WITH TRAGEDY

Tragic events, like those of 9/11 and those more recent, can leave children and parents confused and fearful. In times of crisis, it's easy to assume that children don't understand the impact of what they are hearing and seeing on the news. However, children are very aware when their parents are frightened or worried. They know the expressions on their parents' faces and the tone of their voices. As a parent, you may be struggling with how to talk with your children about horrific news events and how to comfort them with them without scaring them.

Through the eyes of a child

It is important to remember that children look to their parents to provide calm, rational thinking to make sense of situations. By addressing the issue honestly and directly, you can help them to process the information and still feel safe and secure.

Who am I going to depend on to keep me safe? I don't know my plan for this!

First and foremost the number one thing children want to know is that they are safe. They need to hear very clearly that their parents are doing all they can to take care of them and to keep them safe. Convey confidence in the authorities. They need to hear that people in the in charge (law enforcement, doctors and other grownups they don't even know) are working hard to keep them safe. It is reassuring for children to know there are people trained to handle emergency situations who are working to ensure no further tragedies occur.

Where's my Safe Zone?

Child need to know that home is a reliable "safe place." During times of crisis, it is important to remember that your children may come home seeking the safe feeling they have being there. Take extra care make it a place where your children find the solitude or comfort they need. Give your child extra comfort and physical affection, like hugs or snuggling up together with a favorite book. Physical comfort goes a long way towards providing inner security.

I need help to understand this?

Make time to talk with your children. Talking to your children about their worries and concerns is the first step to help them feel safe and begin to cope with the events occurring around them. What you talk about and how you say it does depend on their age, but all children need to be able to know you are there listening to them. Find times when they are most likely to talk; when riding in the car, before dinner, at bedtime. We suggest letting your child lead the conversation. Answer questions honestly and calmly. Find out what they know, and help them stick to the facts. Don't speculate, embellish and avoid over-explaining. There is no need to barrage kids with details they can barely understand. Use language and concepts based on the child's level of understanding. Most importantly show compassion; show confidence on your face and in your voice that they are safe. If you don't talk to your children about this, someone else will.

Where's the good?

Help children to find the good. Where ever there is tragedy, there is good. Help them find constructive things to do with their feelings. Focus attention on the helpers, like the police, firemen, doctors, nurses, paramedics, and volunteers. It's reassuring to know there are many caring people who are doing all they can to help others in this world.

radKIDS®

9 New Venture Drive
Unit #4
S. Dennis, MA 02660
(508) 760-2080
www.radkids.org
radkids@radkids.org

(more)



radKIDS ON... **COPING WITH TRAGEDY** **(Continued)**

What should we do?

Let your child know if you're making a donation, going to a town meeting, writing a letter or e-mail of support, or taking some other action. It can help children to know that adults take many different active roles and that we don't give in to helplessness in times of worldwide crisis. Model healthy ways of dealing with trauma: Light a candle for the victims and their families. If you practice a faith, have your children join you in prayer. Find a positive thing to do together as a family in your own community.

Keep regular schedules. Do your best to keep the television off, or at least limit how much your child sees of any news event. Continue your daily routine. Structure and routine will help children feel safe in their own environment.

Lastly, take care of yourself so you can take care of your children. Be a model for your children on how to manage traumatic events.

Know the warning signs

Most children are quite resilient and will return to their normal activities and personality relatively quickly, but parents should be alert to any signs of anxiety that might suggest that a child or teenager might need more assistance. Such indicators could be:

- Persistent fears related to the tragedy and/or constant talk about the events, excessive worry
- Unable to resume regular routine because they no longer feel safe
- Loss of concentration and irritability
- Behavior problems not typical for the child
- Change in the child's school performance
- Withdrawal from family and friends, listlessness, and decreased activity, changes in relationships with peers and teachers
- School refusal
- Sleeplessness or nightmares
- Headaches or stomachaches
- Loss of interest in activities that the child used to enjoy

Also remember that every child will respond to trauma differently. Some will have no ill effects; others may suffer an immediate and acute effect. Still others may not show signs of stress until sometime after the event.

4-7 Years Old:	C clingy behavior, may follow you around the house, may be troubled or anxious about going to school.
Elementary Age:	Most likely to have specific and concrete fears, may be concerned about the safety of their parents at work.
Upper Elementary/ Early Middle School:	May need assistance separating reality from fantasy, may ask technical and specific questions.
Upper Middle/ High School:	Will have strong opinions, will share concrete suggestions about the tragedy, will be committed to doing something to help the victims. Some teens may deny how frightened they are and even joke about it as a defense mechanism.

Parents who are concerned about their child can contact a local referral agency.

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radKIDS ON...

YOUR BICYCLE HELMET

“A CORRECT FIT”

Developed by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration – Region 10. Harborview Injury Prevention and Research Center (HIPC), Snell Foundation – Seattle, WA. U.S. Department of Transportation National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. DOT HS 808 421. September 1996.

FACT

A bicycle helmet reduces the risk of serious head injury by 85 percent. But it's not enough to simply buy and wear one – you need to make sure it fits properly.

FITTING A BIKE HELMET

POSITION: Put the helmet on your head so it sits evenly between the ears and rests low on your forehead – it should only be about 1-2 finger widths above your eyebrow.

PADS: Put foam pads inside the helmet so it feels comfortable but really snug. Usually, the helmet includes more than one size of foam pads that can be velcroed inside the helmet for a better fit.

STRAPS: Tighten the chin strap as snugly as possible. Adjust the junction of front and back straps just under the ears and secure back strap without putting pressure on the front strap.

If all of this sounds confusing, follow the simple 5-Step Fit Test (on the following page).

A GOOD HELMET FIT is as important as wearing one...but it takes time. Allow as much as a half-hour to get a proper helmet fit. If fitting your child, don't try to "rush" it as they are trying to go outside to ride. Do it while they're watching TV when they're relaxed and you have plenty of time. Then secure the adjustments so the helmet is ready for the next ride.

BUYING A BIKE HELMET:

1. Buy one that has been tested and "approved" for protection. You can tell this by looking for an **ASTM, ANSI or Snell** sticker on the inside of the helmet.
2. There are many different brands and sizes. Select one that fits well prior to any adjustments. Many offer adjustable sizing pads to help ensure a better fit. Buy the one that's most comfortable and attractive to you. You'll be more likely to wear it.
3. Any helmet that has been involved in a crash has done its job. Replace it!
4. Buy one to fit the rider now, not for one to grow into.

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9 New Venture Drive
Unit #4
S. Dennis, MA 02660
(508) 760-2080
www.radkids.org
radkids@radkids.org



radKIDS ON...

YOUR BICYCLE HELMET

“A CORRECT FIT”

Five Step Helmet Fit Test

STEP	PROBLEM	SOLUTION
1. By pressing or pushing front of helmet with heel of hand can lift the back of the helmet up and forward.	<i>Helmet moves back to uncover the forehead</i>	Tighten front strap to junction. Also, adjust padding thickness and/or position, especially in back. Make sure chin strap is snug. If this doesn't work, the helmet may be too big.
2. By pressing or pushing back of helmet with heel of hand can lift the back of the helmet up and forward.	<i>Helmet moves forward to cover the eyes.</i>	Tighten back strap. Make sure chin strap is snug. Also, adjust padding thickness and/or position, especially in front.
3. Put a hand on each side of the helmet and rock from side to side. Shake your head “no” as hard as possible.	<i>Helmet slips from side to side.</i>	Check padding on sides and make sure straps are evenly adjusted.
4. Open your mouth (lower jaw) as wide as possible, without moving your head. The top of your helmet should pull down.	<i>Helmet does not pull down when opening your mouth.</i>	Tighten chin strap. Make sure the front and back strap junction is under each ear.
5. Check to see if the front edge of helmet covers your forehead. The front edge of the helmet should not be more than one or two finger-widths from your eyebrows.	<i>Helmet does not cover the forehead.</i>	Position helmet no more than one to two finger-widths above eyebrows. Tighten any loose straps. Make adjustments so the helmet stays over the forehead.

Have someone else test your helmet fit by doing the 5-Step Test outlined above. Hold your head still during the test. Your helmet should pass each of the 5 steps.



radKIDS ON...

AIR BAG ALERT

QUESTIONS FREQUENTLY ASKED ABOUT CHILDREN AND AIR BAG RELATED INJURIES

Developed by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, US Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. DOT HS 808 456, September 1996.

DANGER TO CHILDREN

QUESTION: Why are air bags dangerous to children age 12 and under?

ANSWER: Air bags inflate at speeds up to 200 mph (faster than the blink of an eye) to protect adults in a front-end collision. That blast of energy can severely hurt or kill passengers and drivers who are too close to the air bag. An infant's head in a rear-facing safety seat is directly in front of the air bag as it breaks through the dashboard and instantly inflates. Even some forward-facing child safety seats could possibly place the child within range of the air bag before it is fully inflated. Also, if a child is unbelted, or too small for the lap and shoulder belts to fit properly, or wiggling around or leaning forward, there is a danger that the child will be too close to the dashboard during the instant that the air bag begins to inflate.

IMPORTANCE OF SAFETY BELTS

QUESTION: How can an air bag work so well for adults, but hurt children in the front passenger seat?

ANSWER: An average size adult who is correctly belted is not likely to come in contact with the air bag until it is fully inflated. A fully inflated air bag spreads the force of the crash across a wide area of the body. Even an unbelted adult will probably come in contact with the air bag at the chest area after the bag has at least partially inflated. For greatest protection, both the driver and front passengers should be correctly belted and the seats moved back as far as practical to allow ample space for the air bag to expand.

Unbelted or improperly belted children can easily slide off the seat during pre-crash braking, throwing them against the dashboard where the air bag can strike them on the head or neck with tremendous force before it is fully inflated.

The air bag only inflates in front and crashes and collapses immediately. For protection in all types of collisions – multiple, rollover, rear-end, side and front end - it is very important to always use both lap and shoulder belts.

BACK SEAT IS THE SAFEST SEAT

QUESTION: Why are children safer in the back seat?

ANSWER: The rear seat is the safest seat for any passenger. Head-on crashes cause the greatest number of serious injuries. A person sitting in the back seat is farthest away from the impact and less likely to be injured. (more)



radKIDS ON...

AIR BAG ALERT

QUESTIONS FREQUENTLY ASKED ABOUT CHILDREN AND AIR BAG RELATED INJURIES (continued)

People sitting in the rear have the soft back of the front seat in front of them, instead of hard surfaces like the windshield, mirror or dashboard. If it is absolutely necessary for a child age 12 or under to ride in the front seat of a car with a passenger side air bag, secure the child in a restraint system that is correct for the size of the child – a front-facing child safety seat, a booster seat, or a lap/shoulder belt – AND move the front seat as far back away from the dashboard as possible.

If the vehicle has no back seat, such as a pickup truck, an infant will be safe in a rear-facing child seat only if the vehicle does not have a passenger-side air bag or if it has a cutoff switch for passenger side air bag. In summary, people riding in the front seat who are most likely to be injured or killed by an inflating air bag are:

- infants riding in rear-facing car seats;
- children age 12 and under who are not properly secured in a restraint system that is appropriate for their size – a forward-facing safety seat, booster seat, or correct fitting lap and shoulder belts;
- children or adults who are not buckled up
- children or adults who place the shoulder belt either behind their back or under their arm; and
- persons sitting too close to the steering wheel or dashboard so that they come into contact with the air bag before it is fully inflated.

BEING SMOOTHERED BY AN AIR BAG IS A MYTH

QUESTION: Is it true that a passenger can be smothered by an air bag?

ANSWER: No! The injuries that occur are caused by the inflating bag hitting the head and neck of an out-of-position passenger or the inflating bag hitting the back of an infant seat behind a baby's head. The air bag loses its air right after it inflates, so the stiff fabric does not remain over the passenger's face.

TURNING AN INFANT SEAT AROUND

QUESTION: When parents learn that an air bag can harm a baby in a rear facing infant seat, many of them want to place the baby facing forward. Is this okay?

ANSWER: No! Infants must always ride facing the rear in the back seat. Both the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) warn that babies should ride facing the back until they are at least one year old and weigh at least 20 pounds. A child under the age of one does not have strong neck muscles; (more)



radKIDS ON...

AIR BAG ALERT

QUESTIONS FREQUENTLY ASKED ABOUT CHILDREN AND AIR BAG RELATED INJURIES (continued)

the head would snap forward in a crash if the baby were facing forward. This could cause serious neck and spinal cord injury.

When the child is facing the back, the force of the crash is spread across the whole body. The child seat harness must be snug, and the seat should be at a 45-degree angle to support the baby's head and maintain an open airway. Some safety seats have an indicator on the side to show the correct angle. A child seat that installs in a position that is too upright can be angled properly by using a firmly rolled sheet or towel under the foot of the seat.

NEED TO BE ABLE TO SEE BABY WHILE DRIVING

QUESTION: Many parents don't want to put their infants in the back seat because they cannot see them. Shouldn't a parent keep an eye on the baby to make sure it is not choking or experiencing some other health problem?

ANSWER: The risk of serious injury in a crash is much greater than the risk of a healthy baby having a life-threatening problem during a car ride. A healthy baby correctly buckled in a rear-facing child seat should be as safe as a child placed in a crib for a nap or an overnight sleep. Parents do not stay in the room to watch a sleeping baby.

Drivers traveling with children should always allow plenty of time to pull off the road if they are concerned about the baby or need to tend to the child's needs.

USING ONLY THE LAP PORTION OF A LAP/SHOULDER BELT SYSTEM

QUESTION: If a child is too small to wear a shoulder belt correctly, will the lap belt protect the child from an air bag?

ANSWER: No. If a child uses only the lap portion of a safety belt, his or her upper body will be thrown forward when the driver brakes or during the crash itself. The inflating bag will strike the child's head and neck very hard.

Whether in the front seat or rear seat, children can suffer serious or fatal injuries if they wear a shoulder belt wrong, such as under the arm or behind the back. A child who is too short for the shoulder belt (for example, the belt cuts across the neck or face) should always use a convertible or toddler safety seat (if the child is under 40 pounds and 40 inches). Remember that a belt-positioning booster seat must be used with both the lap and shoulder belts, preferably in the rear seat, which is always safer than the front seat.

(more)



radKIDS ON...

AIR BAG ALERT

QUESTIONS FREQUENTLY ASKED ABOUT CHILDREN AND AIR BAG RELATED INJURIES (continued)

IDENTIFYING VEHICLES WITH AIR BAGS

QUESTION: How can a driver or passenger tell whether a vehicle has an air bag?

ANSWER: Vehicles with air bags have one or more of the following markings:

- the words "Air Bag" or letters "SRS" (Supplemental Restraint System) or "SIR" (Supplemental Inflatable Restraint) on the steering wheel and dashboard panel.
- a warning label on the sun visors or on the sides of the open door frame.
- a warning in the vehicle owner's manual

Consult the owner's manual to find information about carrying children safely in a vehicle equipped with an air bag.

radKIDS®

9 New Venture Drive
Unit #4
S. Dennis, MA 02660
(508) 760-2080
www.radkids.org
radkids@radkids.org



radKIDS ON... VENOMOUS CREATURE SAFETY

Statistics estimate that there are approximately 8,000 venomous snakebites each year in the U.S. Fortunately, fatalities from reptile bites are extremely rare (8 to 15 deaths) when modern medical resources are available. But despite that fact, serious symptoms are possible and bite victims must be seen in a medical facility without delay.

Prevent Snake Bites

- Leave wild animals alone. Fifty to seventy percent of reptile bites were provoked by the person who was bitten—that is, someone was trying to kill, capture, or harass the animal.
- Be aware of peak movement times. Reptiles in Arizona are most active in the warmer months of April through October. During the hottest months, they will be most active at night. They may be encountered during the day in spring and fall or during a warm day in winter.
- Try to keep your hands and feet out of crevices in rocks, woodpiles, and deep grass. Always carry a flashlight and wear shoes or boots when walking after dark.
- Know that dead snakes can bite. Reflex strikes with injected venom can occur for several hours after death.
- Install outdoor lighting for yards, porches, and sidewalks. Seek professional assistance to remove a snake in your yard.

First Aid

In many cases, first aid performed in the field by the patient or companions only causes additional injury. The best first aid kit for snakebite includes your car keys and cell phone. Get help quickly if you are bitten.

If you are bitten,

- **Don't** use ice or electricity;
- **Don't** use constricting bands or suction. Using “extractors” does not remove a significant amount of venom and the process can increase tissue damage;
- **Don't** give alcohol or medication;
- **Don't** wait to see if you get symptoms;
- **Don't** try to catch the snake. The snake may bite again. Capture will delay your getting to the hospital. Treatment will be the same no matter which kind of rattlesnake attacked you.
- **Do** relax and move as little as possible;
- **Do** splint the affected limb if you can;
- **Do** remove tight clothing, shoes, or jewelry from the bitten limb;
- **Do** go to the nearest medical facility immediately.

If a child under five has been bitten or stung or if an older patient is experiencing more than minor discomfort they should be seen at a medical facility immediately.

1-800-222-1222 is the telephone number for every poison center in the United States. Call this number 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to talk to a poison expert. Call right away if you have a poison emergency.

Adopted from the Arizona Poison Control Center website: www.pharmacy.arizona.edu/outreach/poison



A radKIDS Plan for Sleepovers: "So how is Fluffy doing, Mom?"

If you have decided to let your child sleepover or even visit another home it might be a great idea and a good *radKIDS Plan to have a special word or question between you and your child so that if they are uncomfortable in anyway they can call or when you call them they can use it to send you a message to come get them right away.*

Something like, "So how is Fluffy doing, Mom?" This question is a message that only the two of you understand and it means to the radKID that they want to come home. This code word or phrase will allow your radKIDS to feel confident and comfortable if they need you to pick them up right away.

radKIDS®
9 New Venture Drive
Unit #4
S. Dennis, MA 02660
(508) 760-2080
www.radkids.org
radkids@radkids.org

radKIDS ON... **SLEEPOVERS**

Sleepovers and slumber parties, it would seem, are an essential part of growing up today. It is tempting to see them as a free night of babysitting. Free yes, but babysitting? Maybe not. As parents, we hope that the hosting family will make careful choices about the activities, movies, and supervision of the children. But that doesn't always happen, and the stakes are too high to leave it to chance. By taking few precautions and putting some plans in place, you can help your child have fun, and stay safe at a sleepover.

Before any sleepover, let your child know that s/he can call you at any time to talk, or to ask you to come and pick them up. Discuss how to handle situations that make your child uncomfortable. And most importantly, teach them how to respond to inappropriate behavior. radKIDS already know they have the right to say "Stop!" or "Don't touch me!" or to ask for help, but it is a good idea to occasionally reinforce this information.

When your child is invited to a sleepover, ask your child, "Do you want to have a sleepover with this friend?", "Are you comfortable at their house?", "Do you like being at that friend's home?" If your child has never visited that particular house, and you don't know the family, it might be good to for you and your child to get to know the other family first. Some families have a practice always inviting the other child for a sleepover first. This gives you a chance to get acquainted with the other child before you allow your child to go to a sleepover.

Do you know the parents? If not, you may want to stay for awhile to make sure your child is comfortable. Ask about the plans for the evening. What movie will they watch or which video games will they be playing. **Stay and visit until you are comfortable** with the dynamics and the supervision. If you aren't comfortable, don't dismiss your feelings by telling yourself you are being overly protective or paranoid. Follow your instincts and don't take chances with your child's safety. You might arrange a play date before the sleepover; after all, kids shouldn't be invited to sleepovers with kids they (and you) hardly know. This is a good way to gauge the situation. If you are uncomfortable with the other child's behavior, **pay attention to your instincts**. Protect your child.

Will older siblings be present? Have you met them? Will they be having friends over at the same time? Will they be supervised? 20% of sexual assaults committed against young children were perpetrated by juveniles. If anything about an older sibling makes you or your child uncomfortable, don't take a chance.

You can let the hosts know you will be calling to say goodnight. Make it a point to ask your child how it is going and ask them if they want to stay for the rest of the night. This gives your child the opportunity to get out of a situation s/he feels uncomfortable with. Your child should know that s/he can call you at any time to pick them up, for any reason, and that you will make the excuses to the hosts. Many children worry about seeming impolite, or hurting feelings, or losing face in front of their friends, so they will be more likely to ask for help when they know that you **will run interference for them**.

By taking some precautions and being proactive, you will help your child to be safer while he or she enjoys sleepovers and slumber parties.



radKIDS ON... INHALENT ABUSE

“Ricky was a wonderful son; full of life, ambition, and goals. A promising future before him — erased with one careless act. Inhalant Abuse/Huffing came disguised to Ricky as harmless fun—but harmless fun killed our son. We never warned him about huffing or Inhalant Abuse—why? We had never heard of Inhalant Abuse.” ~Ricky Sr. and Diane Stem

Because the effects of Inhalant Abuse come and go so quickly, it is often hard to detect youth that are under the influence.

Some indicators of Inhalant Abuse to watch for:

- Changes in friends or interests
- Decline in school performance
- Disorientation, dazed appearance
- Slurred speech
- Coordination difficulties
- Chemical odor on clothes and breath
- Red spots or sores around the mouth/nose
- Paint or stains on face and hands
- Loss of appetite, lethargy
- Increase and intensity of headaches
- Excitability and irritability
- Empty lighters, spray cans, plastic bags, balloons or rags with chemical odors
- Empty pressurized whipped cream containers

Inhalant Abuse refers to the deliberate inhalation or “sniffing” of fumes, vapors or gases from common household products for the purpose of getting high. It is an often overlooked form of substance abuse, but it is no less dangerous than abusing drugs or alcohol. Inhalants are often the first drug to be abused. According to The Partnership for a Drug-Free America, 1 in 5 kids in the US will abuse Inhalants by the eighth grade — the time that pre-teen experimentation with Inhalants peaks. Children can die the very first time they intentionally inhale a product to get high. It can also cause brain, liver, kidney damage or lead to the use of illegal drugs or alcohol.

Why abuse Inhalants? While young people may have a hard time getting illegal drugs or alcohol, Inhalants may be easier to attain. There are more than **1,400** common items that can be “sniffed” or “huffed.” Many are found in the kitchen, garage, office, school, convenience store, and elsewhere in the community. In addition to being easily accessible, they are cheap and often off the radar for most adults.

What can you do? Parents can help keep their children safe and healthy by educating them about the dangers of Inhalant Abuse. According to the Office of National Drug Control Policy, research shows that kids who learn about the risks of substance abuse from their parents or caregivers are **about 50%** less likely to use Inhalants.

TIPS FOR TALKING TO YOUR CHILD (5 to 12 year old)

- Discuss what fumes are and what effects they may have on a healthy body.
- Play a game, “Is it safe to smell or touch?”
- Read product labels together, discuss directions, answer any questions honestly.
- Suggest opening windows or using fans when products call for proper ventilation.
- Teach by example—show your child that you use household products according to the directions.
- Monitor your child’s activities and friends.
- Look for “teachable moments.”

It is important for adults to be aware of the signs of use: paint or stains on the body or clothing, loss of appetite or nausea, a chemical breath odor, spots or sores around the mouth and nose, red or runny eyes or nose, anxiety, behavior mood changes, or a drunk and dazed appearance. If you suspect someone you know is an inhalant abuser seek professional help immediately.

What do you do in the case of an emergency? If you find someone unconscious or if you suspect a child is under the influence of an inhalant call 911 immediately. Keep him/her calm and in a well ventilated area to reduce cardiac stress. Call the Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222 or the 1-800 number on the label of the product and ask for specific advice related to the product used.

*For more information please feel free to visit www.Inhalant.org.
Don't forget to check out the message board to see the latest discussions on the issue.*



radKIDS ON...

METHAMPHETAMINES

According to the *2007 Monitoring the Future Survey*—a national survey of 8th, 10th, and 12th graders—1.8 percent of 8th graders, 2.8 percent of 10th graders, and 3.0 percent of 12th graders have tried methamphetamine. In addition, 0.6 percent of 8th graders, 0.4 percent of 10th graders, and 0.6 percent of 12th graders were current (past-month) methamphetamine abusers in 2007.

What is meth?

Methamphetamine or meth (also known by a variety of street names including speed, crank, vitamin c, go-fast and chalk) is a very powerful drug that produces long-lasting stimulant effects to the central nervous system. Meth is highly addictive and can come in crystal form or as a white, usually odorless, bitter-tasting powder that can easily dissolve in water or alcohol. Some common modes of ingestion include snorting, smoking and injecting.

What are the effects of meth addiction?

The direct physical effects can range from short-term hyperactivity, insomnia, decreased appetite, anxiety, and increased agitation/aggression to long-term health issues such hallucinations, memory loss, severe gum disease and tooth decay, extreme compulsive behavior, and major internal organ failure.

“Strawberry Quick”

Drug traffickers are trying to lure in new customers, no matter what their age, by making the meth seem less dangerous. Drug dealers are now selling colored crystal methamphetamine known as “Strawberry Quick.” The colored meth has been described as resembling rock candy or Pop Rocks (a kid-flavored confection that fizzles in the mouth), and because it looks like candy, officials fear it may fool children and teens into mistakenly perceiving it as candy or perceiving it as a drug far less dangerous and addictive than it actually is.

Prevention Is Key

- Alertness and inability to sleep
- Nervous physical activity
- Decreased appetite
- Euphoria and rush
- Increased respiration/body temp.
- Burns, nosebleeds, or track marks
- Carelessness about appearance
- Deceit or secretiveness
- Violence and aggression
- Presence of inhaling or injecting paraphernalia
- Withdrawal from family /friends
- Loss of interest in school/ Extra curricular activities
- Problems at school
- Missing valuables, stealing

Having open-ended conversations with your child/teen regarding all drugs (including alcohol, tobacco) is a great starting point in prevention. Many elementary-aged school children already know about drugs including meth, so replacing the “if they don’t know about it they won’t do it” belief with truthful and caring education can empower children to make wise decisions regarding the use of any drugs.

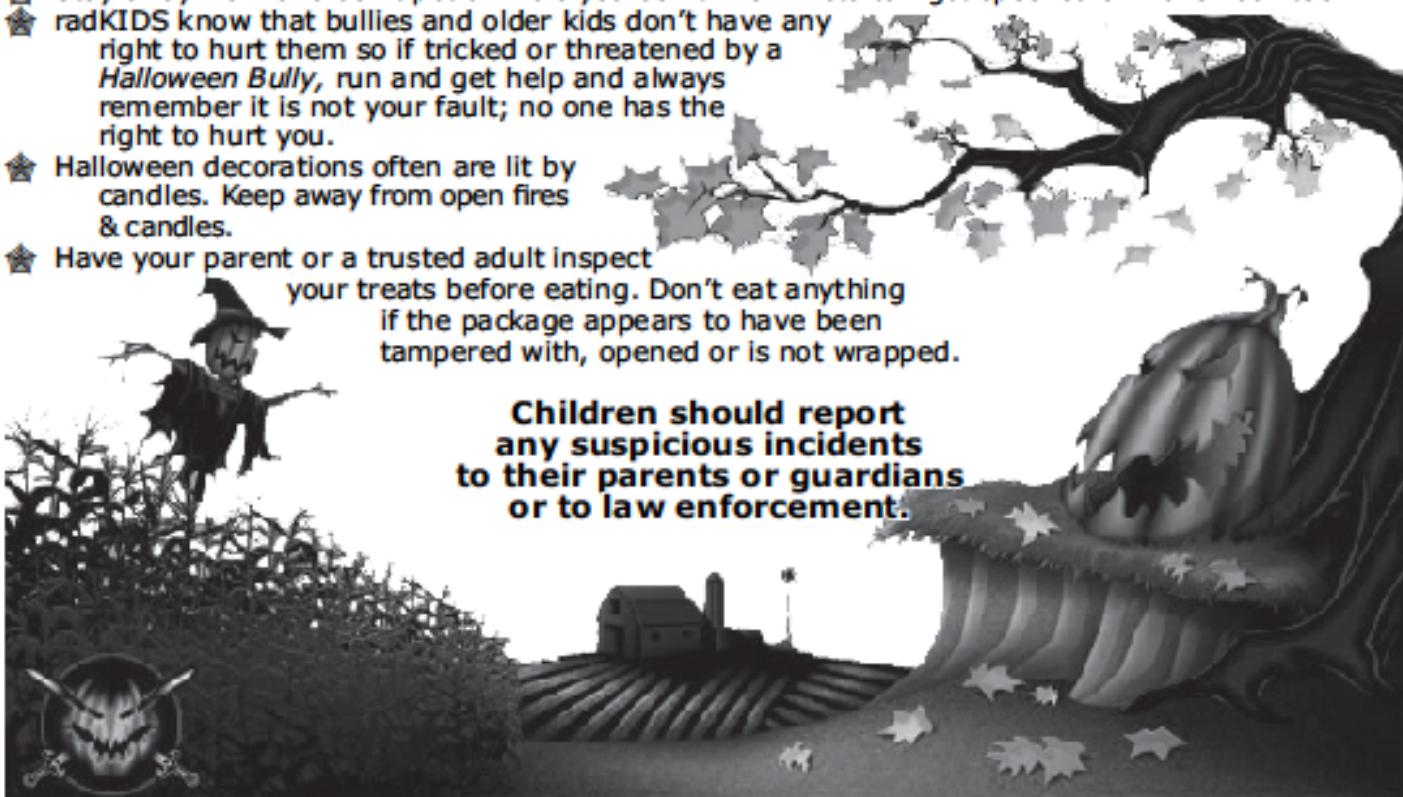
Encourage local law enforcement and school districts to conduct assessments of drug problems within your local community and adapting prevention programs accordingly. This could involve looking at a variety of factors including drug treatment and emergency room admissions. In general, prevention programs should start early, be comprehensive, and repetitively stress key points.

radKIDS On... HALLOWEEN SAFETY

Halloween is a cherished tradition but the excitement of the night can cause children to forget to be careful. Parents need to take a moment to remind their children how special they are and how important it is for them to review and remember their safety plans and rules as they enjoy their evening of fun because, as all radKIDS know, NO ONE HAS THE RIGHT TO HURT THEM!!!!

- ★ A parent, older sibling or trusted adult should always accompany young children on their neighborhood rounds. If older children are going alone, have at least 2 buddies go along. Plan and review the entire route and make sure your family knows what it is. Agree on a specific time when you should return home.
- ★ Remember your radKIDS rule for Site Sound and Distance, stay with your group and communicate where you will be going to each other.
- ★ Carry a cell phone for quick communication and remember **YOUR NUMBER!** Call 9-1-1 if you have an emergency, become lost or afraid.
- ★ Everyone should carry a flashlight with fresh batteries to light the way. Consider adding reflective tape or striping to flashlights, costumes and Trick-or-Treat bags for greater visibility.
- ★ Don't run; walk, slither, and creep on well-lit streets and always use the sidewalk. If no sidewalk is available, walk to the far left edge of the roadway facing traffic.
- ★ Be careful and remember the radKIDS rules for vehicle safety.
 - Stop at all corners, look left-right-and left again before crossing the street to check for cars, trucks, and *low-flying bats*.
 - Cross streets as a group and only at corners or established crosswalks.
 - Don't hide or cross the street in between parked cars.
 - Do not cut through back alleys, fields or across yards or driveways.
 - Stay on side walks and in well-lighted areas.
- ★ Only trick-or-treat in well known neighborhoods at homes that have a porch light on.
- ★ Accept your treats at the door and never go into a stranger's house.
- ★ Run away from people who try to entice you with special treats. Scream, holler, make a scene and use your radKIDS skills (Hammer, Pepper, Kick) if anyone tries to grab you or force you to go with them.
- ★ Stay away from and don't pet animals you don't know. Pets can get spooked on Halloween too.
- ★ radKIDS know that bullies and older kids don't have any right to hurt them so if tricked or threatened by a *Halloween Bully*, run and get help and always remember it is not your fault; no one has the right to hurt you.
- ★ Halloween decorations often are lit by candles. Keep away from open fires & candles.
- ★ Have your parent or a trusted adult inspect your treats before eating. Don't eat anything if the package appears to have been tampered with, opened or is not wrapped.

**Children should report
any suspicious incidents
to their parents or guardians
or to law enforcement.**



For more information about children's safety visit our website at www.radkids.org
or contact us at 508-760-2080. Have a safe and fun Halloween.



radKIDS ON... **DOG DEFENSE**

Every year more than 4.7 million Americans are bitten by dogs. Each year, 800,000 Americans seek medical attention for dog bites; half of these are children under the age of 14. The rate of dog bite related injuries is highest for children ages 5 to 9 years. Almost two thirds of injuries among children ages four years and younger are to the head or neck region. Of those injured, 386,000 (48.2%) require Emergency Room treatment and about a dozen deaths occur as a result of dog bites.

From nips to bites to actual attacks, dog bites are a serious problem.

Teach your children The radKIDS Basic Safety Rules for Dog Defense

- **Do not approach an unfamiliar dog.**
- **Do not play with a dog unless supervised by an adult.**
- **Never disturb a dog** that is sleeping, eating, or caring for puppies.
- **Ask permission from a dog's owner** before petting a dog. Do not pet a dog without allowing it to see and sniff you first. Touch the dog gently, avoiding the face, head and tail.
- **If a dog an unfamiliar approaches to sniff you, stay still. FREEZE** (Be still like a tree) In most cases, the dog will go away when it determines you're not a threat.
- **Do not run from or past a dog and scream.** Dogs naturally love to chase and catch things. Don't give them a reason to become excited or aggressive.
- **If you're threatened by a dog, remain calm.** Don't scream. If you say anything, speak calmly and firmly. Avoid eye contact. Try to stay still or back away slowly until the dog leaves, or back away slowly until the dog is out of sight. Don't turn and run.
- **If you fall or are knocked to the ground, curl into a ball and lie still** -"be still like a log" with your hands over your head and neck. Protect your face and yell "Help me! Help me! Help me!".
- It's important to **report stray dogs or dogs displaying unusual behavior** immediately to an adult.
- **If bitten, tell an adult immediately.**



"It's not that parents don't care about safety", says Stephen Daley, executive director of radKIDS, "It's just that we mistakenly make the assumption that It's a given that the camp will be a safe place for our children. But the reality is there are no federal regulations when it comes to camps."

Teachable Moment:

radKIDS recommends making it a family policy to start each Summer Reading Schedule with a review of the radKIDS Family Safety Manual including a refresher of *Sam's Secret* to remind your children of the differences between Good, Bad and Uncomfortable touch and that it is okay to tell an adult 'no'.

radKIDS®

9 New Venture Drive
Unit #4
S. Dennis, MA 02660
(508) 760-2080
www.radkids.org
radkids@radkids.org

radKIDS ON... **SUMMER CAMP**

The race is on...the annual summer camp registration event...the goal? To choose the right activities that are being attended by the right friends and are offered in time frames that fit the summer plans of the rest of the family (including one or both working parent's vacation schedules). Winning this race means that parents must be FIRST in line with flawlessly filled out paperwork, documentation of physical readiness, and a pediatrician's stamp of approval. Oftentimes parents are so focused on the registration frenzy that they forget to take the time to thoroughly research the programs they are enrolling their children in.

The term camp has no legal definition or standards associated with it. Any organization can legally call themselves a camp so it's a mistake to think that because someone is employed by a summer program that you should trust them with the safety of your children. The rules vary greatly from state-to-state in fact, according to the American Camp Association (ACA),

- Only 25 percent of camps in the United States are accredited (meaning they meet the 300 health and safety standards set by the association)
- 6 states don't require camps to be licensed at all
- 28 states don't require criminal background checks of camp employees

Parents need to do the homework and ask questions.

The word 'camp' may give parents the false sense of security that somebody's checking to make sure this is a safe place but the fact is, it's up to parents to check camps carefully. There is no guarantee of any federal, state or local agency oversight.

Some questions to consider asking:

1. Is the camp accredited? If it is you know that it has met 300 ACA standards.
2. How does the camp recruit, screen and train staff? Be listening to hear if they background check all of their employees. If it is one of those camps that doesn't criminal background checks on its employees, then you probably don't want your children there because it would be very easy for a child predator gain access to children.
3. How old are the camp counselors? The ACA recommends that 80 percent of the staff be 18 or older and that all staffers be at least 16 and a minimum of two years older than the campers they supervise. While employers can conduct juvenile background checks, the results and scope can be limited. The majority of juvenile criminal records are sealed. Criminal records normally become public record at the age of 18.
4. Ask about medical staff and the extent to which they are trained. Get a sense of how far away the nearest hospital is and what the resources are to get a child there if necessary. Who goes to the hospital and who stays back?
5. Ask about camper ratios. ACA guidelines for overnight camps call for a 1:6 ratio for ages 7 and 8, 1:8 for ages 9-14; and 1:10 for ages 15-18. Day camp guidelines call for 1:8 for children ages 6-8; 1:10 for children ages 9-14; and 1:12 for ages 15-18.
6. Be sure to get a clear picture of how discipline is handled at the camp. You want to make sure that the way the camp handles discipline coincides with how you would handle discipline as the parent.

Most of us have fond memories of going away to camp, and as children it never even occurred to us to question how safe we were. We always just assumed that those adults who were there to keep us safe would do so.