



Tips for being a Savvy Parent!

Guidelines for starting the conversation

Sometimes, the hardest part about talking to your kids about safety is just learning how to get the conversation going! Here are some simple tips and helpful ways to help you get the conversation going with your kids!

- Keep it **short and simple**
- **Never** use scare tactics
- Be a good **listener**
- **Ask** open ended questions
- Don't be discouraged if your child does not seem interested in talking at first... **THEY ARE.**

Ask your child:

- What was the best/worst part of your day?
- Who are your "safe adults" at school/sports/in your neighborhood?
- Has anyone ever given you a creepy "uh-oh" feeling?
- What did (or would) you do if you got the "uh-oh" feeling?
- What ideas do **you** have about being safe?
- Did you have to make a "safe choice" this week?

Red Flags and Warning Signs

- Anyone who repeatedly ignores social, emotional or physical boundary limits
- Refuses to let a child set his or her own limits
- Insists on hugging, touching, kissing, tickling, wrestling with or holding a child even when the child does not want the physical contact.
- Shares inappropriate personal or private information with a child, which should normally be shared with adults only.
- Frequently points out sexual images or tells in appropriate or suggestive stories or jokes with children present.
- Seems overtly interested in the sexuality of a particular child or teen and talks repeatedly about the child's developing body.
- Insists upon or manages to spend uninterrupted time alone with a child
- Appears "too good to be true", frequently offering to babysit for free taking kids out alone on outings or giving them money or gifts for no apparent reason
- Frequently walks in on children/teens in the bathroom or changing
- Continually invites children to spend time alone at their home enticing them with the latest toys or gadgets. Especially an adult who does not have children of their own
- Seems especially preoccupied with a particular child and lavishes them with inappropriate attention
- Anyone who regularly visits public places where children gather and spends a significant amount of time staring at or trying to photograph children.

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Prevention tips for Savvy Parents and Safe Kids

1. **Always trust your instincts** and let your child know its ok for them to trust theirs
2. **Observe and listen to your child.** If they don't want to be around a particular person, such as a babysitter, relative, or family friend, don't force them. They may be getting a "red flag" signal that you are unaware of.
3. **Talk openly and often** with your child about safety so that they know it is OK to come to you if something is bothering them.
4. **Keep your safety conversations brief**, to the point and never use scare tactics.
5. Remind your children: Adults should ask other adults for help. SAFE grownups don't ask kids for help
6. **Practice personal safety strategies and "What-If" games with your kids.** What would they do they were lost in a store? What would they say if someone asked them for directions? Do they know what to do when they are home alone or walking to and from school?
7. **Stay interested in your child's life.** If a child is starved for attention, he/she could unknowingly be a more vulnerable target for a predator.
8. **Give your child power over their own body** by letting them decide for themselves how they want to express affection. Do not force them to hug or kiss another person.
9. **Have safety books available** in your home for your kids to read.

Now what?

Get safety tips from Savvy Parents Safe Kids by joining our monthly tips newsletter, getting safety tweets on Twitter (SavvyandSafe) or joining us on our Savvy Parents Safe Kids Facebook page!

Encourage your friends, school, neighborhood or other organization to host a Savvy Parents Safe Kids workshop or professional training and keep the circle of safety in your community strong!

Visit our website for more resources, classes and other valuable tips and tools on child safety and prevention.

