

Top Ten Safety Tips for Parents



1. Talk to your children about risk, don't pretend that to yourself or them that you can protect them from everything. Help them understand that we face risks every day in life but there is always something we can do to manage that risk and lead safer lives. This will empower your children not make them afraid.

2. Teach your children that we all have the right to feel safe all the time, but we also have a responsibility to help others feel safe.

3. Make sure your children know that there is nothing so awful or so small that they can't tell someone. Help them to think about 5 people that make them feel safe and they feel they could talk to if something made them feel unhappy or afraid.

4. Teach your children to trust their own instincts and to recognise their own body signs of danger. In the Dot programme we call this your uh-oh signs - if your knees feel weak, or your heart is racing then "uh-oh" you don't feel safe with a person and you need to tell someone that you trust about this.

5. Remember paedophiles groom children and will become their friends, so it is pointless to teach them to be afraid of strangers, a stranger may save their life. Also remember that paedophiles frequent all the places that children play and have fun including swimming baths, theme parks and libraries and we don't want to stop children enjoying themselves, but they do need to be aware if someone they are with or talking to makes them feel unsafe.

6. Teach your children that they are responsible for their own safety. You are always there to help them and so are other members of the community, but the choices that they make are important. For example, you can tell them not to walk home down a dark alley, but it is their choice whether they listen and take that action.

7. Help your children to understand that they choose their behaviour and that whatever actions we choose to take there are always consequences.

8. Making mistakes - help your children understand that we all make mistakes all the time, but it is really important to recognise that you have made a mistake and admit it. Trying to hide our mistakes can become very risky and put someone in real danger.

9. The biggest killer of human beings is the car - help your children to recognise this and to understand that speed kills. They can minimise risk by being careful pedestrians and responsible passengers. They should always wear seat belts and not be afraid to ask a driver to slow down.

10. The biggest risk to your child's safety at home is fire. Involve them in fitting a smoke alarm and make sure they know what to do if there is a fire.

