

# STREET PROOFING FOR CHILDREN



**“Don’t talk to strangers”.....though a good start to ‘Street Proofing’ your child, it is no longer enough.**  
Children have become the unfortunate victims to many *preventable* dangers of the street.  
Please use the following tips to further teach your children how to stay safe.

## BEGINNING WITH THE BASICS

**Make sure your child knows the following:**

- Their full name, address and telephone number
- How to call 911 and use a payphone (Remember... 911 on a payphone is *free!*)
- To never accept rides or gifts from someone they don’t know
- Who to go to for help (Police, security, store employees, etc.)
- The safe places in their neighbourhood (trusted neighbour, library, etc.)
- A family ‘code word’ in case of an emergency
- To trust their instincts.

## AT SCHOOL OR AT PLAY

**Teach your children to:**

- Walk with a buddy or group, never alone.
- Avoid dangerous, secluded places such as vacant buildings, alleys, construction sites, wooded areas and railway tracks.
- Always take the safest routes to friend’s houses and to and from school, and never take shortcuts.
- Avoid strangers.
- Avoid showing expensive jewellery, electronics or clothing at school.
- Walk confidently and be alert to their surroundings.
- Cross the street safely; at marked crosswalks and not from between parked cars.



## AT HOME ALONE

**Your children should:**

- Check in with their caregiver or trusted neighbour when they arrive home.
- Have a key to the house. (Avoid hiding one outside.)
- Know how to lock windows and doors, as well as how to use the alarm system.
- Know to never allow anyone into the home without your permission.
- Know to never tell a caller at the door or on the telephone that they are alone.
- Know how to locate important telephone numbers such as your work, other relatives, trusted neighbours, police, fire and poison control.
- Know how to escape in case of fire.



## ABOUT THEIR BODY

**CHILDREN NEED TO KNOW THAT:**

**THEIR BODY IS PRIVATE**

**NO ONE MAY TOUCH THE AREA THAT THEIR BATHING SUIT COVERS**

**NO ONE HAS THE RIGHT TO TOUCH THEM IN A WAY THAT MAKES THEM FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE, AND TO SAY “NO” AND ADVISE YOU (PARENT OR GUARDIAN) IMMEDIATELY.**

## KEEPING THEM SAFE

### As a Caregiver or Parent you should:

- Teach your children about strangers:
  - Remember, a stranger is not necessarily someone they've never seen before.
  - You can't tell a bad person just by looking at them.
  - Never accept rides or gifts from someone they don't know.
  - Discuss the following scenarios commonly used to lure children:
    - Assistance – asking a child to help find a “lost puppy or toy”
    - Job offer – babysitting, cleaning, etc.
    - Fear – using threats to hurt loved ones
    - Gifts – offering candy, drugs or alcohol
    - Games and fun – offering TV and videogames at their place
    - Internet – talking on line and suggesting they meet
    - Gaining trust – people taking “special interest” in your child
    - Authority – posing as an official in uniform or other work attire



- Accompany your children to public restrooms.
- Inspect your neighbourhood for areas that could threaten your child's safety such as overgrown shrubbery, poor lighting, vacant buildings, etc.
- Know your children's route to school and play; if they do not have a cell phone, point out payphones and safe places for them to go.
- Make sure the school has an up to date list of who your child can be released to.
- Listen carefully to your children's fears and feelings about people and places that make them uncomfortable.
- Complaints about being bullied should be taken seriously.
- Believe your child if they disclose being touched inappropriately.
- Watch for changes in your child's behaviour that could indicate something is wrong, such as aggression, depression, withdrawal and reluctance to be with certain people.
- Keep detailed information on your child and recent photo close at hand. You can use a child identification kit for this purpose. They are available for free from most police services.
- Teach children safe places they can go in their neighbourhood in an emergency, such a trusted neighbour's house.

## CHILD IDENTIFICATION KITS



**Child Identification Booklets are available at  
Hamilton Police Service Community Policing Centres.  
Please see our website for locations.**



Policing Centre Volunteers are available to attend community events requesting this service.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THIS SUBJECT OR OTHER CRIME PREVENTION TOPICS PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT [WWW.HAMILTONPOLICE.ON.CA](http://WWW.HAMILTONPOLICE.ON.CA) OR PLEASE CONTACT:**

**HAMILTON POLICE SERVICE – CRIME PREVENTION**

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