



You want your child to be safe, but not anxious. Unless you talk to your child about “Stranger Danger,” it may be hard to know when to use caution vs. trust.

stranger Danger

Start young

Teaching Stranger Danger is a critical part of a child’s development — just like learning to look both ways when crossing the street.

As soon as they begin school, start teaching them about strangers. Tell them that adults do not need children’s help to find things, like a puppy, for example. Do not take gifts from people you do not know! In today’s world, strangers offer Happy Meals and Legos, in addition to candy to lure children away.

Define “stranger”

Make sure your kids know that a stranger is, anybody who is unfamiliar to them — even people who seem friendly.

Try not to force them to hug or high five someone they are not comfortable with yet. This is the child’s natural defense mechanism. Tell new relatives they are learning stranger danger. Tell your child if dad or mom says someone is safe, then you can give them a hug. But you do not have to hug anyone that makes you feel uncomfortable.

Choose any method

What you say and the way you teach your kids about stranger danger is up to you. Just do something — and then do it again and again. Some families:

- Role-play and practice responding in different scenarios.
- Establish a family code word. Anyone sent to pick up your child must use the code word so the child knows it’s safe to get in the car.
- Identify safe adults, like police officers, whom children can go to if they sense danger.
- Explain to your child that if they get lost, they should find another mommy with kids and ask her to help you find your mommy.

Make guidelines for being home alone, such as how to answer (or not answer) the door or phone.

Be frank

Honesty is the best policy when it comes to talking about Stranger Danger. So don’t withhold information or worry about scaring your kids.

Kids are a lot stronger than we give them credit for, talk to them as one person to another. Tell them they need to be responsible for protecting themselves.

Even with year after year of reminders, being safe still requires a little luck — not being in the wrong place at the wrong time. But unsafe situations can be less risky when Stranger Danger precautions are ingrained.

Kids like certainty and predictability. Reiterating what to do around strangers helps take the uncertainty out of a risky situation should one occur.

Stranger Danger

- Do not trust strangers
- Do not talk to strangers
- Do not walk with strangers, or do not go anywhere with strangers.
- Do not accept candy, gifts, food, drinks, or money from strangers.
- Do not talk to strangers even if they ask for directions, ask you to pet their dog or tell you a parent sent them to pick you up.
- If a stranger approaches you walk away, tell a trusted adult.
- Do not get into a car with strangers or enter a stranger's home.
- If a stranger approaches you near your school, return to your school immediately and tell a staff member.
- Do not communicate with strangers through text messages on cell phones or e-mail on the computer.



Stranger Danger

NEVER

Never agree to meet a stranger, do not go anywhere, or do anything with someone that you are not comfortable with.

NEVER

Never take sweets, food or presents from someone you don't know.

NEVER

Never get into a car or vehicle belonging to someone you do not know.

NEVER

Never give personal details about you or your family to a stranger

ALWAYS

Tell your parents or a responsible adult, where you are going and who you are with.

ALWAYS

Arrange a time to be back - and stick to it!!!

ALWAYS

Watch out for each other when you are playing with friends.

ALWAYS

Make sure you know the contact information of your parents or responsible adult, that you can contact in case of an emergency.



What is a Safe Stranger

Some people that we know very well or have never met before can be trusted to help us. For example we don't know the Firefighters or Police Officers that come to our aid but we can think of them as **Safe Strangers**.

Safe Strangers are people who we can be trusted to help us in a public place when they are at work and doing their job.

You can not tell if someone is a safe stranger just by the way they are dressed, how they look or how they talk to you.

A stranger might know your name, your address, your friends name, pets name or many personal things about you... but that does not make them a **Safe Stranger**!