

Rockville City Police Department

Crime Prevention Tips for Child Safety

Back To School?

To help you stay safe and healthy this school year, **McGruff®** the Crime Dog says:

- Work out a safe route to school with your parents. Choose the quickest way with the fewest street crossings and intersections with crossing guards. Stay away from parks, vacant lots, fields, and other places where there aren't many people around.
- Walk to and from school with a friend, neighbor, brother, or sister, don't go by yourself.
- Be sure you know your home phone number and address, the number of your parents at work and of another trusted adult, and how to use 911 for emergencies.
- Never talk to strangers or accept rides or gifts from strangers. Remember, a stranger is anyone you or your parents don't know well or don't trust.
- If you bike or skateboard to school, wear a helmet. And don't forget to lock up your bike wherever you leave it.
- If you're home alone after school, check in with a parent or neighbor as soon as you walk in the door.
- Let parents and friends know if you stay late after school. Get permission first if you want to play with a friend instead of going home.

If you see anyone doing something that makes you uneasy or you think isn't right - a stranger hanging around the school playground, a bigger kid bullying younger children, vandalism or graffiti for example - tell your parents, a teacher, or another trusted adult. That helps McGruff **Take A Bite Out Of Crime®!**

** Made available by The National Citizens' Crime Prevention Campaign, sponsored by the Crime Prevention Coalition*

Bicycle Safety Tips

Did you know that about 75% of all bicycle related deaths result from head injuries? You can prevent most serious head injuries by getting in the helmet-wearing habit.

The helmet should have a label that says it meets "ANSI" or "Snell" or "ASTM" safety standards. The helmet should cover the forehead. Riding a bike of the wrong size make it easier for you to lose control and be injured.

- Both feet should touch the ground when you are sitting on the seat with your hands on the handlebar.
- When straddling the center bar, you should be able to keep both feet flat on the ground with about one-inch between your crotch and the bar.
- If the bike has hand brakes, make sure you can comfortably hold the brakes and apply enough pressure to stop the bike.

Some rules for the road.

- Look in all directions before entering or crossing the street.
- Wear bright colored clothes or helmet or attach a florescent-colored flag on a flexible pole to your bike.
- If you ride on the street ride in the same direction as traffic and stay on the right side of the street near the curb.
- Watch out for parked cars that may pull out into traffic or open their car doors.
- Use hand signals

Bicyclist must obey the same rules of the road as automobile drivers.

Always lock your bike to prevent theft. Never just leave your bike on the front lawn when you go inside or away from the house. Keep a description of the bicycle, including the serial number.

"Home Alone Children" Tips

Teach Your "Home Alone" Children:

- To check in with you or a neighbor immediately after arriving home.
- How to call 9-1-1, or your area's emergency number, or call the operator.
- How to give directions to your home, in case of emergency.
- To never accept gifts or rides from people they don't know well.
- How to use the door and window locks, and the alarm system if you have one.
- To never let anyone into your home without asking your permission.
- To never let a caller at the door or on the phone know that they're alone. Teach them to say "Mom can't come to the phone (or door) right now."
- To carry a house key with them in a safe place (inside a shirt pocket or sock). Don't leave it under a mat or on a ledge outside the house.
- How to escape in case of fire.
- Not to go into an empty house or apartment if things don't look right - a broken window, ripped screen, or opened door.

Tips for Working Parents

- If your children are to be in charge of themselves at home, talk about activities they can do and the routines they are to follow. Discuss family policies on entertaining and visiting friends and what to do when the phone or doorbell rings.
- Have children - teens too - check in with you at work or with a neighbor when they come home from school. Be sure they memorize your work phone number and give this number to a neighbor too. Post it next to the phone, along with numbers for a neighbor, police, and fire department. Let your kids know when you will be home.
- Check out baby-sitters and day care centers carefully. Ask for references and call them!
- Instruct children and baby-sitters not to give out any information about who is home, who is out, and for how long.
- Get together with your neighbors, PTA, Boys Club/Girls Club, and schools to provide after school activities as an alternative to leaving a child at home alone.
- Talk to your employer about employer-supported childcare options. These can range from an on-site day care center to summer day camps, information and referral services, and financial assistance.

Never Leave Children Alone In or Around Vehicles - *"Not Even For a Minute"*

Many caring and responsible parents have left their children alone in a car, not realizing the risks involved. Some parents think it is okay to leave a child alone in a car while they run into a store, quickly drop off dry cleaning or while dropping off another child at school. Results of leaving a child alone in or around a vehicle can be deadly.

Did you know?

- The temperature inside a car can reach deadly levels in minutes
- Children can set the vehicle in motion
- Drivers have difficulty seeing small children when backing up

- The child might leave the vehicle to go look for you
- Your child can be abducted

REMEMBER

- A car is not a toy
- A car is not a playground

AND

- A car is certainly not a babysitter.

Safety Tips:

- Children should never be left alone in a vehicle, not even to run a quick errand.
- Keep vehicles locked at all times; even in the garage or driveway.
- Teach your children to never play in or around a vehicle.
- Consider installing cross-view mirrors and/or a backup detector on your vehicle.
- Keys should never be left within reach of children.
- Always make sure that all passengers have left the car after it is parked.
- If a child is locked inside a car, get them out as quickly as possible. If they are very hot or seem sick, call 911 or your local emergency number immediately.
- When a child is missing, check vehicles and car trunks right away.

Source: www.kidsncars.org

Rules for Getting On and Off the School Bus

Getting on the school bus

- When waiting for the bus, stay away from traffic and avoid roughhousing or other behavior that can lead to carelessness. Do not stray onto streets, alleys or private property.
- Line up away from the street or road as the school bus approaches.
- Wait until the bus has stopped and the door opens before stepping onto the roadway.
- Use the handrail when stepping onto the bus.

Behavior on the bus

- When on the bus, find a seat and sit down. Loud talking or other noise can distract the bus driver and is not allowed.
- Never put head, arms or hands out of the window.
- Keep aisles clear -- books or bags are tripping hazards and can block the way in an emergency.
- Before you reach your stop, get ready to leave by getting your books and belongings together.
- At your stop, wait for the bus to stop completely before getting up from your seat. Then, walk to the front door and exit, using the handrail.

Getting off the school bus

- If you have to cross the street in front of the bus, walk at least ten feet ahead of the bus along the side of the road, until you can turn around and see the driver.
- Make sure that the driver can see you.
- Wait for a signal from the driver before beginning to cross.
- When the driver signals, walk across the road, keeping an eye out for sudden traffic changes.
- Do not cross the centerline of the road until the driver has signaled that it is safe for you to begin walking.
- Stay away from the bus' rear wheels at all times.