

## Key Information for Parents

As a parent you should...

Provide a positive environment for your child and build up his/her self-esteem by praising him/her for his/her accomplishments. A positive self image will aid your child in the learning process as well as give him/her the confidence he/she needs to handle difficult situations.

Keep the lines of communication open with your child. Encourage your child to always tell you where he/she is going, who he/she will be with and to “check in” with you often. Get to know your child’s friends—learn their first and last names, their telephone numbers and the names of their parents.

Encourage your child to tell you if someone makes them feel uncomfortable or is bothering him/her in any way. Encourage him/her to tell you if someone offers them candy, money or a gift, wants to take his/her picture or asks to keep a secret.

Know that you should never prominently display your child’s name on school bags, clothing, or personal belongings. This allows total strangers to gain the child’s confidence by using his/her name, making the child feel like the individual actually “knows” him/her.

Encourage your child to play with other children in places where people can see them.

Teach your child to never get into a car without your permission.

Teach your child to never go into someone’s home without your permission.

Teach your child his/her full name, address, and complete phone number with area code. Make sure he/she also knows his/her parent(s) full name.

Teach your child how to use the telephone and how to call the 911 emergency number.

Not allow your child to go off on his/her own in public areas. If your child should get lost, encourage him/her to go to an area where there are a lot of people to ask for help.

Teach your child that a police officer is their friend and they can go to a police officer for help.

Know that there is no time frame placed on when a child can be reported missing. By federal law, a law enforcement agency is required to immediately investigate a missing child report and to immediately enter that child’s name and identifying information into NCIC (the FBI computer).