

# *Tips for Parents*

## ***Even "Nice" People Sometimes Do Mean Things.***

Abusers are experts at looking friendly, nice, safe, kind, generous, and loving. A child is vulnerable when the other person has more: age (older), size (bigger), knowledge, resources, status, and/or power.

REMEMBER: Up to 30% of abusers/offenders are under the age of 18.

Abusers use manipulative behaviors to gain control: flattery, bribery, jealousy, intimidation, and anger. Abusers manipulate parents along with children.

## ***Pay Close Attention To Who Is Around Your Children.***

Parents should know where their children are and who they are with. Children should know how to contact their parents. Use the buddy system: Take a buddy or don't go.

Refuse to leave your children with someone you don't trust. No job or event is worth your child's safety.

## ***Listen To What Your Children Say.***

Encourage communication by taking seriously what your children say. Increase your child's vocabulary by helping them name feelings. Back up your child's right to say "NO."

Role Play: A child who never says "no" to a parent will never say "no" to another adult. Give children permission to yell for help.

## ***Take A Second Look At Potential Danger.***

Be cautious on the Internet, experts recommend computer use be monitored regularly. Be selective when sharing personal information: including last name, telephone numbers, contact information, schools, activity schedules and occasions when someone is home alone. Talk about worse case scenarios and possible solutions to uncomfortable situations. Don't follow anyone who takes your bicycle, book bag or purse – report theft instead. Watch out for children who are alone often.

## ***Trust Your Instincts.***

Listen to your gut feelings, if you have doubts listen to them. Your body sometimes knows what your head hasn't yet figured out.

## ***Recognize Change In Your Child's Behavior.***

Change in behavior is a signal of change in your child's life. Tell your children: "I will always love you."

## ***Model Healthy Boundaries and Limit-Setting Behavior.***

Be a good example.