

TIPS FOR CAREGIVERS

LISTEN TO CHILDREN

Believe what they are telling you.

TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

Know where your children are at all times. Be familiar with their friends and daily activities.

BUILD SELF-ESTEEM

A child who has low self-esteem cannot protect him/herself. Listen carefully to your children's fears, and be supportive in all your discussions with them, replacing fear with knowledge.

TEACH DECISION MAKING

Children at all ages can make decisions. Practice early with little decisions so big decisions later are easier. Teach them to trust their own feeling, and assure them they have the right to say NO to what they sense is wrong.

BUILD SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Children need positive adult role models and need to know where to go for help.

CHOOSE SUBSTITUTE CAREGIVERS CAREFULLY

Interview and monitor babysitters, group leaders, youth pastors, etc. Be alert to a teenager or adult who is paying an unusual amount of attention to your children or giving them inappropriate or expensive gifts. Contact the Sheriff's Office (509-775-3132) and request any available information about the person. This will include if the person is a registered sex offender. You may also visit www.watch.wsp.wa.gov, which is the Washington Access to Criminal History.

PROTECT KIDS WHO ARE HOME ALONE

Set ground rules, designate emergency contacts, and develop safety plans for latchkey kids.

TALK WITH CHILDREN

Teach your children that no one should approach them or touch them in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable. If someone does, they should tell their parents immediately.

BE SENSITIVE

Watch for changes in a child's behavior. They are signals that you should sit down and talk to your children about what caused the change(s).

USE ROLE-PLAYING

Rehearse safety situations with your child. Give them power through knowledge. Play the "what if" game.

LET KIDS BE KIDS

Teach them what they will need to know to be safe and let them know you will do your best to protect them. Don't scare the fun out of children.

ESTABLISH BOUNDARIES

Teach and allow your child to have appropriate boundaries. They should never be forced to spend time with someone they are uncomfortable with, hug or kiss unfamiliar relatives, or provide any type of physical contact against their will. Allow children to say no to adults when appropriate, and respect their boundaries.