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telephone and that he or she will write down a message.

- If your child feels uncomfortable or gets scared by anything the caller says, tell him/her to hang up and make sure he or she tells you immediately about any and all telephone calls.
- If you have an answering machine, let it answer the telephone if your child is home alone.

## BE STREET SMART

Explain to your child how to safely walk to and from school:

- Always walk with a friend - there is safety in numbers. Strangers usually target kids that are by themselves.
- If you think that you are in danger, or if you are being followed, yell and run into the nearest store, house or back to school. Tell an adult what happened.
- Have your mom or dad or both of them walk your school route with you to make sure that it is completely safe.
- Always stick to the same, safe route going to and from school. Don't take shortcuts and never hitchhike.

## WHAT TO DO IN AN EMERGENCY:

Explain to your child that if someone is hurt or very sick, there is a car accident or a fire, call 9-1-1 as soon as possible. Your child needs to know that if he or she gets lost, go to a pay phone and dial 9-1-1 to get help. This is a free call from a pay phone.

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For additional resources contact:

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children  
[www.missingkids.com](http://www.missingkids.com)

The Federal Bureau of Investigation  
[www.fbi.gov/kids/crimepre/abduct/abdrules.htm](http://www.fbi.gov/kids/crimepre/abduct/abdrules.htm)

For further information on this program and other crime prevention material, write to:

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Crime and Violence Prevention Center  
California Attorney General's Office  
P.O. Box 944255  
Sacramento, CA 94244-2550  
[www.safestate.org](http://www.safestate.org)

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# CHILD SAFETY



Crime and Violence Prevention Center  
California Attorney General's Office

Bill Lockyer  
Attorney General



**Parents, Do your children know about strangers? Do they know how to protect themselves from kidnapping and other crimes? Children need guidance on making safe choices and decisions. Take a minute to go over the following safety tips with your children. They could prevent your child from becoming a victim of crime. It is important that you give them examples that they will understand. Role-play in your home, neighborhood, and your child's school. Pose "What if?" scenarios and safely guide your children through the scenario. Make sure that your children understand that their safety is important to you, and use the following points to encourage discussion about this issue.**



## WHO IS A STRANGER?

A stranger is someone that your child does not know. Children often conjure up the image of a "scary monster" when parents mention the word "stranger." Explain that a stranger may look, act and dress nicely, or even wear a uniform.

A child may be in a situation that requires interaction with a stranger, and this may be confusing. For example, if a child gets lost in a grocery store, the child should immediately go to the checkout counter or security office even though that may mean talking to a stranger. Instruct your child not to wander around looking for you. The child should seek help from someone who works in the store.

## TELL YOUR CHILD TO FOLLOW THESE RULES ABOUT STRANGERS

- Stay away from a stranger who asks for assistance. Strangers should never ask children for directions or for help with something they can do themselves, such as finding a lost puppy or kitten.
- Never take anything like candy, ice cream or money from a stranger.
- Never take a ride from a stranger, even if the stranger says your mother needs you or uses some other excuse.
- If a stranger asks for directions, stay away. Strangers shouldn't ask kids for help.
- Never give your name or address to a stranger.
- If a stranger in a car bothers you, turn and run in the opposite direction.
- If a stranger tries to follow you on foot or tries to grab you, RUN AWAY, SCREAM

and TELL your parents or a trusted adult friend. A dangerous stranger doesn't want to be the center of attention.

- Check with parents or a trusted adult before accepting a ride even from someone you know.

## SAFETY AT HOME

Instruct your child on how to safely answer the door:

- Never open the door to a stranger.
- If a stranger knocks on the door or rings the doorbell, tell your child to look out the peep hole or call out "who's there?" If it's for you, your child should tell the visitor to wait, and leave the door locked until you are available. If you are not home, your child should tell the visitor that you are busy and to please come back later. Your child can take a message, but he or she should NEVER open the door.
- If the visitor won't go away, and your child is scared, tell him/her to call 9-1-1.
- Never leave the yard or a play area without permission from a parent or the adult in charge.

How to answer the telephone:

- When answering the telephone, your child should not give out any information. If the caller asks "who's this?" Instruct your child to ask who the caller is and whom he or she called.
- If your child is alone, he or she should never tell anyone that he or she is alone. Instruct your child to tell the caller the person can't come to the