



Family Discussion

At **The Safe Side**, we believe the most important way to teach your child safety lessons is through communication, discussion and practice that happens openly and often. Print this document and discuss the questions with your kids. Most of the topics covered in the questions are explored in **The Safe Side Stranger Safety** video, available at stores nationwide and www.thesafeside.com.

Because different families have different sets of rules or opinions, many of the questions are open for discussion and solution. We offer suggestions to some of the more ambiguous questions, but realize your family rules may be different. Make changes as appropriate.

New terms

The following three terms are introduced in **Stranger Safety** video and used in the Questions, Hot Tips mini-poster and My Safe Side Data list included in the download file.

<u>Don't Know</u>	ANY person your child does not know.
<u>Kinda Know</u>	Someone your child might recognize, but who is not one of your child's Safe Side Adults
<u>Safe Side Adult</u>	A person your child can always trust to go with or to talk to, identified and agreed to in advance by your child and you.

Questions for discussion

Who do you think your three Safe Side Adults should be, and why? Where could you find their phone numbers?

What would you do if you were alone and the doorbell rang? Do you think you should talk to the person at the door, even if the door is locked? What if they said they needed help? Should you open the door?

Your child should never open the door without their Safe Side Adult. Teach them not to approach the door or look out the window where the person could see them. They should not talk with the person at the door. If the person does need help and the child doesn't answer, that person will go somewhere else.

When is it safe to play alone outside the house? What rules should we have about where it is safe to play outside? Should you have a friend with you when you play outside?

Children should never play outside alone. It is much safer if they play with a friend within sight of their Safe Side Adult. Children who are alone or isolated are more vulnerable to someone who means them harm.

If someone did something that made you feel scared, uncomfortable, or confused, who should you tell? What if they told you to keep it a secret?

Children may feel guilty or embarrassed if someone has done something inappropriate to them. Let your child know that there is nothing they could tell you that would make you lose your love for them. Let your child know that you will always listen to and believe them no matter what.

Is it okay to play alone in our car? Is a car a good hiding place?

A car is a dangerous place for a child to play. Many children are hurt in accidents involving parked cars and may not be able to get out of a car if it is stolen, or if they are hiding in it.

Is it okay to leave our yard and go somewhere without telling me?

Explain to your child that it is not okay to go somewhere without asking you, because if something happens to them, you wouldn't be able to help them. It's always better to check first and check in with their Safe Side Adult before they go anywhere or do anything to them.

Here's the situation: you're playing in front of our house (or apartment) and a car pulls up near you. You recognize the driver, but that person is not on your Safe Side Adult list. The person begins to get out of the car to approach you. What should you do?

Even if your child recognizes the person in the car, he or she should not speak to or allow a Kinda Know to get close if their Safe Side Adult isn't around. They should run into the house immediately and tell their Safe Side Adult.

Should you ALWAYS listen to adults? When is it appropriate NOT to listen to what a grown-up says?

Teach your children they do not always have to listen to adults. If an adult tells them something or does something that makes them feel scared, confused or uncomfortable, they should tell one of their Safe Side Adults as soon as they can. Get out of the situation as quickly as possible.

What other things, besides yelling, could you do if someone grabbed you and attempted to pull you into a car?

It's very hard to fight with a person who is much larger than a child, but children can scratch, pull hair, kick and wriggle around to draw attention to them. Kids should do whatever they can to get away, even though they are frightened. Each year thousands of children avoid abduction because they know what to do.

What if you're at the store with your Safe Side Adult and a grown up that you don't know asks your name? Should you give them your name?

Without your permission, a child should not give out any personal information about him or herself. We recommend children not wear shirts, hats or other articles of clothing that contain their name.

What if you are accidentally separated from your Safe Side Adult in a park or store? What should you do? Who can help you?

At a store, tell your child to go to the person working behind the counter. If this is not possible, have your child approach a woman with children for help or a uniformed law enforcement or security officer.

Let's practice yelling as if a Don't Know or a Kinda Know was hurting you or trying to grab you. Yell for me as loud as you can.

Role-playing is one of the best things you can do to teach your child about safety and reinforce the skills they need to know. Practice all of the scenarios from The Safe Side video and make sure your child really understands what to do in these situations.

If you were in a store and a person dressed as a security guard or police officer asked you to go with them, what should you do? Should you go without a Safe Side Adult?

Teach your child never to go with anyone without checking with their Safe Side Adult. If their Safe Side Adult isn't with them, tell the person they need to call their Safe Side Adult. If the person is legitimate, he or she will understand the caution your child is displaying.

How should you answer the phone in our house? If the person on the line asks you your name or where you live, should you tell them? What should you do?

If your child is home alone, he or she should say that their parents can't come to the telephone right now and ask to take a message. Teach your children not to engage in any other conversation or reveal any personal information. Some parents tell their children to screen the calls or not to answer at all if they are home alone.

If someone was hurting you and said that they would hurt you again if you told anyone, what should you do?

Always tell. Let your child know that you will always believe them, even if the person hurting them is close to you (relative, friend, etc.), and you will help them deal with the situation.

Do you know our phone number by heart? What about our address? Do you know my cell phone number?

*Complete **the My Safe Side Data** list with your child. Have your child commit critical information to memory (like your cell phone number). Place the list in the family phone directory or post it on the family message board.*



my Safe Side data

My address _____

My phone number _____

Safe Side Adult 1 _____

Safe Side Adult 2 _____

Safe Side Adult 3 _____

Mom's cell phone _____

Dad's cell phone _____

Police _____

Fire _____

Doctor _____

Poison control _____

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