

Fairhaven Police Presents "Safe Kids"



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Riding the Bus

School bus transportation is safe. In fact, buses are safer than cars! Even so, last year, approximately 26 students were killed and another 9,000 were injured in incidents involving school buses. More often than not, these deaths and injuries didn't occur in a crash, but as the pupils were entering and exiting the bus.

Remember these safety tips:

- Have a safe place to wait for your bus, away from traffic and the street.
- Stay away from the bus until it comes to a complete stop and the driver signals you to enter.
- When being dropped off, exit the bus and walk ten giant steps away from the bus. Keep a safe distance between you and the bus. Also, remember that the bus driver can see you best when you are back away from the bus.
- Use the handrail to enter and exit the bus.
- Stay away from the bus until the driver gives his/her signal that it's okay to approach.
- Be aware of the street traffic around you. Drivers *are* required to follow certain rules of the road concerning school buses, however, not all do. Protect yourself and watch out!

Walking and Biking to School

Even if you don't ride in a motor vehicle, you still have to protect yourself. Because of minimal supervision, young pedestrians face a wide variety of decisions making situations and dangers while walking to and from school. Here are a few basic safety tips to follow:

- Mind all traffic signals and/or the crossing guard -- never cross the street against a light, even if you don't see any traffic coming.
- Walk your bike through intersections.
- Walk with a buddy.
- Wear reflective material...it makes you more visible to street traffic.

Riding in a Car

- You might have heard before that most traffic crashes occur close to home ... they do.
- Safety belts are the best form of protection passengers have in the event of a crash. They can lower your risk of injury by 45%.
- You are four times more likely to be seriously injured or killed if ejected from the vehicle in a crash.
- Everyone needs to be buckled up properly. That means older kids in seat belts, younger kids in booster seats and little kids in child safety seats.

"On Your Own" Home Safety Checklist

Telephone:

- List important numbers besides each telephone and/or program them in.
- Equip your phone with an answering machine or service so it can take messages.
- Buy a phone with caller I.D. Tell your child to answer the phone only for specific callers. Let the phone take a message for all others.

Security:

- Provide secure locks for all doors and windows.
- Store matches, lighters, medications, household cleaners, and other toxic substances in a safe place. Make sure they are clearly labeled and in their original containers.
- Lock up alcoholic beverages, and check to make sure they do not mysteriously disappear.
- Store firearms and ammunition separately and under lock and key.
- Use light timers so your child doesn't come home to a dark house.

Fire Safety:

- You must have a smoke alarm on each level of the house (or for homes on one level, near the kitchen and all bedrooms). Test them to make sure they all work and remember to change the batteries when you turn your clocks during day light savings time.
- Replace any broken electrical cords and use no more than two plugs per outlet.
- Keep your hot water heater below 54 C to prevent scalding.

First Aid:

Assemble a basic kit with your child, explaining what each item is and how to use it.

- Box of different-sized bandages for all cuts;
- Sterile gauze pad for larger cuts, with adhesive tape to hold it and small scissors to cut the tape;
- Tweezers to remove slivers;
- Peroxide to clean cuts and cotton balls to apply it; and
- Digital thermometer to check for fever.
- Keep a cold pack in the freezer.
- Call 911 for help in an emergency

Power Outage:

- Keep a flashlight or two (and extra batteries) handy.
- Provide a few items that can run on batteries (radio, clock, electric games).

Guide for Babysitters

The YWCA offers babysitting courses every few months. The full day course cost \$25.00 to attend and usually runs from 9:00am to 4:00pm on Saturdays or school vacations. The YWCA Youth Services Program can be reached by calling 508-993-5858.

When you baby-sit, you are entrusted with a child's life. Your primary responsibility is to care for the children's needs and most of all: keep them safe. You can prepare yourself for this important trust by following these guidelines.

- Have the following information written down and readily accessible in the event of an emergency: Family name, children's names, house address with nearest cross street, instructions on how to contact the parents, phone number(s) of close relatives and neighbors, doctor's name and telephone number along with a medical release. Include the phone number of the poison control center (800)-222-1222.
- In the event of an emergency call 911: Identify yourself by name, tell them you are babysitting and state the problem. State the address of the house where you are and telephone number. If you have fled the residence for any reason advise the operator that you are calling from another location. Stay calm, answer all questions the operator ask you and stay on the line until you are instructed it is okay to end the call.
- Get written instructions about any medicines to be given to the children – how much and what time.
- Having visitors while babysitting is a bad policy. Always get approval if you would like to have a visitor.
- Find out whom you should call in case of an emergency. Be sure to get their phone number.
- Beware of pets on the property.
- Take a walk through the house and check for any special locks, windows that cannot be climbed out of, other telephones and anything at all that would be a problem in case of an emergency.
- During the walk through, check for hazards and things that the children can get into, such as matches, lighter fluid, electric cords, plastic bags, medication, or anything else that may be dangerous.
- Look to see if there is a pool. Check for doggie doors and any unlocked doors or windows leading to that area.
- Have a mental fire drill: that is, plan on more ways than one to get yourself and the children out of the house in case of fire. Have a prearranged meeting place outside so everyone can be accounted for.
- Be sure to find out if you are to give the children anything to eat or drink before bed.
- Make sure all the doors and windows are locked from the inside, and lock the front door after the parents leave.

What to do after the parents leave:

- If it is evening, turn on the porch/outside light.
- If the children are asleep, check on them frequently.
- If the children are up, know their location at all times and never leave them alone too long!
- If for any reason you must leave the house, TAKE THE CHILDREN WITH YOU!
- DO NOT open the door for anyone unless you personally know the person.
- If someone insists on coming in and you do not recognize them, or if you suspect a prowler, CALL THE POLICE AT 911.

IN CASE OF FIRE:

- Sound the alarm – yell FIRE as loud as possible.
- If possible, close the door to the area where the fire is.
- DO NOT attempt to extinguish the fire, but rather attempt to save a life.
- Get everyone out of the house, and do not go back in for any reason.
- Keep all the children together, and go to the approved neighbor's home.
- Call the Fire Department at 911. State your emergency and tell the operator that you are babysitting. Give the address and telephone number. Tell the operator if everyone is out of the home or if someone is still unaccounted for when you make the call. Stay calm and listen to the operator's instructions. They will advise you on what to do.

A well-prepared babysitter will be highly respected and greatly appreciated by parents.
Any sitter who takes these recommendations to heart will be in great demand.