

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

MENTALLY HEALTHY CHILDREN

Good mental health is necessary for all children to be successful in school and in life. Mental health has to do with the way people get along, including the way children function in their families, on the playground, and at school. Characteristics of mentally healthy children are children who feel good about themselves, feel comfortable with other people, and are able to meet the demands of everyday life. Parents can help raise mentally healthy children by working with them to develop these characteristics.

1. Help children feel good about themselves.
 - Teach children to deal with a variety of different situations.
 - Share with children, both the good and the bad.
 - Teach children that it is OK to show emotion.
 - Help children realize that they don't have to be perfect to be accepted.
 - Respect children, and they will learn to respect themselves.
 - Encourage children to relax and enjoy simple pleasures.
2. Help children feel comfortable with other people.
 - Expose children to people outside of school and family.
 - Set an example for children with positive personal relationships.
 - Discuss the importance of trust in a relationship.
 - Demonstrate to children the importance of respecting others.
 - Encourage children to become part of more than one group.
3. Help children learn to meet the demands of everyday life.
 - Teach children to take responsibility for their own actions.
 - Encourage children to plan ahead.
 - Encourage new experiences for children.
 - Help children learn to establish realistic goals.
 - Teach children to always do their best.
 - Discuss the importance of decision-making based on personal values and right versus wrong.

CHILD SAFETY

Child abduction, child abuse, and child-related violence stories are in the newspaper on a daily basis. Parents and children alike are concerned about this growing national crisis and must be prepared to take action to combat this problem.

The most basic way to begin dealing with the problem of child abduction, abuse, and violence is through education in the home. Parents can make an impact by sharing basic safety rules with children and by following these tips.

TIPS TO SHARE WITH CHILDREN:

1. Make sure your parents know where you will be.
2. When going places, go with a buddy or a group.
3. Do not travel through dark or isolated areas.
4. Be observant if you notice strangers hanging around the schoolyard or the park.
5. Do not accept rides or gifts from strangers.
6. Do not answer the door when you are home alone, or tell strangers you will be alone.
7. Call the police if someone is trying to get in.
8. If strangers ask for direction, tell them you do not know and walk away. Do not approach a strange car.
9. If someone, anyone, touches you in a way that feels bad, tell.

TIPS FOR PARENTS:

1. Teach children the basics. Make sure they know their telephone number, address, how to dial the operator, rescue numbers, etc.
2. Know where your children are all the time.
3. Teach children to avoid strangers.
4. Don't leave your young child alone in the car or toy section of a store.
5. Know your child's friends.
6. Listen to your child's fears and concerns.
7. Make sure children know the safest routes to and from school and friend's houses.

*"Children are our most valuable natural resource."
Herbert Hoover*