

10 Family Rules for Safety

Your baby is growing up. Every day he gains more control of his life and you lose a little more. You can't always hold his hand, but you can teach him the skills that will help keep him safe for life.

The best way to keep your child safe is to help him develop good judgment. Here are some family rules for raising confident children that know how to be safe.



1. Talk to your child every day and listen.

Eye-to-eye conversation keeps you connected and builds cooperation and trust.

2. Let him know that your family does not keep secrets.

Make sure he knows he can talk to you about anything, and no matter what happens, you will always love him.

3. Always listen to your child.

Children who believe they are taken seriously have higher self-esteem. These children are more likely to speak up to protect themselves in a bad situation.

4. Make sure your child knows that any part of his body that is covered by a swimsuit is private.

NO ONE has a right to touch a child in ways that make him or her uncomfortable.

5. Make sure your child knows how to and is not afraid to reach out to you or to the police if he feels in danger.

6. Teach him that it is better to be safe than to be polite.

If he is in a situation that scares him, he should call for help.

- If a stranger tries to take him, he should shout, "Help! This is not my parent!"
- If someone touches him in a way that makes him uncomfortable, he should shout "No!"
- If he is uncomfortable when at a friend's house, he should call you to pick him up.

7. Talk to your child about bullies.

Tell him how to defuse the situation. Make sure he knows to walk away and say, loudly enough for anyone nearby to hear, "I won't let anyone abuse me." "Abuse" is a word with sexual connotations that can embarrass a bully. Assure him there is no shame in being afraid of bullies. He should walk away or ask an adult for help.

8. Never leave your child with a person you don't know and completely trust.

When you do leave your child, be sure the caregiver knows your family rules. Explain family rules for everything including diet and handling misbehavior.

9. Model good judgment and share your decision making process with your child from a young age.

Making mindful decisions is a learned skill, one that you can teach.

10. Remember, the best way to help keep your child safe is to help him develop good judgment.



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