

NEW NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY TIPS

Moving to a new neighborhood represents a big change for everyone in the family. It's an exciting time but may also create some stress and confusion for family members, especially children.

Communicating with your children about the new home and neighborhood and reassuring them about the changes are vital. It is also important to pay careful attention to their feelings and allow them to express themselves about all the changes they are experiencing.

Following are some simple rules to reinforce and practice with your children in order to ensure that moving into their new home and neighborhood is a safe and positive experience:



- Make certain that your children know their full name and learn their new address and telephone number as soon as possible;
- List emergency telephone numbers by your telephone as soon as possible after you move into your new home. If you changed jobs or have a new telephone number, ensure that your children have these numbers, as well as a list of backup people they can contact in case of an emergency;
- Take your children on a walking tour of the neighborhood and identify the locations of the local park, convenience store, school, main streets, places to avoid, etc. Caution your children about taking shortcuts and identify safe havens along the route where they can seek refuge if needed: ex: fast food outlets, telephones (to place a 9-1-1), offices, etc.;
- Make a point of meeting your neighbors and introducing them to your children while you are with them. This may provide a good opportunity for your children to meet other children in the neighborhood;
- Teach your child to always use the "buddy system" when walking or playing outside. He should always be in a group of one or more in order to avoid being alone and isolated;
- Remind your child to always ask your permission before accepting invitations from anyone;
- Before school resumes, take your child to visit the school. If your child walks to school, walk the route with him beforehand and make sure he follows all the basic safety rules.

For Teenagers

- If your child wants to visit his old neighborhood friends, make sure he is well aware of the public transportation routes and schedule (if applicable). Ask your child to contact you upon arrival and before leaving their friend's house;
- Insist that he informs you of his whereabouts and if there are any changes to his schedule;
- Make sure your teen informs you of any job interviews: ex: the location, contact person and time.

For more information regarding the Missing Children's Network personal safety workshops, offered year-round, please contact our offices at 514 843-4333 or visit our website at www.missingchildrensnetwork.ngo