



STRANGER DANGERS

→ TEACHING YOUR CHILDREN HOW TO INTERACT WITH STRANGERS

Can you answer these questions about strangers?

WHAT IS A STRANGER?

Anyone you don't know. A stranger can be a man or woman, young or old. They do not have monster faces and do not wear raggedy old clothes or masks. They look just like regular people.

WHERE MIGHT YOU SEE A STRANGER?

Strangers are everywhere. We see lots of strangers every day. You see them in cars as you ride to school or to the store. You see them walking their dogs or jogging in your neighborhood. You could even have a stranger come to your door. Remember, strangers are just people that you don't know.

ARE ALL STRANGERS BAD?

Most strangers are good people just like you. They would never dream of hurting you, but there are few strangers who might hurt you. These strangers will try very hard to trick you into coming closer or going someplace with them.

HOW CAN YOU TELL THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GOOD AND BAD STRANGERS?

There are many more good strangers than bad strangers. The problem is that bad strangers try to make you think they are very good people. They smile and might even try to give you things that make you trust them.

DO YOU KNOW SOME OF THE TRICKS STRANGERS USE TO GET KIDS TO STOP AND TALK?

Bad strangers might try to give you candy, toys, or even money to get you to come closer. Sometimes they use pets because they know kids like animals. They might even try to say that your parents are hurt or have asked them to pick you up. These are all tricks to get you to go with them.

WHAT DO YOU DO IF A STRANGER TRIED TO GET YOU TO STOP AND TALK?

If anyone you don't know wants to talk to you, give you things, or wants you to go someplace with them, run and tell! Don't stop and say, "No, thank you," you need to run and tell the closest grown-up that you know and trust. **Just run and tell!** Don't worry about being rude.

Parents/Guardians/Role Models

Children, younger than age 5, rarely understand the “stranger” concept. Children up to age 5 should be under constant, adult supervision because they are unable to protect themselves from strangers. However, by age 5, children start to venture out from that close supervision as they attend school.

This brochure will help you to ask your child questions about strangers to help you start non-threatening conversation with your child about the subject. Go beyond this brochure and find books that teach children about strangers through stories. Use “teachable moments” to remind them of the lesson learned in this brochure and in books you have read together. Do this often to reinforce what they have learned.

Children often hear news reports and hear adults discussing strangers. Your interest and discussions will help them feel better prepared and less threatened. Call the **Henrico County Police Division at (804) 501-4838** to schedule a free stranger program in your school or community.

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