

- *Model* safe practices for children (adults should not stand on chairs or sit on shelves). Explain why and how unsafe actions can hurt them and others.
- Teach safety rules and model safe practices (bus safety indoor and outdoor play safety, staying with the group, safe use of materials, and knowing personal identification information).
- Talk about consequences of unsafe behavior such as injury to self or damage to property.
- Repeat safety reminders as often as needed. Understand that you may have to repeat them many times (“Use your walking feet.” “It isn’t safe to run outside without an adult.”).
- Give specific recognition for remembering safety messages and safe behaviors (“Thank you for waiting for me.” “It’s good that you are sitting in your chair.”).
- Point out safety signs and *symbols* in the environment and discuss what they mean.
- Practice looking both ways and using the cross walk when crossing the street with children.
- Discuss the importance of wearing bike helmets and using car safety seats. Encourage parents to bring bike helmets for their child to use if appropriate.
- Teach children outdoor safety, including not playing in water areas without adult supervision or wandering off.
- Teach and model appropriate responses to potentially dangerous situations, including fire, violent weather, and strangers or other individuals who may cause harm.
- Practice fire and tornado drills frequently. Establish a safe place to meet in case of a fire. Teach children how to safely stay with their group and adults while exiting to a safe location. Help children feel calm and secure during these drills, emphasizing that they don’t need to worry in case of emergency because they have practiced what they should do.
- Use *play* to *reinforce* safety messages and practice responding to dangerous situations (“Let’s pretend the fire alarm went off. What should we do?”).
- Help children identify people they can go to when they feel afraid or where to go to feel safe (family members, caregivers, firefighters, and other community helpers).
- Advise children to never leave with someone they don’t know unless their parent or caregiver has approved. If needed, develop a “safe” word that only the child and parent know. This can help the child realize this person has been approved to leave with (keep in mind that not all “strangers” are people the child or family doesn’t know).
- Talk with children about dangerous objects such as guns, knives, matches, fireworks, etc.
- Talk with children about the dangers of playing in cars, old appliances, trunks, or other dangerous areas.