

LIVONIA POLICE
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Street Smarts

Street proofing is a concept designed to assist children in identifying and reacting to suspicious or dangerous circumstances.

The key words here are *identify* and *react*.

Teaching your child to identify a problem is pointless if she/he does not know how to react to it and similarly your child cannot be expected to react if he/she is unable to identify a potential problem situation.

How can my child identify a potential problem or danger?

Familiarity: When walking with your child through your neighborhood point out people, places and activities that are usually present at any given time. Assist your child in recognizing what is normal for your area so that changes will be noticed by him/her.

Be Alert: When walking with your child, make a game of observing activities and persons on the street. See how many potential problems you and your child can spot e.g. isolated parking lots, poorly lit alleys, abandoned houses, cars stopped near parks.

Have a Plan: Ask your child to see how where the nearest telephone, corner store, fire hall, or police station is. Ask you child to tell you what he/she would do to obtain help if they or one of their friends was in trouble. "You can speak to a telephone operator from any pay phone free of charge. Advise the operator that it is an emergency and the operator will place your call for help."

Positive Action: Should your child, despite his/her best efforts, find themselves in danger here is the action to take:

1. If she/he is physically held by someone, tell your child to yell, loud and long and to keep it up until the person lets go or help arrives.
2. Run - tell your child to put as much distance between himself and the problem as possible.
3. Run directly to the nearest safe location such as a neighbor, corner store or police officer and tell an adult what happened immediately. Don't wait to be asked.