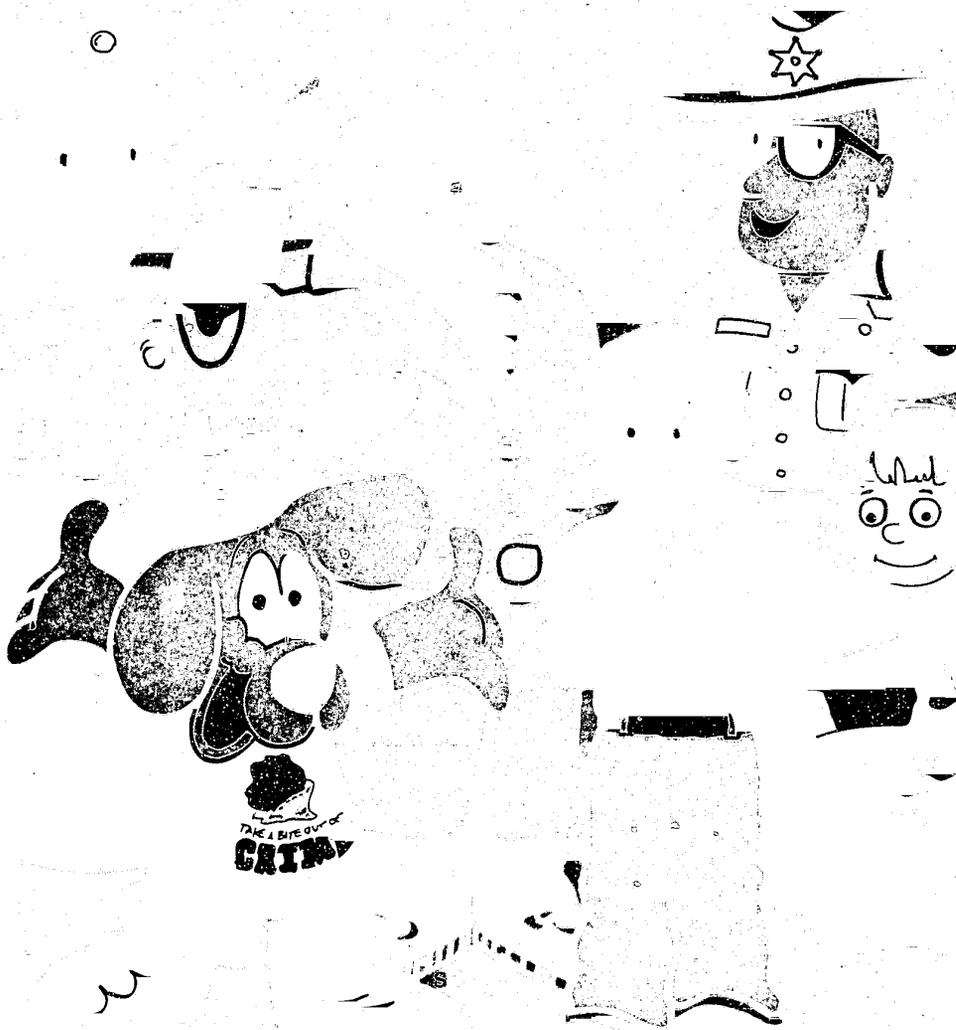


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Police Officer's Freedom Bill for Children

- Every child has the right to a drug-free environment.
- Every child has the right to be free from violence.
- Every child has the right to live free and protected from all forms of physical, sexual, and psychological abuse.
- Every child has the right to possess property without fear of theft.
- Every child has the right to a role model, such as a police officer, whose responsibility is to provide guidance towards a lawful path in life.
- Every child has the right to participate actively in youth programs offered by communities and law enforcement agencies.
- Every child has the right to be protected against all forms of harassment and discrimination.
- Every child has the guaranteed right to equal protection under the law.

(Adopted by the International Association of Chiefs of Police)

Note: The International Association of Chiefs of Police is a founding member of the Crime Prevention Coalition. The Crime Prevention Coalition, created more than a decade ago to support the National Citizens' Crime Prevention Campaign, now counts 125 organizations as members. This network of federal and state agencies, state crime prevention organizations, and national associations helps promote public service ads, sponsors national and regional meetings, offers peer technical assistance, and provides a rich resource of innovative ideas and prevention programs.

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National Crime Prevention Council
1700 K Street, NW, Second Floor
Washington, DC 20006-3817



**TAKE A BITE OUT OF
CRIME**

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National Institute of Justice**

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About This Book

Cops Helping Kids was written for you—police officers and deputy sheriffs who work with four- and five-year-old children. Many of you have told the National Crime Prevention Council that there are limited resources to help you prepare for visits to preschools, Head Start programs, day-care centers, etc. We recognize that working with young children is something you may not do often, or it may be new to you. This guide will help you by providing information, strategies, and activities appropriate for young children.

The first section provides insight into how preschool children act and some helpful hints on how best to teach them health and safety issues. The next section presents a variety of discussion questions to introduce a topic, along with activities to help you teach important concepts. Many activities specifically involve McGruff® the Crime Dog and his nephew, Scruff™. Because of their appeal and familiarity, these national figures can help you better communicate crime, drug, and violence prevention messages to children in nonthreatening ways.

To make your visit as productive as possible, each discussion topic/activity includes:

- objectives for the children
- a list of materials necessary for the activity
- topic questions to ask the children and appropriate responses to look for
- a brief activity to do with the children.

Sometimes there is an "Extra and Follow-Up Sessions" activity that you can do if you have extra time or on a return visit, or that you can suggest to the teacher to use as a reinforcement of your message.

Next, you will find a section of reproducible handouts. Some are extra activities for the children, while others are resources for parents. Use the Letters to Parents as they are or adapt them to fit your own style. They provide additional reinforcement for your messages.

In the last section of the book, you will find a resource section that lists organizations that also work to keep young children safe.

Why Drug and Violence Prevention Is Necessary for Young Children

Crime, drug, and violence prevention messages that reach young children are a necessity, not a luxury. We might like to think that four- and five-year-olds don't need to know about crime and that they would not benefit from activities and discussions designed to prevent violence and involvement with alcohol and other drugs. But the sad truth is that many children are exposed to violence and drugs at home, in the neighborhood, on television, or at a friend's or relative's home. Sometimes these children seem far wiser than their years. The fact is, they are often fearful and anxious.

The impact of drugs and violence on children often leaves ugly scars—physical and psychological—that are not easily healed. Law enforcement officers, teachers, and other caregivers can help protect children and assist them in gaining the self-concepts and skills needed to make good choices for the rest of their lives.

The law enforcement officer, as a role model within the community, can play an important part in preparing children to succeed despite the negative and violent influences on their lives. Law enforcement officers can, along with other adults, help young children develop skills that make them more resilient in the face of stress. Resilient children—those children who are able to overcome problems and adjust to change—tend to:

- be accepted by a caring adult
- have an active approach to solving problems
- have a skill of some kind that they are good at (one acknowledged by themselves and others)
- have the ability to maintain a positive outlook on life (and to view their experiences constructively)
- have a sense of caring or feeling of responsibility for others.

Using materials and activities that help build these resiliency factors, you can help protect these children for years to come and increase their chances of growing into healthy and productive adults.

What To Expect From Four- and Five-Year-Old Children

You may have years of experience working with four- and five-year-old children or you may seldom visit preschool groups. If you often deal with young children, you know what to expect from them. If you haven't dealt much with this young audience, you might find that entering a classroom of people less than three feet tall can be extremely unnerving. "How will they act?" "How do I treat them?" "What do I say?" are common questions. But young children are not a strange subspecies or a new race: They are small people with open hearts and minds. They are eager to learn new things and want to please.

When you enter a preschool class, be aware that the group may be a mix of four- and five-year-olds with different abilities and at different developmental levels. This means you will have to be flexible. You will also be the center of attention. They all want your attention, and they may not be shy about competing for it!

Let the children know your expectations before beginning your discussion; tell them to raise their hands and wait to be called on before speaking and to be good listeners when it is someone else's turn to talk.

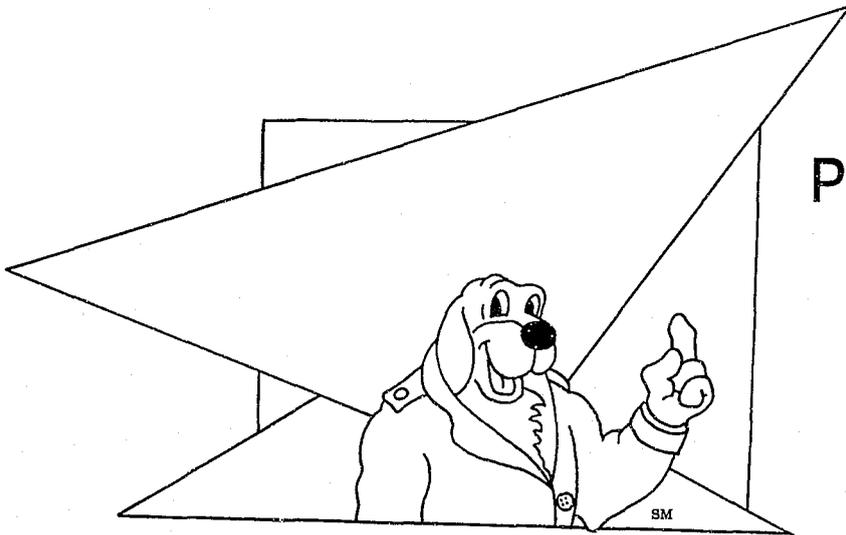
And remember, young children cannot sit still for very long and just listen—they need to be moving about or otherwise actively involved in what you are doing. If you enter a preschool classroom expecting simply to lecture to the children, you will be surprised at how quickly they lose interest. Keep their attention by using visual aids, asking them questions, calling on volunteers to come up and assist you in some way, or having the children demonstrate an activity.

The Four-Year-Old

- likes to wiggle and move, but can sit still and play for 15 to 20 minutes
- asks many questions: How? Why? What for?
- is fascinated by the sound of words and their effect upon others and likes to experiment with inappropriate language as well as poetry
- likes to touch, feel, taste, and explore
- needs clear limits and is learning to accept rules, models behavior after adults, requires redirection toward acceptable activity, and can be stubborn, bossy, and impolite (likes to show off)
- may change moods quickly—four-year-olds can go from cooperative to stubborn, or happy to angry, in a flash
- learns well through concrete activities relevant to particular interests and experiences, and learns by doing, observing, and interacting informally with other children and adults
- feels good about solving his or her own problems and will experiment and try again if positive responses are received.

The Five-Year-Old

- is still curious—likes to learn new facts and repeat them to others
- can say his or her full name, age, and usually at least part of his or her address
- likes to dictate stories and “read” what he or she has said, is interested in words, responds to word labels at home and at school (for example chair, table, phone, sink), likes to play guessing games and can make up questions for others
- has a great imagination and likes to pretend, dress up, and assume imagined roles, yet is beginning to distinguish make-believe from reality
- responds positively to appropriate praise, encouragement, and smiles—is delighted by adult praise
- needs frequent and immediate rewards for good behavior.



Planning Your Visit —The Checklist

Before Your Visit

- ✓ *Ask the teacher if she or he wants you to cover any special topics* that may be particularly relevant to the children. Perhaps a child recently saved a parent by dialing "9-1-1" or "0 (operator)" or a child was injured while riding a bike.
- ✓ *Ask if there are any special situations* in the children's families of which you should be aware—for example, child abuse. Knowing what the children are facing can help you adjust your discussion and prepare for disclosures or interruptions. Also, ask about rules for any planned activities.
- ✓ *Inquire about what the class has been learning lately.* Is your visit one of a series from community helpers? If you leave an activity sheet with the students, will the teacher be able to follow up later in the week?
- ✓ *Ask that the teacher (or an aide) stay in the room while you are visiting the children.* With the teacher present, you will have help if any problems occur. It is also beneficial in cases in which children disclose personal information that may require follow-up action. For example, if a child reveals a possible case of child abuse or familial drug use, documentation, intervention, and counseling services may be required. Invite the teacher to be an active participant in your discussion with the children. If the teacher plans to be away, bring a partner with you or ask that an aide or parent volunteer be on hand.
- ✓ *Know how many students will be in the class.* Gather enough handouts, stickers, etc., to distribute to the children. *Always* bring extras.
- ✓ *Know key referral policies and resources for problems you might encounter.*

Sample Letter to the Teacher

Dear _____,

Thank you for inviting me to visit your classroom. I will be happy to cover any topics that you feel are especially relevant to your class. Just let me know in advance how I can adapt my presentation to fit in with what the children are already learning in your lesson plans.

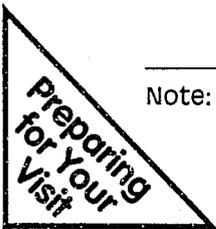
I would also appreciate your cooperation in helping reduce the fear some children associate with a uniformed officer. One way to help reduce that fear is to speak positively before I arrive about what police officers and deputy sheriffs do in our community. Often adults make statements, perhaps in jest, about the possibility of a child who is misbehaving being "taken away" by an officer. Children associate this with personal real-life experiences or with stories they have seen on television. We want to show the children that interaction with officers is generally a positive experience.

Preparing the students before I arrive will make the learning more effective and complete. It would also be helpful for the children to wear name tags.

Thank you for your help. I appreciate your desire to use the community as a learning resource. I look forward to working with your class.

Sincerely,

Note: You may want to transfer this letter onto your department's letterhead or write your own before your visit. You may also want to send a list of topics you're prepared to discuss. (Before copying, remember to remove these suggestions and the page number.)



Your Visit —Things To Remember

- *Introduce yourself.*
- *Be sure your visit with the preschoolers is not simply a lecture.* Actively involve the children and make the visit an enjoyable experience. For example, having a real bicycle to look over or singing a song about bike safety is much more fun than just listening to an adult talk about it—and the children are more likely to learn and remember safety rules!
- *Establish and enforce the "one person talks at a time" rule.*
- *Ask questions and let the children respond.* Correct only dangerous or harmful misinformation. When the wrong answer doesn't matter, don't point it out. If a child has a harmful understanding (for example, "wine coolers are like fruit drinks for kids"), thank the child for responding and ask the question again. Praise the child who gives the correct answer. Make sure children don't leave with any dangerous misunderstandings.
- *Supply lots of positive reinforcement.* For example, "You have some great ideas. You really know a lot about staying safe and healthy!"
- *Talk at the children's level.* Talk *to* them, not *at* them. Ask simple questions. At first you might catch yourself saying something over the children's heads. Try to restate your remark in more basic language. Do not assume that the children know even your most common phrases. Although "arrest" is a word that you use frequently, "take someone to jail" is better understood by four- and five-year-olds.
- *Make your visit brief* (no more than 15-20 minutes). Preschool children have very short attention spans.
- *Repeat a small amount of important material several times* rather than cramming a great deal of information into a short time frame. Young children learn by repetition, reinforcement, and demonstration.

- *Use visual aids* (such as pictures and puppets) as much as possible to get the children actively involved and increase their attention spans. Puppets don't need to be elaborate—sew two buttons to an old sock or glue pictures to popsicle sticks—or ask the children's teacher to provide you with puppets. Four- and five-year-old children have extraordinary imaginations!
- *Any handouts or coloring activities should be done at the end of your visit.* Four- and five-year-olds can take a long time to color. You may want to prearrange with the teacher any activities that the class may have to complete after you leave.
- *Work with the whole audience*, not just those children who consistently speak up. Gently encourage (but do not force) each child to participate. Emphasize that you want to hear what everyone has to say.
- *Be aware that you may be dealing with very different abilities within a small age range.* If there are great differences you may want to ask the teacher if the children can be grouped according to their levels and then work with one group at a time.
- *Try to use McGruff and Scruff in your activities.* For example, "Scruff and his friend Cynthia are playing in the park. A man they don't know tries to talk to them. The stranger wants Scruff and Cynthia to help him find a lost puppy. What should Scruff and Cynthia do?" Asking questions in this third-party way can make the topic less threatening than if you ask children what they would do. Although the child makes the decision for Scruff, he or she is not intimidated with a "What would *you* do?" question.
- *Explain all parts of your uniform.* The children may know that you carry a weapon, but they may not be aware of any of your other equipment. Take out your handcuffs and radio and show how they work. Consider passing around your hat for the children to try on. (This may work well if the class is small and you don't think it would be disruptive.) Point out your badge and patches. This will get the children involved and help them to identify whom they can go to if they need help.
- *Relax and sit down.* The children will probably be sitting on the floor. Sitting in a low chair or on the floor with them will be more conducive to interaction.



What If...? Situations for the Officer

Preschool classroom visits can be very unpredictable, even for those with years of experience working with young children. Be prepared to encounter a variety of situations. Expect the unexpected!

What Should You Do?

- Q: What if one child continues to speak up, dominating the answers to your questions?
A: Thank the child for his answers, but state that you want to hear from everyone.
- Q: What if the children seem generally unresponsive to your questions and activities?
A: Engage the children in a moving or singing activity or one that requires volunteer assistance. This will get them involved in your visit and focus their attention on you. Instead of simply talking *to* the children, ask them questions about your topic and elicit their ideas.
- Q: What if children in the back of the room are chatting about an unrelated topic?
A: Praise the children who are paying attention (for example, "I like the way Tyrone and Katie are listening."). Do this loudly enough so that the chatting children can hear you praising those who are paying attention. As long as they are not disturbing other children, ignore them. If they are disrupting the others, the aide or teacher will probably notice as well and take control of the situation. If absolutely necessary, remind them that only one person may talk at a time.
- Q: What if, at the beginning of your discussion, a child raises her hand and asks to use the bathroom?
A: Let her go! Asking her to wait could be disastrous. She will hurry back to hear your discussion and you will avoid ten minutes of disruptive fidgeting and squirming or a possible accident.
- Q: What if, in the middle of the session, a boy starts to cry? (The teacher has stepped out.)
A: Ask the child what the problem is. If you can't seem to console him, simply pop your head out the door and ask a passing teacher or aide to find your children's

teacher. Four- and five-year-olds may cry often, so don't panic and don't assume that you have done something wrong.

Q: What if, while you are explaining the various parts of your uniform and mention your firearm (still in the holster), a child asks if you have ever shot anyone?

A: Be honest. If you have never had to use your weapon, you are fortunate. If you have shot at someone, explain that part of your job as a police officer or deputy sheriff is to keep people safe and, once in a very great while, that may mean using your gun. State that you use your gun only after you've tried many other things and only if it's a real emergency. Tell them you went to a special school to learn to use your gun correctly and that you have to keep going to that school to use it. Emphasize that kids should never touch guns and that if they see a gun, they should tell an adult.

Q: What if, in the middle of your visit, a child shouts something like, "My Dad says all cops are jerks and I should never trust you!"?

A: Respond simply with, "I'm sorry that your Dad said that, because you can trust me. My job is to help kids like you have safe and healthy lives. If he'd like to talk to me about specific problems, have him call me. Your teacher has my phone number."

Note: Not all communities you visit may accept law enforcement officers in the same way. Children are influenced by the opinions of their caregivers and their community's attitudes. A child's fear or apprehension of law enforcement officers may result from bad experiences in his or her land of origin (which the family may have fled because of military/police persecution) or his or her family situation (in which a child's relative may have been arrested for a crime). This makes your task all the more important. Be patient—it may take several visits for a frightened child to feel comfortable with you.

Q: What if, during a discussion about drugs, a child reports that her sister uses crack?

A: Quickly thank her for sharing the information, and state that this is something you and she can talk about later. (Then be sure to approach the child gently one-on-one, or perhaps with the teacher, to discuss the issue in more detail.)

Note: Disclosure to law enforcement officers of family crime and victimization is not uncommon. Many children trust you because you are a role model within the community. They expect that you will listen, do something to help stop what is reported, and help to make the situation better. Do not encourage the child to blurt out information in front of the entire group. You need to talk alone to determine if the incident is real, serious, and in need of immediate attention. If there is a suggestion of further danger, you will want to consider what resources—social services, family counselors, child protection workers, etc.—are available to help cope with the situation. If possible, have the teacher or school counselor present during the disclosure discussion. The child may feel more comfortable in the company of a familiar person.

Sample Evaluation Form

Please return to _____

School _____ Teacher _____

Age of children _____

Program title _____ Date of presentation _____

(circle one)

Presentation Format	Poor	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Presenter's Knowledge of Topic	Poor	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Presentation Content	Poor	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Audio/Visual Aids (if used)	Poor	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Handouts	Poor	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Level of Interaction With Class	Poor	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Appropriateness of Presentation to School Subject (Lesson Plan)	Poor	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Length of Presentation	Too long	Appropriate	Too Short	

Would you recommend another visit by this presenter? Why/Why not?

Suggestions/Comments:

Note: You may want to leave this or a form like this with the teacher after your visit. Transfer it onto your department's letterhead. (Before copying, remember to remove these suggestions and the page number.)



Menu of Topics

Introducing Yourself as a Community Helper

Getting To Know McGruff and Scruff

When Someone Knocks or Calls

Crossing the Street

Car Safety

Separation From Parents

Safety on Wheels

Using the Telephone To Call for Help

Medicines vs. Drugs

Bullies

Guns and Other Weapons

Awareness of Strangers (Stranger Danger)

Okay and Not Okay Touches

Introducing Yourself as a Community Helper

Your visit may be the first opportunity the preschoolers have had to meet a law enforcement officer. Most will be excited, but some may be a bit scared. The children's impressions of you may be based on TV stereotypes or even on threats from their parents (for example, "If you don't behave, I'll have the officer take you away"). Perhaps just last week a relative of a child in the class was arrested or given a speeding ticket. What you do and say will help clear up misconceptions. Overcoming the children's misconceptions should not be difficult. Go slowly. If they are fearful, reassure them that there is nothing four- or five-year-olds could do that would get them sent to jail.

Objectives for Children

- to learn the role and duties of a law enforcement officer
- to learn what laws are and why we have them
- to become familiar with the parts of the police officer's uniform.

Note: If this is your first visit with the group, you may want to use all or part of this activity to familiarize the children with you and what you do.

Materials Needed

- you (in uniform)
- squad car
- optional: Community Helpers picture sheet (page 43)
Letter to Parents (page 44)

Questions To Ask and Answers To Look for

What do police officers and deputy sheriffs do?

They have many different and important jobs. They help keep people safe.

Some direct traffic (tell cars when to stop and go), some work in schools teaching kids, and some work in neighborhoods with children and grown-ups. Some officers work during the day, and others work at night. On their patrol they may walk, drive cars or motorcycles, ride bikes or horses, or pilot a helicopter or a boat. They help solve problems (for example, help when there is an accident, help find lost children). They are community helpers.

What is a law?

Laws are like rules that you have in the classroom or at home to keep you safe and healthy. For example, these rules may include brushing your teeth, not touching sharp objects, and not going near the stove.

There are special, more important rules called "laws" for streets, neighborhoods, and towns, such as speed limits for how fast people can drive and laws against hurting other people or stealing.

Law enforcement officers catch adults who break laws.

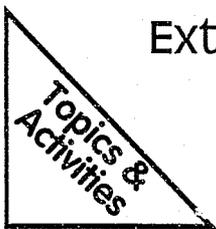
Activity

Ask if the children have any other questions about what you do. They will probably be very curious about your uniform, so explain the various parts of it, including your hat, badge, handcuffs, gun (keeping it in the holster), whistle, baton, and flashlight. Demonstrate how each (except the weapon, of course) is used. Let the children come up one by one to touch your badge and flashlight. Explain that there is nothing they can do as four- and five-year-olds that would require them to go to jail.

If time, weather, and the rules of the school allow you to do so, take the children outside to show them your squad car. Before demonstrating or explaining the sirens, lights, or radio, prepare the children for loud noises. (If this isn't done, you may scare the whole group!) Allow any apprehensive children to stay inside with an aide and watch the display through a door or window. Before you demonstrate the siren, have the children place their hands over their ears and turn away from the car. Tell them that this would be the way the car would approach them using its siren to get their attention. Then demonstrate the lights. Open the back doors and have the children go through the back seat. If the weather is cold or rainy, perhaps you could bring a picture or videotape of a squad car.

Extras and Follow-Up Sessions

Use the Community Helpers picture sheet (page 43) to discuss the roles each community helper plays in keeping kids safe and healthy. Discuss where each community helper works and the different aspects of their jobs.



Getting To Know McGruff and Scruff

Children learn a great deal from McGruff the Crime Dog and his nephew Scruff —characters that teach them messages to help keep them safe. This activity will introduce the characters to them.

Objective for Children

- to become familiar with the characters McGruff the Crime Dog and Scruff

Materials Needed

- copies of the pictures of McGruff and Scruff for each child (page 45)
- glue or paste
- construction paper
- flat wooden sticks
- crayons

Questions To Ask and Answers To Look for

Does anyone know who these two are?

(ask while displaying McGruff's and Scruff's pictures)

This is McGruff the Crime Dog. He is a big brown dog who helps keep kids safe and healthy.

This is Scruff. Scruff is a kid just like you. He tries to be safe and make good choices. McGruff is Scruff's uncle. Scruff goes to his Uncle McGruff for help.

What does McGruff say?

"Take a Bite Out of Crime!"

Note: Because of their ages, the children may not know anything about McGruff and Scruff. You may want to ask them the questions again after doing the activity.

Activity

Read the following paragraph about McGruff and Scruff while still showing the picture to the children. Tell the children you will ask them what they remember about McGruff and Scruff after you have finished.

Meet McGruff the Crime Dog! He gives good advice and helps boys and girls learn how to "Take a Bite Out of Crime." Maybe you have seen him on television. He is a big brown dog who can stand up just like a person. He wears a raincoat like a person. He looks for ways to keep boys and girls safe. And this is Scruff. McGruff is Scruff's uncle. Scruff knows a lot of things, and he's eager to learn more. He wants to grow big and healthy just like his Uncle McGruff. Scruff asks a lot of questions. Sometimes he has a hard time making safe choices. McGruff loves Scruff so much! He teaches Scruff how to have a safe and healthy life.

Ask the children what they remember about McGruff and Scruff.

Have the children color the pictures of McGruff and Scruff. Then paste them to a piece of construction paper and attach the paper to sticks to make puppets.

Extras and Follow-Up Sessions

The children could have puppet shows later in the week. Have the children make puppets of themselves. Using the puppets of McGruff and Scruff and those of themselves, help the children role-play different questions they might want to ask McGruff and Scruff. Be prepared for some tough questions like "I'm always scared when I go to school. What can I do?"

You may also want to take along another person to wear a McGruff costume. For information about how to locate a costume, contact your state crime prevention association. For information about how to purchase a McGruff costume, contact the National Crime Prevention Council.

When Someone Knocks or Calls

Young children should never be left by themselves. In reality, though, we know that even preschool-age children may be without direct adult supervision for short periods of time.

Objective for Children

- to learn safe responses when someone calls or knocks on the door and parents are not home or are busy at home

Materials Needed

- model door lock (spring and deadbolt locks)
- disconnected phone

Questions To Ask and Answers To Look for

Who is a stranger?

A stranger is a person you have never met before; a person you may have seen before, but whom you don't know anything about (for example, someone you've seen walking in your neighborhood); or a person whom your parents don't know well.

What should you do when the doorbell rings or someone knocks?

Tell an adult who is at home. If a grown-up is not at home, do not open the door. Don't even ask who it is. Ignore the knock, and wait for an adult who lives with you. If it's important, the person will come back later. If a grown-up is there but is busy (in the yard, in the shower, asleep), tell the grown-up and let him or her answer the door. Do not open the door yourself!

What should you do when the phone rings and no grown-ups are around?

This is something that each family might have their own rule about. Ask your parent what your family's rule is. One suggestion is to answer the phone politely. If Mom or Dad is close by, ask the caller to wait while you get them. If an adult is not available (in the yard, in the shower, asleep) say, "Everyone is busy. Please call back." *Never* say that you are alone.

Activity

Have the children take turns locking the lock and answering the telephone. Pretend you are a person they do not know (for example, a door-to-door salesperson, a repair person) and have them practice appropriate responses. Teach the children the following poem:

*Ding dong, ding dong,
Knock, knock, knock [pretend to knock]—
Don't open the door;
Keep it closed and locked!*

Extras and Follow-Up Sessions

Teach the children the following rhyme:

*1-2-3-4 [clap each]—Never open up the door!
5-6-7-8 [clap each]—Any stranger has to wait!*

Crossing the Street

Every year thousands of children are killed in traffic accidents in the United States. Many of these accidents could have been prevented if the children had known and practiced pedestrian safety.

Objective for Children

- to learn safe ways to cross the street

Materials Needed

- Traffic Light and Stop Sign sheet (page 46)
- optional: one sheet each of green, yellow, and red construction paper

Questions To Ask and Answers To Look for

When you walk outside, where is it safe to walk?

It is safe to walk on the sidewalk or on the grass, but never in the street.

Is it okay to cross the street by yourself?

No. Hold hands with an adult.

How do you cross the street safely?

To cross the street safely, you stop, look to the left, look to the right, and look to the left again to make sure no cars are coming. Listen carefully. Use your ears. Make sure that any cars close by see you and stop to let you cross. Then, hold hands with an adult, cross at the crosswalk or at the corner (never in the middle of the street), and continue looking left and right as you cross.

Activity

Explain traffic lights and stop signs. Show the children the Traffic Light and Stop Sign sheet (page 46).

Have the children take turns holding hands with you or the teacher. Pretend you are about to cross the street while you recite the following poem:

*Before I cross the street,
I use my eyes [look left, right, and left again],
I use my ears [cup your hand behind your ear],
And then I use my feet [march in place].*

Extras and Follow-Up Sessions

You may choose to copy the Traffic Light and Stop Sign sheet (page 46) and pass it out to the children to color. Discuss other lights, signs, and signals with them too.

If the weather is good and there is a lot of space to move around, play the game "Red Light, Green Light" (Include a yellow light too!). Have the children stand in a line about 30 feet away from you. When you hold up a green sheet of paper the children may take big steps toward you. When you hold up the yellow sheet they should slow down and take "baby" steps, and when you hold up the red sheet they must stop and freeze. The first child to reach you (having followed the instructions) wins. Play again. A way to make the game more challenging is to have the kids hop like a bunny, hop on one foot, or walk backwards rather than simply walk or run on green.

Car Safety

Car safety is one of the few "daily life" areas in which younger children can learn that obeying the law routinely protects them. Respect for the law and a sound prevention attitude can begin here. Educating young people will not only increase their chances of avoiding accidents, but may positively influence the actions of their friends and family, too.

Objective for Children

- to learn how to be safe when riding in a car

Materials Needed

- paper
- crayons

Questions To Ask and Answers To Look for

When you get into the car, what should you do?

Put on safety belts! Safety belts are for everyone in the car. They keep you safe if there is a car accident. Wearing safety belts is the law.

Note: Your state law may require a four- or five-year-old to be in a car seat depending on the weight of the child. This may be a topic you need to discuss as well.

Is it safe to stick your hand out of the window while the car is moving?

No! You should keep your whole body safe inside the car.

Also, you should try not to distract the driver by fighting, throwing things in the car, or bumping the driver.

Is it okay to play with the car door?

No. You should never play with the handles on the car door. Even though the buttons and handles look like they could be fun, the door might accidentally open while the car is moving—you could fall out!

Activity

Distribute paper and crayons to the children. Ask them to draw pictures of themselves wearing their safety belts and reminding people to buckle up.

Teach them to say this rhyme when they get in the car:

*I'm very smart, I'm very smart!
I lock my door [or] I buckle my safety belt
Before we start!*

Remind them that all members of their families should wear their safety belts, too. In fact, they can put these pictures in their parents' cars to remind people to be safe!

Separation From Parents

Being separated from caregivers can cause panic and fear in young children. Teaching children how to react if these occasions arise will help assure that they remain calm and react safely.

Objective for Children

- to learn what to do if lost or separated from an adult caregiver

Materials Needed

- Community Helpers picture sheet (page 43)
- Safe Places in Your Community sheet (page 47)
- optional: Letter to Parents (pages 48-49)
Copy of a McGruff House sign (or of other local Safe House or Helping Hands programs)

Questions To Ask and Answers To Look for

What should you do if you get lost?

- If you get lost outside—in a park or zoo, for example—stop and stay where you are. You may be scared, but your Mom or Dad (or the grown-up you were with) will come looking for you. Walking around makes it harder for them to find you. If you see a police officer, tell him or her you are lost and ask for help.
- If you get lost in a store, stay calm and alert. Go to the cash register (the place where you pay) and tell them your name and that you are lost. The people who work in the store will find your Mom or Dad for you. Stay by the cash register until Mom or Dad comes. Don't leave the building.

*Do you know your Mom's and Dad's first and last names?
Do you know your address and phone number by heart?*

Ask the children to recite this information. Some children will know it and some will not. Encourage them to go home and practice with their parents.

Activity

Review with the children people they can trust and places in the community where they can go in an emergency. Use the Community Helpers picture sheet (page 43) and the Safe Places in Your Community sheet (page 47).

Teach the children the following poem about what to do if they are lost in a store:

*Think, think, think!
I'm lost but I will be okay.
Think, think, think!
I'll tell the person where we pay [cashier].*

Extras and Follow-Up Sessions

Discuss with the children the following scenarios:

- Scenario #1: Scruff goes to the shopping mall with his Uncle McGruff. All of a sudden, Scruff doesn't see McGruff anywhere in the store. What should Scruff do?
- Scenario #2: Scruff is on a field trip to the zoo with his class. He goes to the trash can to throw away his milk container. When he turns around, he can't find his group. Scruff is scared. What should he do?
- Scenario #3: Scruff can't find his Uncle McGruff in the grocery store. A nice man comes over and asks him if he is lost. He knows this man is a stranger, but he is scared. What should Scruff remember to do?



Safety on Wheels

Four- and five-year-old children can be extremely daring. They may be learning to ride two-wheeled bikes, probably using training wheels, but Big Wheels™, skateboards, in-line skates, scooters, and roller skates can be just as dangerous. With these, children can speed down sidewalks, behind parked cars, and into streets in a flash. Teach the children proper safety rules and remind them to wear protective pads and helmets during all of these activities.

Objective for Children

- to learn safe rules for biking, skating, skateboarding, etc.

Materials Needed

- Traffic Light and Stop Sign sheet (page 46)
- optional: Letter to Parents (page 50)

Questions To Ask and Answers To Look for

Where are some safe places to ride your bikes, Big Wheels™, skateboards, roller skates, and Rollerblades®?

Discuss such places as parks, school grounds, bike trails, and sidewalks. You should not ride or skate in the street unless there is very little traffic and an adult is watching you closely. If you are riding or skating on the street with an adult, pay attention to traffic. Never ride or skate on busy roads or driveways. Just because you can see the driver of a car does not mean that the driver can see you.

What should you wear when you are doing these things?

If you ride bikes or other things on wheels, your helmet should be on your head with the chin straps fastened. Helmets protect your brain, the part of your body that lets you make good decisions and grow strong and healthy.

Discuss the helmet law in your area. Mention other safety equipment, including elbow and knee pads, long-sleeved shirts, long pants, shoes, etc.

Is it a good idea to give a friend a ride on your bike?

One to a bike is the only safe way to ride. Take turns if you need to.

Should you ride your bike (etc.) after dark?

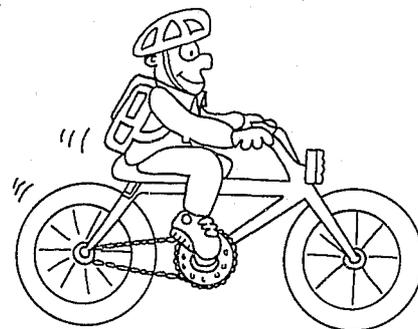
When it's dark, it's time to go inside. Drivers can't see you when it's dark. Put your bike away in a safe place and ride again tomorrow.

Activity

Explain various traffic signs, signals, and road markings. Use the Traffic Light and Stop Sign sheet (page 46). Pass around a child's bike helmet and have the children try it on, making sure they can buckle it.

Have the students repeat this poem as you demonstrate:

*Scruff, Scruff,
I want to play!
My helmet's here [point to your head],
And I'm on my way.*



Extras and Follow-Up Sessions

Explain to the class that you are going to pretend you are on a bike, skateboard, or rollerblades and you need help with the safety rules. Give the students a situation, and let them decide as a group what is safe or not safe. If the situation is safe, children should turn their outstretched arms in a circular motion (like a wheel) and say, "Go, go, go!" If the situation is not safe, they should put out their hand to indicate stop and say, "Stop—don't go!" Praise the group for making good choices. Some examples:

- I can't find my helmet, but I want to ride my bike.
- My friend wants to ride on my handlebars.
- I'm skateboarding on the sidewalk.
- My friend wants to rollerskate in the parking lot.
- I'm skateboarding with my older sister. When it's time to cross the street, we get off our skateboards, then we look, listen, and hold hands. *Then* we cross the street together, carrying our skateboards.
- I want to ride my Big Wheel™ down a big hill, but there is only a street with no sidewalk on the hill.
- My brother wants me to ride bikes with him in the dark.
- I'm riding my bike with my parents on the bike trail. There is no traffic, and I have on all of my safety gear.

Using the Telephone To Call for Help

Young children will seldom need to call for emergency assistance. However, because the need *may* arise, all children should become comfortable with basic telephone skills.

Objective for Children

- to learn how to use the telephone in an emergency situation

Materials Needed

- disconnected telephone
- sign that says "9-1-1" or "0 (operator)" (whichever is the appropriate emergency number in your area)
- optional: Letter to Parents (page 51)

Note: Although you may have additional emergency numbers in your community, we recommend keeping the message clear and simple by teaching only how to dial "9-1-1" or "0 (operator)." Remember to say, "nine-one-one," not nine-eleven.

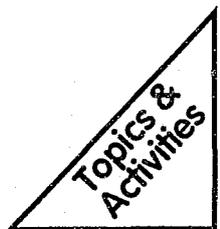
Questions To Ask and Answers To Look for

Who can help you if you get hurt?

A trusted adult (Mom, Dad, teacher, law enforcement officer, etc.).

If grown-ups get hurt, who should help them?

Other grown-ups.



What is an emergency?

Can anyone give me an example of an emergency?

An emergency is a very big problem that kids can't handle by themselves. For example, children need grown-ups to help them if there is a fire, or if someone gets badly hurt.

What if you and your mom are the only ones at home.

Mom falls down the stairs and isn't saying anything.

What is the special phone number you can use to call for help?

"9-1-1" or "0 (operator)" is the special telephone number you can call if there is an emergency. But you should call it only in an emergency. It will bring the police, a fire truck, or an ambulance.

Discuss the use of "9-1-1" or "0 (operator)" and who is on the other end of the phone, along with the children's addresses at home. Explain that the special phone number is used only for real emergencies. Ask for examples of when to use this emergency number.

Is it okay for you to dial "9-1-1?"

Yes, but only when there is a real emergency. If there is an emergency, first tell a grown-up, if one is around. If not, tell an older brother or sister. If no one else is home, you can call "9-1-1" or "0 (operator)" to get help.

Activity

Ask the children if they have the phone numbers for the police, fire department, and other trusted adults listed beside the phone. If not, tell them to remind their parents to write the numbers down and place them beside the phone.

One by one, have the children practice dialing "9-1-1" or "0 (operator)" on the disconnected phone. Have them say their name and that they need help.

Extras and Follow-Up Sessions

As a follow-up, ask the teacher to have the children practice reciting their names, parents' names, addresses, and telephone numbers. Children should learn this important emergency information, if they don't already know it.

Role-play the following scenarios with the children:

Scenario #1: Scruff is at his friend's house after school. His friend's grandma falls down the steps. She's badly hurt and can't get up. No one else is home. What should they do?

Scenario #2: Scruff and his friend Keisha are tired of playing inside. Keisha says that one time she called the police and it was fun. The call made the police car come. She goes to the telephone and gets ready to dial. What should Scruff say?

Medicines vs. Drugs

Many young children are exposed to alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs at home, in their neighborhoods, and through the media. Even children in preschool can learn to make wise choices and avoid drugs that will harm their bodies and their minds.

Use your discretion as to what drugs are appropriate to discuss for the students in your community. Be aware that talking about certain drugs or other harmful activities (for example, sniffing glue) may pique a child's interest in trying such behaviors. The best approach may be to refer only to the drugs that the children mention or those with which you know they are familiar.

Objectives for Children

- to learn from whom it is okay to accept medicines
- to learn to distinguish drugs from medicines
- to understand how drugs can affect the body
- to understand what poisons are

Materials Needed

- box with assorted *empty* medicine and household supply containers/bottles.
- optional: People Who Can Give You Medicine activity sheet (page 52)
Letter to Parents (page 53) (also send a copy of "Talking With Young Children About Drugs" [pages 33-34])

Questions To Ask and Answers To Look for

Is it okay to take medicines when you are sick?

Yes. Medicines can make you feel better (get rid of tummy aches or sore throats), but only if you take the right kind of the medicine and the right amount. If you take the wrong kind of medicine or too much, you can hurt your body. It is *not* okay to take someone else's medicine.

Who can give you medicine?

Your parents, grandparents, doctors, nurses, and perhaps your babysitters if they have permission from your parents. You should never give yourself medicine or take medicine from a friend.

Is it okay to taste something if you don't know what it is and there is no adult to ask?

No. You should never put anything you are not sure about in your mouth—it could be poisonous. Many things kept around your house, in the bathroom, under the sink, or in the garage are poisonous. Many house plants are poisonous too. Ask the children to name some things inside or outside the house that can hurt them.

What are drugs? Why are drugs bad?

Drugs are things that hurt your body. Some drugs look just like medicines. They change the way your body and your mind work, and they can make you sick instead of well. Alcohol and tobacco are also drugs, and are dangerous for kids. Because children are smaller and still growing, alcohol and tobacco are illegal for you to use. Ask the children to name different drugs.

Activity

Children don't always know the specific names of medicines and dangerous things around the house, but they may recognize them. Put a variety of clean, empty bottles of household items in a large box (for example, aspirin, bleach, cough medicines, household cleaners). Include some things that are safe, such as fruits, vegetables, juice bottles, etc. If you don't have the actual items on hand, pictures cut out from magazines also work well.

Have each child take a turn coming up and pulling an item from the box. Ask the class, "Is it okay to put this in your mouth?" After discussing each item, have the children guide you in placing the item in one of two piles—one of things that are okay to put in your mouth and the other of dangerous things. When a medicine bottle is pulled out, point out that it is okay to put medicine in his or her mouth if a trusted adult gives it when they are sick. If the children are unsure, the answer is always "No, don't touch."

Extras and Follow-Up Sessions

To reinforce these messages, role-play with the children these scenarios:

Scenario #1: One day Scruff is playing at his friend Kevin's house, and Scruff gets a headache. Kevin gets some medicine and tries to give it to Scruff. What should Scruff do?

Scenario #2: Scruff finds some blue stuff under the sink. It looks just like a fruit juice he likes, but he's not sure exactly what it is. Should Scruff drink it?

Talking With Young Children About Drugs

Because young children in some communities are exposed to drugs and drug use, it is important to begin discussions and prevention education early. Many educators and parents worry that such information may frighten children or stimulate their curiosity to try drugs. To avoid that possibility:

- be careful not to mention drugs that children won't have to deal with.
- be clear about the harmful consequences of drug use (without exaggerating).
- be clear in conveying the message, in both words and attitude, that children must *not* get involved with drugs.

Every community is unique in both its strengths and weaknesses. You know best which issues need to be addressed in your community. Hopefully, you won't need to use most of this information with your youngsters. However, if you feel it is necessary to talk about specific drugs because they are something the children in your community may be exposed to, you may find the information below to be helpful. Use the questions the children ask as a guide for how much they are ready to discuss. Follow their lead. When they've heard enough, they'll let you know by changing the subject!

Young children are more likely to be familiar with one or more of four drugs: alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and cocaine/crack.

Another problem affecting a growing number of children in the United States is inhalant abuse. Some preschool children may already be aware of it. More and more children in elementary and junior high schools are inhaling a wide variety of products that can be bought legally for everyday household use. The chemicals in these products—such as glues, paints, cleaners, fuels, and propellants—can be very dangerous if used improperly. More than 1,400 products can be abused. Because many of these products are normally found in households, children need to be taught their appropriate uses. And because inhalant abuse is increasing among children as young as ten and eleven, it may be important to point out the dangers to younger children.

What To Say About Specific Drugs

Alcohol is a drink for adults, but it can be harmful if used in an unsafe or unwise way. Alcohol can change a person's mood. It can make that person loud, sad, funny, relaxed, confused, upset, or angry. Alcohol can make it hard to see and think clearly; it can make it hard to play sports and dangerous to drive a car. Alcohol can hurt the body and it is against the law for children to drink. Drinking alcohol hurts children more than adults because children are smaller and still growing.

Tobacco products are made from a plant which has a drug called nicotine in it. It is usually smoked in cigarettes, pipes, or cigars, but it can also be chewed. Tobacco smoke hurts the people who use it and also the people around them. The smoke hurts the lungs, which help us breathe, and the heart, which pumps our blood. That is why it is against the law for children to purchase cigarettes. Cigarettes are unhealthy for everyone—children and adults.

Marijuana comes from a plant. It is sometimes smoked in cigarettes called "joints." Marijuana hurts the lungs, which help us breathe, and the heart, which pumps our blood. Smoking marijuana may change a person's mood and make the brain work differently. It makes it hard to think clearly. Marijuana is also called "dope," "pot," "weed," and "grass." It is a drug that is against the law for both adults and children to use.

Cocaine is made from a plant and looks like powder. People sniff the powder up their noses. Some people smoke little pieces of cocaine called "crack" in pipes. Some people give themselves injections ("shots") of cocaine. This is extra dangerous because using a dirty needle can make people very sick or even kill them. People use cocaine because they think it will make them feel good. It can be very hard to stop using cocaine once a person tries it—even if the person has used it only once! Cocaine hurts the brain, the heart, and the lungs—it can even kill people. It is against the law for everyone to use cocaine.

Inhalants are common things that may be around the house. They include glues, paints, cleaners, gasoline, and sprays (which are propelled out of a can under pressure). They are to be used only for their intended purpose—for example, for cleaning. Never taste them or hold them close to your face, because that would be very dangerous and could make you sick. People who breathe the fumes can hurt their brains, lungs, hearts, or kidneys. While it's not dangerous to use products such as glue properly—for example, in an art project, it is dangerous to hold glue close to your face and sniff it deeply.

Note: This information is simply a guide for you in your discussion on health and safety. Use your discretion in choosing which drugs to discuss with children.



Bullies

Fear of bullies is a major concern of young children. One out of every seven children is either a bully or the victim of a bully at some time.

Objectives for Children

- to develop an understanding of bullies
- to learn how to deal with bullies

Materials Needed

- puppets (You can use puppets from the classroom.)
- optional: Letter to Parents (pages 54-55)

Questions To Ask and Answers To Look for

Is it ever okay to be mean or nasty?

No. You need to treat everyone nicely—the way you want to be treated.

Should you call people names that make them feel bad?

No. Name calling is *not* okay. Some names you think are funny may hurt other people's feelings.

What is a bully?

A bully is a person who picks on you or pushes you around.

What does a bully do?

Bullies tease, act tough, and sometimes hurt your feelings. Bullies try to scare you. Sometimes they push you around, hurt you, call you mean names, or take things from you.

Activity

With puppets, act out scenarios where at least one puppet is:

- calling the other puppet a hurtful name
- teasing the other puppet about his or her appearance
- teasing the other puppet about the way he or she talks
- threatening to hurt the other puppet if he or she doesn't do something (such as let the bully be first in line)
- breaking the other puppet's toy on purpose and laughing about it

After each scenario, ask the children how they think the bullied puppet feels and what they think that puppet should do about the situation.

Through discussion, bring out the importance of such ideas as:

- walking straight and tall as though he or she is not afraid (even though the puppet is scared on the inside)
- sticking with a group of friends, because bullies may be less likely to act out in a crowd
- saying, "I don't like it when you do that!"
- saying nothing and walking away
- telling a trusted adult

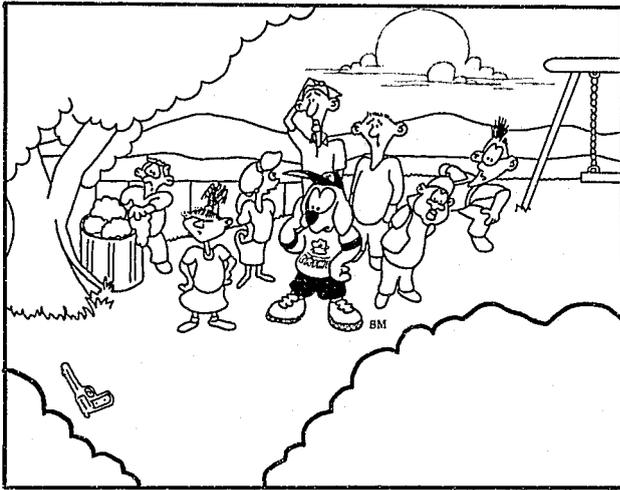
Extras and Follow-Up Sessions

Have the children interact with the puppets. Teach them the following rhymes:

*If you're not nice,
If you're too rough,
I'll walk away—
I'll be like Scruff!*

(or)

*If you push me,
If you're too mean,
I won't push back—
I'll leave the scene!*



Guns and Other Weapons

Most children who accidentally kill themselves or other children are playing with a gun they found in their home or in the home of a family member or friend. With more than half of all gun owners keeping their guns loaded at least some of the time, it is very important that young children learn that guns are dangerous and can kill.

Objective for Children

- to understand what to do if you find a gun or other weapon

Materials Needed

- paper bags (one per child)
- page for Dangerous and Safe Things activity (page 56)
- optional: Silly and Dangerous Things Activity sheet (page 57)
Letter to Parents (page 58)

Questions To Ask and Answers To Look for

Do you ever find strange things on the playground or at home and not know what these things are? What should you do if you find something that looks like a weapon (gun or knife)?

There are always things around that you aren't sure about. You should never touch or pick up anything that you have not seen before or anything that might be unsafe. Ask a trusted grown-up if you can touch these things. Always tell a grown-up right away if you find something that looks like a weapon or something you're not sure about.

How can you tell whether a gun you see is real or a toy?

Often you can't tell if a gun is real or a toy. If it looks like a gun, treat it as if it were real and move away from it as quickly as possible. Tell a grown-up.

If you find a gun or other weapon what do you do?

Stop. Don't touch. Leave the area. Tell a trusted grown-up.

Activity

Sit in a circle on the floor and distribute paper bags with one paper cutout (from the handout on page 56) per bag representing both dangerous and safe things inside (for example, guns, weapons, sports equipment, healthy foods, etc.). Everyone says:

"1-2-3-4-5 [clap five times]—What do you find inside?"

When you tap a child on the head, he or she must pull the item out of his or her bag and say what it is.

Discuss the item. Ask the children: "Is it safe?" "Is it dangerous?" "What is it for?" Stress that if the dangerous items were real instead of just pictures, the children would not touch them. Continue so that each child takes a turn and all items are discussed. If you need additional items, you can cut pictures out of magazines and catalogs.

Extras and Follow-Up Sessions

Role-play these scenarios with the children:

Scenario #1: Scruff is playing hide-and-seek in the park with his Uncle McGruff and he sees a gun on the ground. What should Scruff do?

Scenario #2: Scruff is at his friend's house. His friend brings out a gun and wants to play with it. Scruff doesn't know if it is real or a toy. What should he do?

Make copies of the Silly and Dangerous Things Activity sheet (page 57) for the children. Read the directions aloud. Have the children circle the silly things and put an "X" over the dangerous things. This can be an excellent discussion starter.

Awareness of Strangers (Stranger Danger)

While child abduction is a very serious matter, the number of children actually abducted by strangers is low. Statistics show that the substantial majority of child abductions are made by family members. Children tend to think that strangers always wear dark hats and have scary, ugly faces. Emphasize that strangers are not "boogie men"—they are anyone the child and their parents don't know well.

Objective for Children

- to learn what to do when approached by a stranger

Materials Needed

- none
- optional: Safe Places in Your Community sheet (page 47)

Questions To Ask and Answers To Look for

Who is a stranger?

A stranger is a person whom you have never met before; a person you may have seen before, but whom you don't know anything about (for example, someone you've seen walking in your neighborhood); a person whom your parents don't know well.

What do strangers look like?

Strangers can be men or women, young or old. They can have any color skin. Some are tall and skinny; some are short and fat. Some strangers are pretty and some are not so pretty. They can speak different languages. Most strangers are nice, but some strangers are mean. Because you don't know if someone is a good stranger or a bad one, you should not talk to anyone you don't know.

Should you ever get into a car with someone you and your parents don't know?

No. Never accept a ride from a stranger.

If a stranger tries to talk to you, what should you do?

Do not talk to the person. Get away fast and tell a trusted grown-up.

Who has a secret code word with their parents?

A secret code word is a word that only you and your parents know. If there is an emergency and someone you don't know has to pick you up from school or from a friend's house, ask that person the secret code word. If he or she doesn't know the secret code word, don't go. Get away and go to a grown-up you know and trust for help.

Activity

Role-play the following scenarios with the children:

Scenario #1: Scruff and his friends are playing in the park, and a woman they don't know comes up to them. The stranger wants them to help her find a puppy. What should they do?

Scenario #2: Scruff and his buddy are outside, and a man tells them that he'll give them \$5 if they take a package to the corner for him. He looks really nice. Scruff and his buddy could buy a lot of candy with the money. What should Scruff do?

Scenario #3: Scruff is walking home from school. A man in a doctor's coat comes up to him and says, "Your mom had an accident, and she sent me to take you to the hospital." What should Scruff do?

Scenario #4: Scruff is walking down the street, and a person he doesn't know yells, "Hey, Scruff. Come over here. I have something for you." What should Scruff do?

Extras and Follow-Up Sessions

Read "Little Red Riding Hood" to the children. Point out that Little Red Riding Hood's mother warned her not to talk to anyone on her way to Grandmother's house, but she didn't follow the rules. She stopped to talk with the wolf, who then ran ahead to harm her. Discuss the importance of rules and what Little Red Riding Hood should have done.

As a variation, read the story up to the point where Little Red Riding Hood meets the wolf. Stop and ask the children what she should do. Encourage the children to suggest various safe alternatives for her.

Okay and Not Okay Touches

This is a very difficult issue that will take some time to explain. Let the children guide the conversation. Be sure to use the language they use. If you don't feel that you can cover the topic well, don't initiate the conversation at all. Instead, bring in an expert who has experience working with four- and five-year-old children.

Objectives for Children

- to distinguish between okay and not okay touches
- to learn to protect yourself by saying no

Materials Needed

- none
- optional: Letter to Parents (page 59)

Questions To Ask and Answers To Look for

Do you like to get hugs?

Yes—everyone likes to get some hugs! A hug from someone you like can make you and the other person feel happy. Sometimes you might not want a hug. That's okay.

How do you feel when someone punches or tickles you and won't stop when you ask them to?

They can make us feel hurt, mad, or confused. These are bad touches. We don't like them.

Do you have to keep secrets if you don't think it's right?

You never have to keep a secret, especially secrets about touches. If someone touches you in places that your bathing suit covers and it makes you feel

scared, or funny, or maybe a little yucky, say "No!" Tell a grown-up you trust. If people don't believe you the first time, keep telling them until they believe you. (Maybe you can think of another grown-up you trust who will listen and help you.)

Activity

Sit in a circle with the children and their teacher. Tell the children you will teach them a song. Begin by singing the whole song first (to the tune of "If You're Happy and You Know It, Clap Your Hands"). Then have the children join in.

Officer: *If you're in danger and you know it, yell for help.*

Kids: *Help! Help!* [loudly]

Officer: *If you're in danger and you know it, yell for help.*

Kids: *Help! Help!* [loudly]

Officer: *If you're in danger and you know it,*

Kids: *Find a grown-up who will help you!*

Officer: *If you're in danger and you know it, yell for help.*

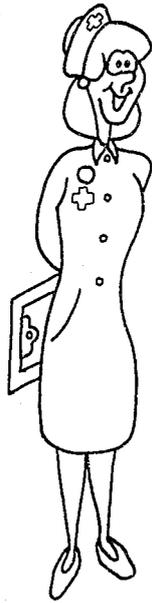
Kids: *Help! Help!* [loudly]

Extras and Follow-Up Sessions

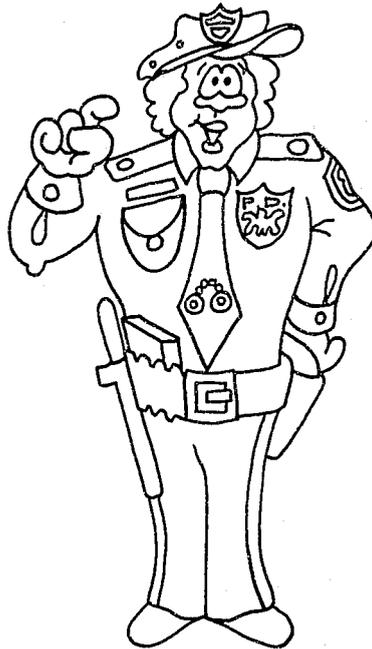
Have the children practice saying "no" and "please stop that" loudly and forcefully. This helps them gain a sense of control.



Community Helpers



Nurse



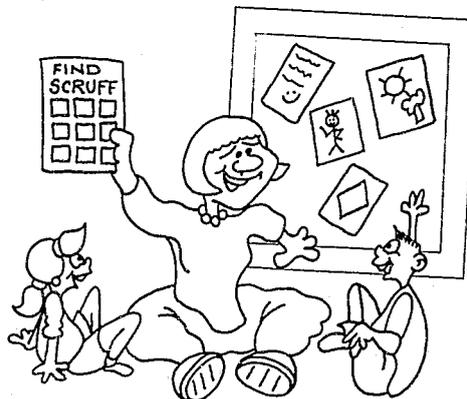
Police Officer



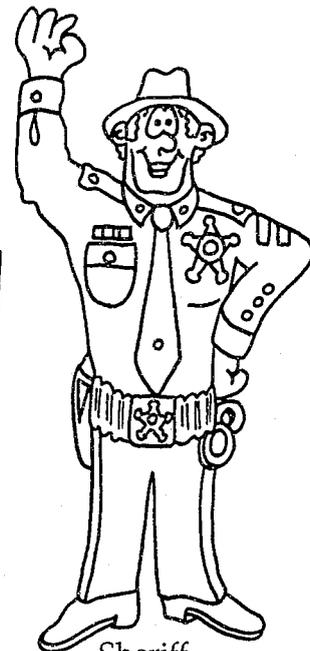
Doctor



Firefighter

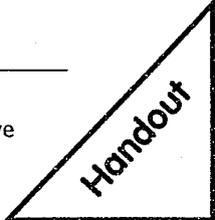


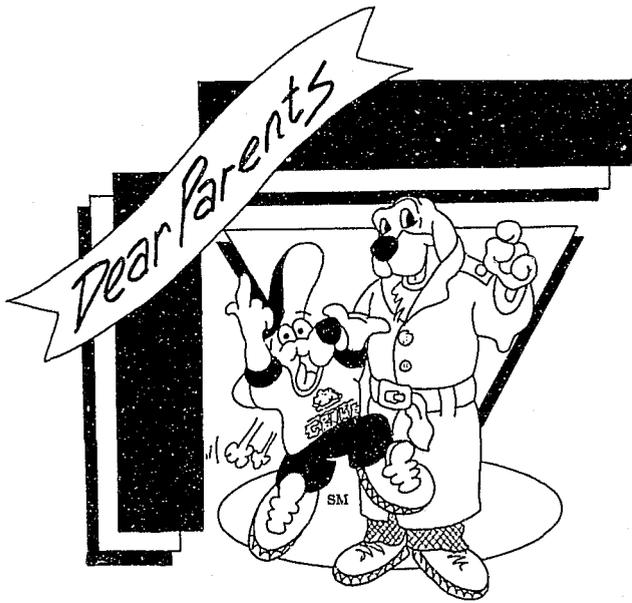
Teacher



Sheriff

Note: To be used with Introducing Yourself as a Community Helper and Separation From Parents topics. Copy and hand out for kids to color. (Before copying, remember to remove these suggestions and the page number.)





Today I visited your child's class. We talked about how police officers and deputy sheriffs help keep people safe. Ask your child what he or she remembers about the things law enforcement officers do, and what they wear as part of their uniforms.

We also talked about laws, which we said were like the rules in your child's classroom and at home. The children learned that both rules and laws are made so that people don't get hurt and can stay safe and healthy. Ask your child about his or her classroom rules and why each is important.

To help reinforce the messages that your child learned today, you can:

- Be sure your child understands why there are rules in the form of laws, and that all communities have them. Explain the rules that govern your family.
- Set a good example. Children imitate adults, especially parents, in their thoughts and action—don't show disrespect for the law.
- Don't use the threat of calling a law enforcement officer or the threat of going to jail to coerce a child into behaving. This could make a child less likely to seek the help of an officer when one is really needed.
- Help your child to know the difference between the fantasy of television and movie police officers and deputy sheriffs and real law enforcement officers.

Sincerely,

Note: To be used with Introducing Yourself as a Community Helper topic. Sign and transfer onto your department's letterhead for children to take home to their parents.



McGruff the Crime Dog

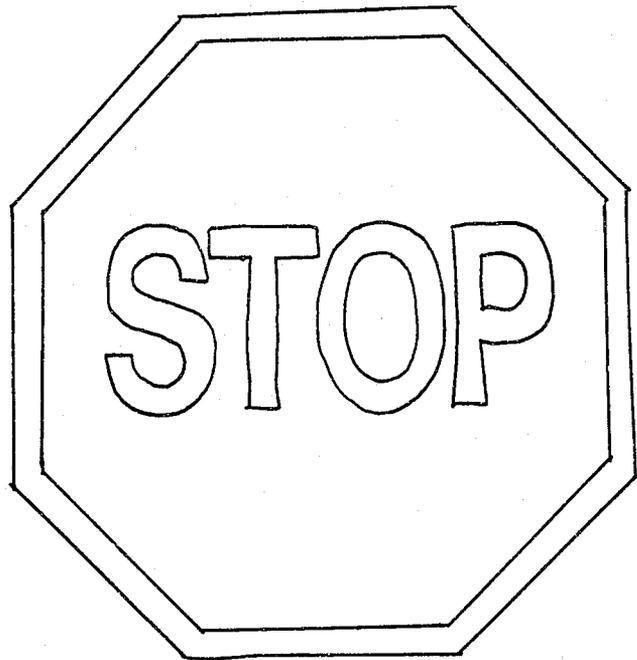
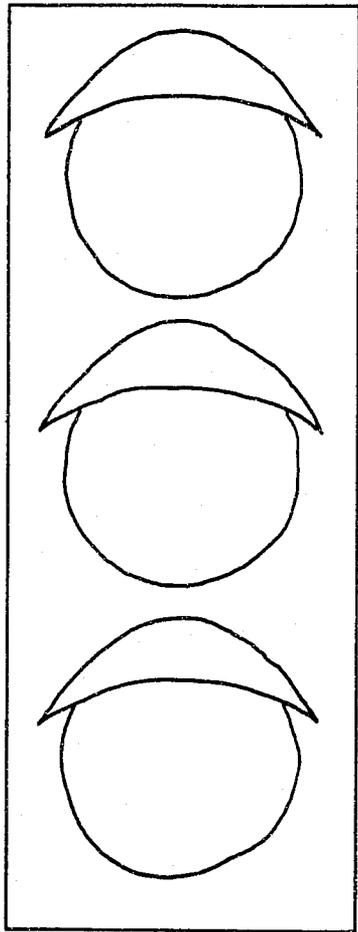


Scruff

Note: To be used with Getting To Know McGruff and Scruff topic. Copy and hand out for children to color. You may also glue these pictures to sticks to make puppets.

Handout

Traffic Light and Stop Sign

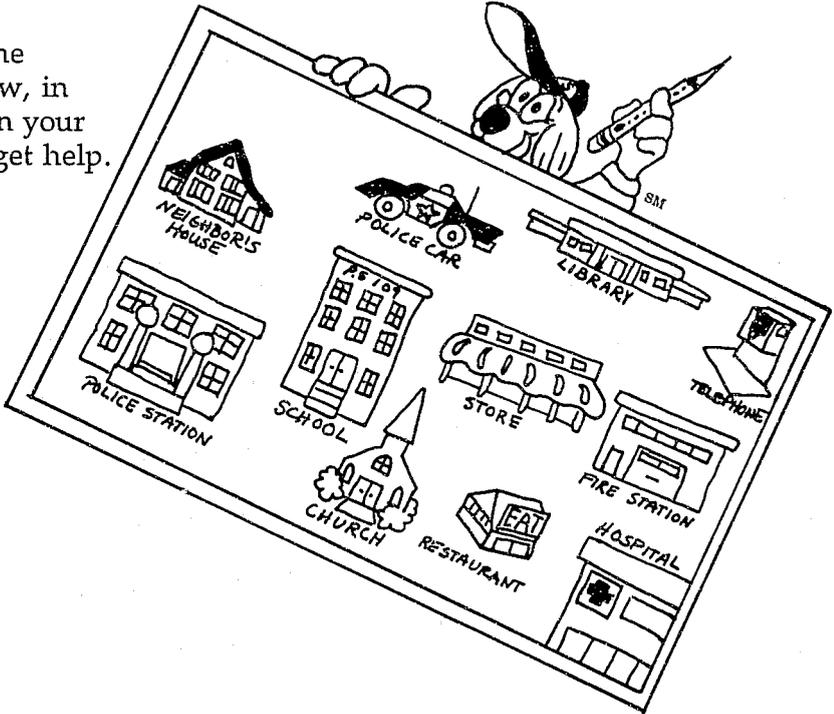


Note: To be used with Crossing the Street and Safety on Wheels topics. Copy and hand out for children to color.

Handout

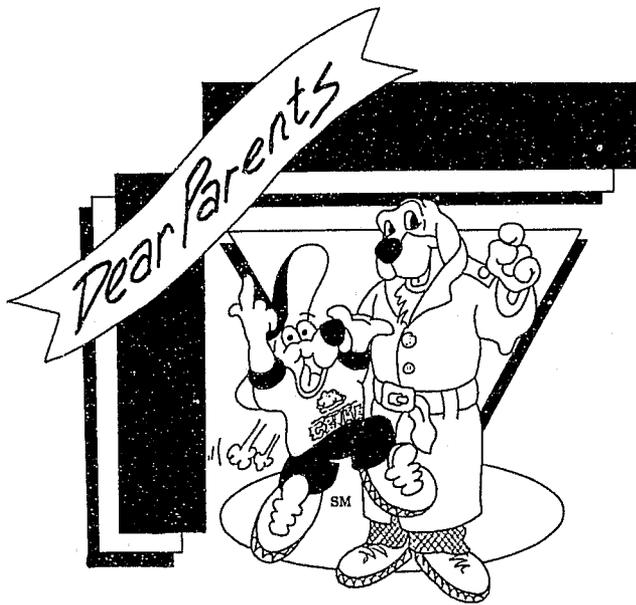
Safe Places in Your Community

Scruff just drew all of the places he could think of to go for help. Now, in the space below, draw the place in your community where you can go to get help.



Note: To be used with Separation From Parents and Awareness of Strangers (Stranger Danger) topics.

Handout



Today I visited your child's class. We discussed several things, including what do if your child gets lost and becomes scared. Please discuss your family rules for when your child becomes lost. Also, help your child memorize his or her full name, address, and telephone number (including area code) as well as your full name. Discuss what to do in various circumstances. Here is some information that can help you teach your child about staying safe and healthy.

Would Your Child Know What To Do if...

- he or she got lost at a shopping mall?
- a nice-looking, friendly stranger offered him or her a ride home after school?
- the babysitter or a neighbor wanted to play a secret game that the child was not supposed to tell you about?

A great thing about children is their natural trust in people, especially in adults. It's sometimes hard for parents to teach children to balance this trust with caution. But children need to know commonsense rules that can help keep them safe—and build the self-confidence they need to handle emergencies.

Start With the Basics

- Help your child learn his or her full name and your full name, address (city and state), and phone number with area code. Putting the address and phone number to the tune of a song will help the child learn it.
- Be sure your child knows how to call "9-1-1" or "0 (operator)" (whichever system is used in your community) in emergencies and how to use a pay phone. Remember, you don't need money to call these emergency numbers from a pay phone. Practice making emergency calls with a make-believe phone.
- Tell your child never to accept rides or gifts from someone he or she and you don't know and trust.

- Teach children to go to a store clerk, security guard, or police officer for help if lost in a mall, store, park, or on the street.
- Set a good example with your own actions—lock doors and windows and know who's there before opening the door.
- Choose a secret code word with your child. Make an agreement that if you are ever unable to pick up your child from somewhere and you need to send someone in your place, you will tell your replacement the code word. Your child should never tell anyone what the code word is. He or she is to go with someone only if that person knows the family's secret code word.
- Take time to listen carefully to your child's fears and feelings about people or places that frighten or make him or her feel uneasy. Tell your child to trust that instinct.

At School and Play

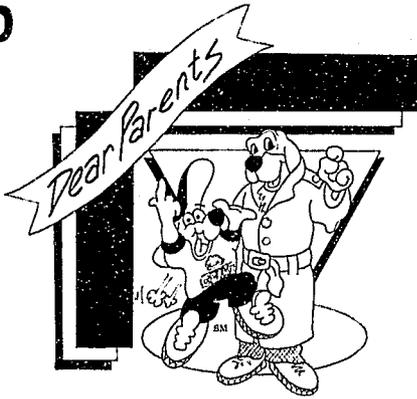
- Encourage your child to walk and play with friends, not alone. Tell him or her to avoid places that could be dangerous—empty buildings, alleys, or playgrounds and parks with broken equipment and litter.
- Work with other parents to ensure that the children in your neighborhood are supervised closely on their way to and from school. Walk the routes together and point out places to go for help, like McGruff Houses.*
- Encourage your child to be alert in the neighborhood and to tell an adult—you, a teacher, a neighbor, a police officer—about anything that doesn't seem quite right.
- Check out day-care and afterschool programs—look at certifications, staff qualifications, rules on parents' permission for field trips, reputation in the community, parent participation, and policies on parent visits. You may want to make a few unexpected visits.

Sincerely,

* A McGruff House is a safe place for children to find reliable help in an emergency or a frightening situation. McGruff House volunteers must meet specific standards, including a law enforcement records check. Programs are established locally as a partnership among law enforcement, schools, and community organizations. For information call 801-486-8768.

Note: To be used with Separation From Parents topic. Sign and transfer onto your department's letterhead for children to take home to their parents.

Letter to
Parents



Each year, more than half a million bicyclists visit the doctor after crashing on their bikes. Many more are injured on tricycles, roller skates, and in-line skates. You may think your child is safe because he or she rides only around your neighborhood, but most serious bicycle crashes occur on quiet neighborhood streets. The speed of the toys combined with the risk-taking nature of most children can mean serious consequences. While a bicycle helmet and pads can't keep your child from falling, they can reduce chances of serious brain and joint injury.

How To Get Your Child To Wear a Helmet

Helmets may take some getting used to at first. These tips may help you encourage the helmet habit:

- Let your child know that in some states helmets are required by law.
- Let your child help pick out the helmet. After all, he or she is the one who will be wearing it—but make sure the helmet meets safety certification. Helmet straps may be difficult for young fingers. Help your child practice until he or she can buckle the helmet easily.
- Always insist that your child wear the helmet with *no* exceptions. Anyone can get hurt—anywhere.
- When you ride or rollerblade together, wear your own helmet. Your good example can make a big difference in encouraging your child.
- Praise and reward your child for wearing the helmet. Your youngster may feel strange at first, but you can take away some of the discomfort with words of support.
- Begin the helmet habit with the first riding toys. Then, it will become a natural habit as your child grows.
- Encourage other parents to buy helmets. Making helmet use common is the best way to eliminate the discomfort of being "different."

Sincerely,

Letter to
Parents

Note: To be used with Safety ON Wheels topic. Sign and transfer onto your department's letterhead for children to take home to their parents.



Today in class we talked about calling for help in an emergency. Your child learned when it would be an appropriate time to dial "9-1-1" or "0 (for operator)"—such as when the only adult at home is injured and can't talk on the phone. Please role-play with your child the steps to take in various emergency situations. You may want to post the "9-1-1" or "0 (for operator)" emergency number in a prominent place by the phone, along with the phone numbers for police, fire department, and trusted adults your child could call for help.

You and your child can combine fun and learning by making a telephone number picture-poster. Gather pictures of important people in your child's life (for example, Mom, Dad, Grandma, an uncle, a trusted neighbor). Glue or tape the pictures onto poster board. Write the correct phone numbers under each picture and hang your poster next to the telephone. This way, if your child ever feels scared, he or she will know exactly whom to call for help.

Sincerely,

Note: To be used with Using the Telephone To Call for Help topic. Sign and transfer onto your department's letterhead for children to take home to their parents.

Letter to
Parents

People Who Can Give You Medicine

Circle the People Who Can Give You Medicine
and Put an X Over the Ones Who Can't



Your Doctor



Your Mother



Your Friend



Your Grandparents

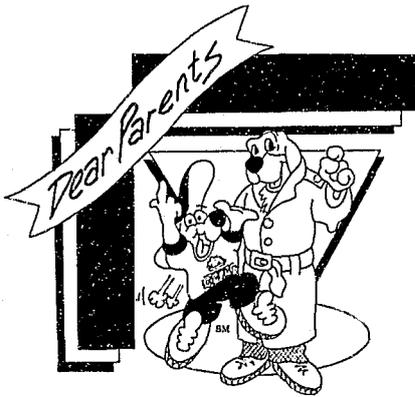


A Stranger

Note for the law enforcement officer, teacher, and parent: The message of this game is that there are some people from whom it is O.K. to take medicines, and there are some people from whom a child should not take things. Before passing this out to the children, have a discussion on this subject and then give the activity to them to reinforce the message.

Note: To be used with Medicines vs. DRUGS topic. Copy for the children to do after your visit. Suggest they take their work home to share with their parents.

Handout



Today I visited your child's classroom to discuss medicines, drugs, and poisons. The children learned about the kinds of things that can be harmful to our bodies and from whom it is okay to accept medicines when they're sick. We emphasized the following points about good drugs (medicines):

- Children can take medicines from you, their doctor, or a nurse.
- We should never take medicines that have been prescribed for someone else, even if we have the same sickness.
- Medicines can help us only if we take them by following the directions carefully.

You may want to discuss these issues further with your child and explain which other trusted adults (such as an aunt or uncle) can give them medicines. We also talked today about how medicines can be harmful if too much is taken or taken in the wrong way. If there is anyone in your home who takes medicine every day, this is a good time to discuss that with your child. Your child should understand that sometimes it is important to take a medicine every day in order to stay healthy.

We also talked about the kinds of drugs that can be harmful to our bodies. The children learned about how these drugs can change the way the body and brain work, making it difficult to think, talk, and walk. It is important for your child to understand that, while it is not against the law for adults to use such drugs as alcohol and tobacco, it is illegal for children because they are smaller and still growing. This is a good time for you to talk with your child about your feelings on the use of these and other drugs.

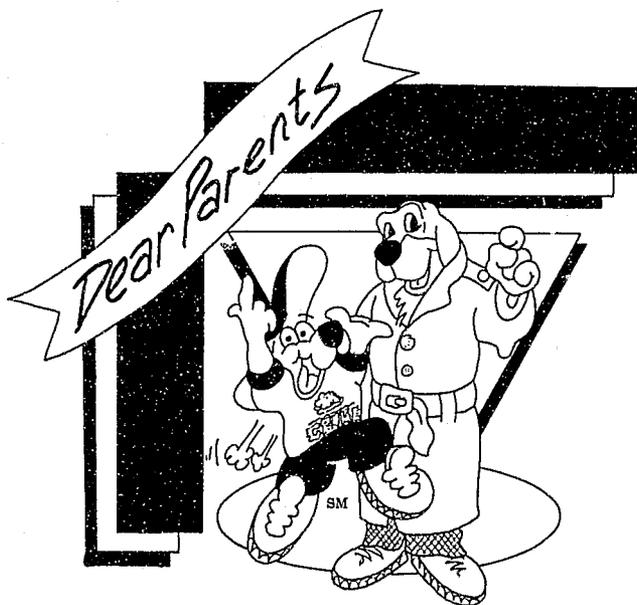
Much of the information about drugs we discussed today is outlined in the attached information sheet called "Talking With Young Children About Drugs." Please refer to this as you talk with your child about today's lesson at school.

Be sure that all drugs and medicines in your home are in a secure place that your child is not able to get into on his or her own. Many children like to put things into their mouths. Make sure all harmful substances, such as cleaning products and paints, are secured and labeled as poisonous. You may want to mark them with the Mr. Yuk™ symbol or similar label. Also, be aware that many house plants can be harmful if eaten. Keep the number of the local poison control center or hospital near the phone. Thank you for helping your child learn about being safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

Note: To be used with Medicines vs. DRUGS topic. Sign and transfer onto your department's letterhead for children to take home to their parents.

Letter to
Parents



Today I visited your child's classroom and talked about bullies. Bullies are a very real and scary problem for children. Encourage your child to talk about what he or she learned in school today. Perhaps your child will want to tell you about a time when he or she felt bullied by someone.

Background on Bullies

Few memories of childhood may be as powerful as that of the class bully lurking, teasing, shoving—never missing a chance to harass a victim. The bully—big and strong—was always on the lookout for opportunities to pick on children—usually smaller, younger, or weaker children.

Bullying, too often perceived as simply a "kids will be kids" problem, is extremely serious. It's just as troublesome and prevalent as it was when you were a child. As children become older, bullying can become even more dangerous because of the increased availability of weapons. Studies show that one child in ten is regularly harassed or attacked by bullies; 15 percent of all school children are involved in bully/victim problems. Bullies are equally common in the inner cities and rural communities and they have become the topic of considerable research by American educators, social scientists, and law enforcement officers.

How do children become the targets of bullies? Contrary to popular belief, victims of bullying don't always differ much from other kids. Generally, however, victims are physically weaker and often younger. They may be lonely children with few friends. Victims become accessible to attack by the route they walk to and from school, by the bus stop they frequent, by the street they live on, because of an older or younger sibling, and so on.

What Can Be Done About Bullying?

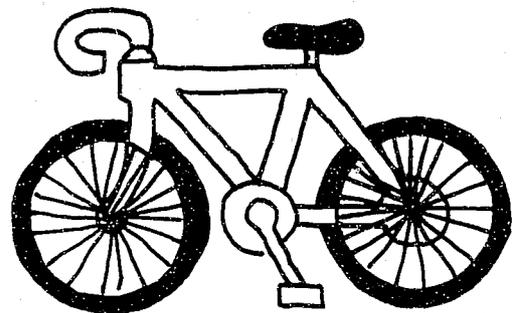
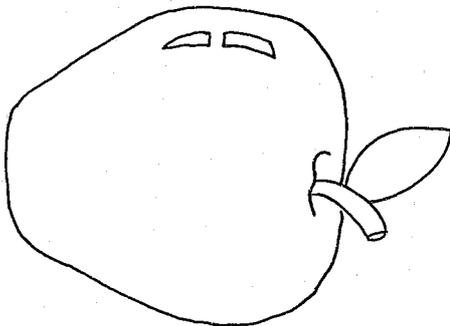
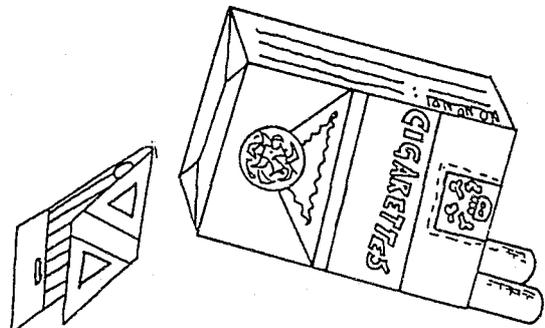
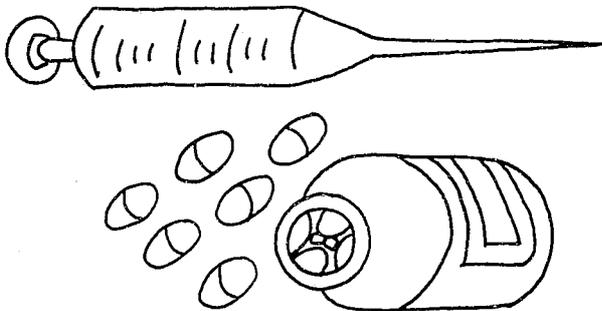
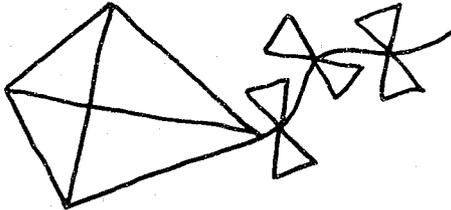
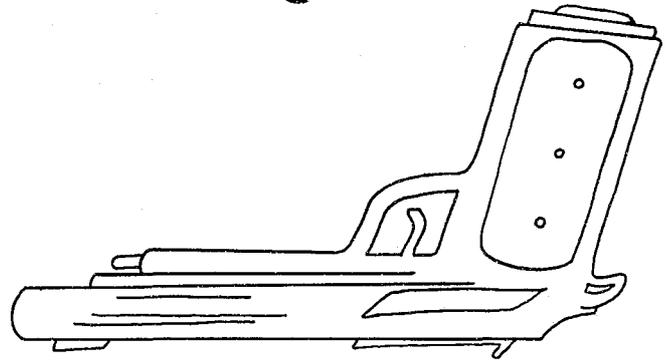
- Take your child's complaints of bullying seriously. Children are often afraid or ashamed to tell anyone that they are victims of bullies—so if your child complains, believe it.
- Watch for symptoms in your child: withdrawal, a drop in grades, torn clothes and unexplained bruises, not wanting to go to school, needing extra money or supplies, regularly taking toys or other possessions to school and "losing" them.
- Inform the school immediately if you know or suspect that your child is being bullied. Whether incidents take place at school, en route, or elsewhere, knowing help and reinforcement are available at school and at home is critical to a bullying victim. Teachers and day-care providers can carefully monitor your child's (and the suspected bully's) actions and take steps to ensure your child's safety. Whatever action is necessary, the message should be clear: bullying is not acceptable.
- Work with other parents to ensure that the children in your neighborhood are supervised closely on their way to and from school.
- Talk, but listen, too. Encourage children to talk about school, social events, the walk or ride to and from school. Listen to their conversations with other children. This could be your first clue to whether the child is a victim or a bully.
- Don't bully your child yourself. Use nonphysical, consistently enforced discipline measures.
- Teach children to stand up for themselves verbally. Inquire about programs that will boost self-esteem.
- Teach children the social skills they need to make friends. A confident, resourceful child who has friends is less likely to be bullied.
- Recognize that bullies may be acting out feelings of insecurity and anger. If your child is a bully, help get to the root of the behavior.

Sincerely,

Note: To be used with Bullies topic. Sign and transfer onto your department's letterhead for children to take home to their parents.

Letter to
Parents

Dangerous and Safe Things



Note: To be used with Guns and Other Weapons topic. Copy and cut out for use with the activity. For additional items, cut pictures from magazines and catalogs.

Handout



Every two hours a child in America is killed with a gun. Many more are injured, often requiring long-term hospitalization and suffering permanent disabilities. Children are victims of firearm injury by suicide, homicide, or unintentional shootings at alarming rates. Nearly 8.7 million youngsters have access to handguns in their homes. *Any* child may be attracted to guns. Some children are simply curious and do not understand the danger. One out of six pediatricians nationwide has treated a young gunshot victim.

What Can Be Done To Protect Your Child?

- Teach your child—whether a preschooler, elementary student, or a teenager—that guns hurt and kill.
- Encourage your child to tell you or another trusted adult immediately about any weapon he or she knows of.
- Tell your child not to touch a weapon—or anything that looks like one—for any reason. Repeat the message periodically, because children learn gradually and often forget or test the rules.
- Explain to your child that gun violence on TV, in the movies, and in video games is not real. Stress that in real life guns hurt and kill people.
- Show your child how to settle arguments without resorting to actions or words that can hurt. Talk openly about problems. Set a good example by handling your own anger, disagreements, and sadness appropriately.
- Support school staff in their efforts to keep guns, knives, and other weapons out of schools.
- Because handguns are more likely to be used in suicide, homicide, or fatal accidents than to defend against a criminal, it's safest not to keep a gun in the home.
- If you choose to own firearms—handguns, rifles, or shotguns—make sure they are unloaded and securely stored. Invest in trigger locks, gun cabinets with locks, or pistol lock boxes. Lock up ammunition separately. Make sure that your child doesn't have access to the keys.

Sincerely,

Note: To be used with Guns and Other Weapons topics. Sign and transfer onto your department's letterhead for children to take home to their parents.



Today I visited your child's class and we discussed okay and not okay touches. Obviously, this is a very sensitive subject, but it is one that the children should know about. Children are often taught about "stranger danger," but the reality is that most danger lies not with strangers but with someone the child knows and trusts. When this trust is violated, the child feels confused and may not know what to do. Particularly in the case of sexual contact, the child may not know that what has happened is not only wrong, but is a crime, that he or she is not at fault, and that it's okay to talk about it.

Please take this opportunity to address this issue with your child.

Protecting Your Child Against Sexual Abuse

- Let your child know that he or she can tell you anything and you'll be supportive.
- Teach your child that no one—not even a teacher or a close relative—has the right to touch him or her in a way that makes him or her feel uncomfortable, and that it's okay to say no, get away, and tell a trusted adult.
- Don't force a child to kiss, hug, or sit on a grown-up's lap if he or she doesn't want to. This gives the child control and teaches that he or she has the right to refuse.
- Always know where your child is and whom he or she is with.
- Tell your child to stay away from strangers
- Be alert for changes in your child's behavior that could signal sexual abuse—such as sudden secretiveness, withdrawal from activities, refusal to go to school, unexplained hostility toward a favorite babysitter or relative, or increased anxiety. Some physical signs of abuse include bedwetting, loss of appetite, nightmares, complaints of pain or irritation around the genitals, and venereal disease.
- If you think your child has been sexually abused, report this to the police or a child protection agency immediately.

Sincerely,

Note: To be used with Okay and Not Okay Touches topic. Sign and transfer onto your department's letterhead for children to take home to their parents.

Letter to
Parents

Resource Organizations

American Automobile Association
Foundation for Traffic Safety
1730 M Street, NW, Suite 401
Washington, DC 20036
202-775-1456

Provides books, films, and curricula on traffic safety. Materials are designed to be used with several age groups on topics including bicycle, school bus, and pedestrian safety.

Boy Scouts of America
PO Box 152079
Irving, TX 75015-2079
214-580-2000

Provides young men with a variety of projects, including character-building, citizenship, fitness, and crime prevention and law enforcement skills. Explorer Scouts support police and others in the community in crime prevention activities.

Bureau of Justice Assistance Clearinghouse
Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20850
800-688-4252

Provides information and publications on BJA-funded crime and drug prevention programs including formula grants, technical assistance, training, and demonstration projects.

Center To Prevent Handgun Violence
1225 Eye Street, NW, Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20005
202-289-7319

Provides and publishes educational materials and programs for adults and children, including information about children and gun violence, firearm homicide, suicide and unintentional shootings, violence in schools, and conflict resolution.

DARE America
PO Box 2090
Los Angeles, CA 90051
800-233-DARE

Provides trained police officers to fifth and sixth grade classrooms. Curriculum topics include drug and alcohol use and misuse, resisting peer pressure, building self-esteem, and managing stress.

Family Violence and Sexual Assault Institute
1310 Clinic Drive
Tyler, TX 75701
903-595-6600

Maintains and reviews an international clearinghouse of references and unpublished papers concerning aspects of family violence and sexual abuse and reviews and disseminates the information in a quarterly newsletter.

Girl Scouts of America
830 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10022
212-940-7500

Meets the special needs of girls and helps them develop as happy, resourceful individuals willing to share their abilities as citizens.

High/Scope Educational Research Foundation
600 North River Street
Ypsilanti, MI 48198
313-485-2000

This research, curriculum development, and training center promotes the learning and development of children from infancy through adolescence and supports teachers, parents, and other significant adults who work with and care for children.

Head Start Publication Center
PO Box 26417
Alexandria, VA 22313-0417
703-683-5769 (Fax only)

Provides publications, videos, and information about substance abuse, education, learning activities, and other subjects, including materials in Spanish.

The Home and School Institute, Inc. (HSI)
1500 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20005
202-833-1400

Along with its MegaSkills Education Center, HSI focuses on helping families build children's school achievements and beyond by working with school districts; federal, state, and local government agencies; companies; and community groups.

**National Association
for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)**
1834 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20009-5786
800-424-2460, 202-232-8777

Provides educational services and resources to adults committed to the growth and development of children from birth through age eight.

**National Association
of Police Athletic Leagues**
200 Castlewood Drive, Suite 400
North Palm Beach, FL 33408
407-844-1823

Uses athletics and recreational activities to create a bond between police officers and youths, focuses on the problems of crime and delinquency, creates national youth leagues, and develops materials.

**National Center
for Missing and Exploited Children**
2101 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 550
Arlington, VA 22201
800-843-5678

Serves as a national clearinghouse on effective state and federal legislation directed at the protection of children.

**National Clearinghouse
for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI)**
PO Box 2345
Rockville, MD 20847-2345
800-7729-6686, 301-468-2600

Distributes a wide range of free drug and alcohol information materials in English and Spanish, operates a computerized database, and provides free catalog materials.

**National Association
of Elementary School Principals (NAESP)**
1615 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314-3428
703-684-3345

Sponsors programs for principals, vice principals, and aspiring principals and provides services and publications for parents, teachers, and other adults who work with young children.

National Committee To Prevent Child Abuse
332 South Michigan Avenue, Suite 1600
Chicago, IL 60604-4357
312-663-3520

Works to stop child abuse before it happens, conducts research, produces public service advertising, and provides low-cost materials.

National Crime Prevention Council
1700 K Street, NW, Second Floor
Washington, DC 20006-3817
202-466-6272

Through McGruff the Crime Dog campaign, demonstration programs, educational materials, training, licensed products, and the Crime Prevention Coalition, forges nationwide commitment to prevent crime and build safer, more caring communities.

National Head Start Association
201 North Union Street, Suite 320
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
703-739-0875

Seeks to upgrade the quality and quantity of Head Start Program services, conducts training sessions and seminars, and prepares organizational policies and positions.

National McGruff House Network
1879 South Main, Suite 180
Salt Lake City, UT 84115
801-486-8768

As the national headquarters for local programs, provides reliable sources of help for children (and others) in frightening or emergency situations in partnership with law enforcement, schools, and community organizations. Also, oversees McGruff Truck program, that applies the same concept to public utility companies.

National SAFE KIDS Campaign
111 Michigan Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20010-2970
202-939-4993

Provides information on children's safety issues, including brochures for parents, a resource list, and guides for medical professionals and teachers.

Resources Available Through NCPC

The National Crime Prevention Council produces a wide variety of educational products that may be helpful to law enforcement officers who work with children. Selected materials that may be of particular value:

- *McGruff's Elementary Drug Prevention Activity Book*, which includes camera-ready masters for activities for youngsters in kindergarten through fourth grade, tips for parent-child communication, and more
- *Talking With Youth About Prevention: A Teaching Guide for Law Enforcement and Others*, which covers the most frequently requested prevention topics for ages five to eighteen and contains background information, activities, and sample materials
- *When a Child Reports a Crime: Encouraging Children To Report Crime and Responding Appropriately When They Do*, which describes how the critical first contact with a child victim or witness can be handled, reporting obligations, and other concerns
- *Opening Doors With McGruff and Scruff*, a colorful, interactive tool that invites children to open doors behind which are McGruff, his nephew Scruff, and many community helpers. A great discussion starter!
- *McGruff's Drug Abuse Prevention Kit: for Children in Grades K-6*, which contains the "No Show" video, audio cassette, and reproducible masters
- a wide variety of educational posters for children and youth
- the *Catalyst* newsletter for community crime prevention (ten times a year, free).

Ordering information for these products is provided in NCPC's catalog.

Licenseses of NCPC offer a variety of additional educational products to help send crime, drug, and violence prevention messages to children, youths, and adults.

Licensed products featuring McGruff the Crime Dog and his nephew Scruff include pencils, stickers, lapel pins, dolls, books, apparel, educational videos, and animated robots. All NCPC revenue received from the sale of its own and licensed products supports the National Citizens' Crime Prevention Campaign.

To receive the *Catalyst* or more information on NCPC or licensed products, check below.

Please send me:

- NCPC Catalog Licensed products packet *Catalyst* newsletter

Name _____

Organization _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Daytime Phone _____

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