



Arizona Crime Prevention Association

Volume 5 Issue 1

A publication of the Arizona Crime Prevention Association

January 2011

Is My Child Too Young For Crime Prevention?

It is never too early to start teaching children basic safety skills. Each day, we face opportunities where we as parents can use them to teach our children. I like to refer to them as "educational opportunities". These "educational opportunities" could be something you and your children observe together when you are at their school, the park or just sitting at home enjoying your favorite television show. At the moment you observe this "educational opportunity," stop and explain to your child what you are observing. Once it is finished, ask them to explain what they saw and what they think about it. Ask them what they would do in that situation. The answer they give will allow you to explain the positives or a "better" solution to the problem with an explanation why. Children learn information in a number of ways. The more we as parents use all the senses, eventually we understand how our children learn best. Here are some things you can start teaching your child at a young age:

- Never answer the telephone. Do you really want an unknown person hearing the voice of your child or asking them questions? Use the words, "let it ring, let it ring, let it ring" moving your head side to side. Children like to learn through sounds, hand signs and any other examples that make it a fun learning environment.
- When someone knocks, a child should never go to the door without an adult. A person could try to get them to open it. A better suggestion is to have the child stay in another room, so if the adult feels they need to open the door, the unknown person would not see the age of the child or know they live there.
- Teach them what an emergency is and when and how they should dial 9-1-1. Explain how we never dial this number unless we have an emergency and need the police and/or fire departments or an ambulance. Show them where on the telephone the numbers are. If you have a play telephone, have them practice on it.
- Teach them to keep the doors shut and locked. This will become an action they do without having to think about it. You can make it fun when explaining the reason and say to them, let's practice. "Keep the door shut and locked" while clapping your hands to make the sound of the door shutting and then using a turning motion with your hand to demonstrate turning the deadbolt lock. After a few repetitions, use your front door and as the child shut and locks the door, say "shut" as they shut it and "lock" as they lock it. Applaud their effort for positive reinforcement.
- To wear a bicycle helmet every time they ride bikes, skateboards, rollerblades, scooters, horses, or anything else with the potential to toss or throw them to the ground. An egg or similar item can be used to show the result of not wearing one. Help them understand that the brain is like a computer — it allows us to do the things we want to do like play, eat, laugh, talk and many more wonderful things. Parents should always wear their helmet to show by example.
- Teach children to always ask for permission before they go anywhere. It is difficult to make a child understand "strangers" when the

majority of perpetrators are people known to them.

- Teach children to respond to situations and not people. Safety Kids, Inc. trains instructors who use "Charlie Check First" to memorize this point. "Charlie Check First" is a red stuffed check mark with eyes, hands and feet. He is used to teach children to "Always check first before you go anywhere, with anyone, at anytime and if you cannot check, the answer is NO!" You can use your hands to demonstrate by making a check mark with your finger.

A child's brain is always learning. Although life can have areas of gray, to a child they are black and white. We must continue to educate, lead by example, and communicate openly about all areas of safety. By starting at a young age, our children will always know they can ask you questions and you will provide them answers.

Protecting The Homeland

On September 11, 2001, what should have been another average day turned into a day that changed our lives forever. Many of us grabbed our cup of coffee or picked up the newspaper and for a moment turned on the TV to catch the morning news or traffic report. As we began to back away from the TV, we witnessed the tragic incidents of that day unfold right before our eyes.

Since that day local, state and federal law enforcement agencies evaluated their strategies and joined forces to share information and to try to prevent another incidence like the one we witnessed. Law enforcement and public safety agencies also began working with American citizens and residents regarding homeland security. The realization was made that in order to protect our country from domestic and foreign terrorism, it has to be everyone's responsibility.

"In October 2004, Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano opened the Arizona Counter Terrorism Information Center (ACTIC) as the state's central analysis hub for real-time crime and terrorism-related intelligence and information. Today, ACTIC

is staffed with more than 200 detectives, state, local and federal agencies. ACTIC was the first state fusion center to include complete integration of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Joint Terrorism Task Force. Today, the ACTIC is recognized as one of the leading state-level law enforcement and public safety "fusion centers" in the country."

The detectives and staff of ACTIC investigate leads and rely on information provided from citizens, like yourself. A video titled "8 Signs of Terrorism" was created to help educate our communities.

The 8 signs are:

- Surveillance: terrorists begin watching a selected target and start gathering information about it. They try to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the target and look at routes to and from. This stage can take the longest.
- Elicitation: during this phase, terrorist try to gather detailed information about a location such as people, places or operations specific to the target. They may try to place people in employment at the target.
- Tests of Security: terrorists may try to breach secure areas to test the strengths and weaknesses of an area. They want to assess response times of security and routes first responders take.
- Finances: terrorism needs money. This stage can include credit card fraud, fraud against seniors, people asking for questionable donations and large sums of money used during business transactions.
- Acquiring Supplies: terrorist will begin to purchase, steal and store supplies. They may also try to acquire uniforms or identification to gain access to secure areas.
- Suspicious People Who Don't Belong: recognizing suspicious behavior is vital to preventing terrorism. Be observant while at work, home, while traveling or attending an event.

- Dry Runs or Rehearsal: this is one of the final stages prior to the actual terrorist act. They may attempt dry runs to check emergency response times, work out flaws or correct any unanticipated problems.
- Deploying Assets/Getting into Position: this is the last chance for the community to notify law enforcement before the terrorist act occurs.

Homeland security is everyone's responsibility and even as the years have passed since that tragic day, we must never forget and remain vigilant in protecting our country against both domestic and foreign terrorism. The video can be seen at <http://www.azactic.gov/Video/>.

Students Beware!

When we think about identity fraud, we often think about our personal accounts, our parent's accounts or even our grandparent's accounts, but what about our children's accounts. The 2010 Identity Fraud Survey Report (www.javelinstrategy.com), released by Javelin Strategy & Research, found some interesting statistics for 2009. Bad news first, the number of identity fraud victims increased 12% to 11.1 million adults. Now for the good news, it appears with increased consumer awareness, and assistance provided by financial institutions and law enforcement, that businesses and consumers are taking more active roles to deal with it. The average fraud resolution time dropped 30% to 21 hours. There was also a drop in fraud costs per victim. Equally encouraging is nearly half of new victims filed police reports resulting in double the reported arrests, triple the prosecution and double the convictions.

Now you may be asking yourself, what about our teenagers and college aged children? Our young children are some of the most vulnerable to identity fraud. Children and young adults have new credit and often don't check personal accounts. According to the earlier report, Millennials (consumers aged 18 - 24 years old) take nearly twice as long to detect fraud compared to other age groups.

Some of the reasons our young adults become targets are they have new credit and credit they don't monitor. Most students have blank credit. Students also have access to securing new credit. Walk around any college campus and you will see all the credit applications or representatives from credit card companies soliciting new applicants.

When it comes to computers, this generation of computer savvy people spend more time online than any other generation. Most of their banking is done online. They often think because they may not have a lot of money in their account that they are immune from identity fraud. A student who only has \$100 in their account and has it compromised could lead to devastating consequences. How would they buy food, school supplies or pay their phone bill. The list could go on and on.

- Keep doors locked and windows secured so others can't access your dorm room and personal property.
- Do not leave personal information sitting out in the open for everyone to view or take.
- Shred all personal documents you don't need and secure those you do.
- Make sure secure websites are used when ordering items online.
- Keep anti-virus software and firewalls current and up to date.
- Do not give out your student numbers, pin numbers or anything else that may lead to fraud.
- Use privacy settings on social networking sites. Do you really want everyone to know things about you?
- When using free Wi-Fi spots, do not access personal websites such as your banking information. Could someone be watching your key strokes?
- Run credit checks yearly and if the child or young adult has not established credit, it should come back stating that. Go to www.annualcreditreport.com for a free copy.
- Do not share things on a cell phone that someone could use to steal your information.

If our young adults and college students take proactive steps, they reduce the chances of identity fraud considerably.