



# How to Keep Your Child Safe

It is every parent's worst nightmare. We see it on the news and read about it in newspapers. A child is snatched in broad daylight or after nightfall from his or her home. And it seems like it is happening all the time. Despite what you might reasonably think after hearing the terrible stories of Jaycee Dugard, Elizabeth Smart, Amber Swatz and others, the occurrence of kidnapping by 'strangers' should not be the parents' primary concern. Parents themselves perpetrate more than 98 percent of all kidnappings, according to the Department of Justice. In a recent Times/CNN article, data indicates that 94 percent of kidnapped children are returned to their parents. For others, such as the family of Polly Klaas, the outcome is painful, very sad and despicable.

But how can I protect my child? How can I make sure that my child is alert without scaring them?

- Know where your kids are
- Don't let them go out alone; there is safety in numbers
- Know who they're with
- Speak openly with them about their safety
- Practice what you talk about; go over scenarios and ask your kids what they would do
- "No, Go, Tell" plan for kids...Kids have a right to say "NO!"

Keep lines of communication open and establish an atmosphere in your home that encourages kids to talk to you about what is going on in their lives. We suggest you teach kids what to do if they were to get lost or are approached by someone questionable in the same way you teach them how to cross the street.

Websites we recommend for great tips on **How to Keep Your Child Safe** are the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, [www.missingkids.com](http://www.missingkids.com), and the **Polly Klaas Foundation**, [www.pollyklaas.org](http://www.pollyklaas.org). Both sites provide a wealth of information on Child Safety. The Polly Klaas Foundation website offers a free Child Safety Kit. For your Children's Sake and Yours, Please Log On!



*Neighborhood Watch Newsletter is a publication of the Community Preservation & Safety Unit, Pinole Police Department, 880 Tennent Avenue, Pinole 94564*

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# Neighborhood Watch: Keeping Our Neighborhoods Safer

## What is Neighborhood Watch?

Neighborhood Watch is one of the most effective ways to prevent crime and help revitalize neighborhoods. Neighborhood Watch is a crime prevention program which enlists the active participation of residents in cooperation with law enforcement to reduce crime in their communities.

This program involves neighbors getting to know each other and learning how to work together and residents recognizing and reporting suspicious activities in their neighborhoods. The extra "eyes and ears" of aware neighbors will help us catch the criminals.

Why Organize: Quality of life is-

sues; Maintain property values; Neighborhood communication; Security; Problem-solving.

Involvement: Pinpoint areas with problems; Start talking with people; Introduce the program; Establish relationships; Identify concerns; Look for leaders.

Plan the Meeting: Select a date and time; Arrange a location; Invite a police representative; Prepare an agenda; Distribute fliers (the Police Department will prepare the invitation.); Provide snacks, if possible, for the first meeting; Presentation on the program and its benefits; Purpose of meeting; Recommendations, suggestions and resources.

For additional information regarding Neighborhood Watch, please contact

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## MEET OFFICER ANDREW DECKER

Meet Community Preservation Officer Andrew Decker. Officer Decker has been with the Pinole Police Department since October 2005. Prior to his employment with Pinole, Officer Decker was a police officer with the West Contra Costa Unified School District. Officer Decker has held such positions as Patrol Officer, Crime Prevention Officer, School Resource Officer and Explorer Coordinator. Officer Decker is also Pinole Police Department's certified Bike Patrol Officer. Officer Decker believes good community contact comes through bike patrol. While riding a bike, he urges others to follow a few safety tips.



Officer Decker wants all persons, especially under the age of 18 to:

- Wear a properly fitted helmet. Helmets must always be strapped while riding a bike.
- Wear bright clothing to easily be seen by motorists.
- Obey the rules of the road. People riding bikes can be given tickets for not stopping at a stop sign.
- Always check the bike's safety equipment and give it regular tune-ups.
- Always ensure your bike is stored in a locked area and in a safe place.

