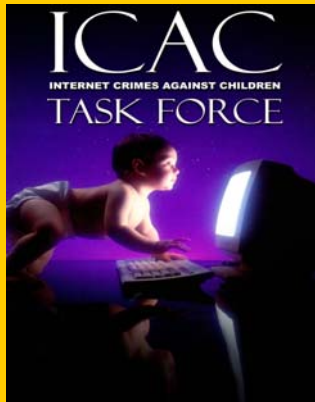




323 Center Street, Suite 200  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201  
Phone: (501) 682-1020  
1-800-448-3014  
[www.ArkansasAG.gov](http://www.ArkansasAG.gov)



Internet Crimes Against Children  
Task Force  
Arkansas State Police  
#1 State Police Plaza Drive  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72209  
CYBERTIPLINE: 800-843-5678

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## A Parent's Guide to Online Safety, Child Abduction Prevention, and Runaway Issues



Brought to you by  
Attorney General  
Dustin McDaniel



# Resources

**Arkansas Child Abuse Hot Line**

1-800-482-5964

**Arkansas Teen Crisis Hot Line**

1-800-798-8336

**Families Anonymous**

1-800-736-9805

**Team H.O.P.E**

1-800-305-6311

**Teenline National Hotline**

1-800-522-8336 (Noon to Midnight CST)

**National Clearinghouse on Families and Youth**

[www.ncfy.com](http://www.ncfy.com)

**State of Arkansas Division of Human Services**

[www.arkansas.gov/childcare](http://www.arkansas.gov/childcare)

**The Children's Partnership**

[www.childrenspartnership.org](http://www.childrenspartnership.org)

## Resources

**Office of Attorney General Dustin McDaniel**  
**Missing Children Services Program**  
1-800-448-3014  
[www.ArkansasAG.gov](http://www.ArkansasAG.gov)

**Arkansas Crime Information Center**  
501-628-2222  
[www.acic.org](http://www.acic.org)

**National Center for Missing  
and Exploited Children**  
1-800-843-5678  
[www.missingkids.com](http://www.missingkids.com)

**Morgan Nick Foundation**  
1-877-543-HOPE  
[www.morgannick.com](http://www.morgannick.com)

**National Runaway Switchboard**  
1-800-621-4000  
[www.nrscrisisline.org](http://www.nrscrisisline.org)

**Federal Bureau of Investigation**  
General Information 202-324-3000  
Arkansas 501-221-9100  
[www.fbi.gov](http://www.fbi.gov)

## A Message from:

DUSTIN MCDANIEL  
Attorney General



Dear Fellow Arkansan:

I believe that our children are our most precious asset. To better protect our kids, I also believe that we must help them identify and deal with the dangers present in their lives. *Keys to Safety* is an educational program that does just that.

The elementary portion of the program focuses on teaching students basic safety concepts with an emphasis on online safety. The junior high and high school program takes a close look at the dangers of running away and includes a discussion about online safety.

*Keys to Safety* was formulated based on input from students, community leaders, and law enforcement members and was presented to more than 43,000 individuals last year alone. The Attorney General's Office continues to work on improving and strengthening the program's message and outreach, and we hope that you find the information in this new booklet helpful and informative.

By taking the time to read this information and pass it along to a person in your life, you can help us safeguard the future of our young people and our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dustin McDaniel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dustin McDaniel

# Top 10 Tips for Talking to Your Kids About Safety

## 1. Start Early

Talk to your children about threats to their safety when they are young. Kids are forced to cope with tough issues at increasingly early ages, often before they are ready to understand all aspects of these complicated ideas.

## 2. Initiate Conversations with Your Child

While we want our children to feel comfortable enough to come to us with any questions or concerns, this doesn't always occur. That's why it's perfectly okay, at times even necessary, for you, the parent, to open the door.

## 3. Find Out What They Already Know

Have a preliminary talk with your children and casually ask them what they think it means to be safe. Also, ask what steps they take to ensure their safety online, at home, and on the go.

## 4. Create an Open Environment

Young children want their parents to discuss difficult subjects with them. However, your kids will look to you for answers only if they feel you will be open to their questions. It's up to you to create the kind of atmosphere in which your children can ask any question, on any subject, freely and without fear of consequence. You create such an atmosphere by being encouraging, supportive, and positive.

## 5. Communicate Your Values

As a parent, you have the opportunity to be the first person to talk with your child about tough issues like safety and violence. By being the first to start the conversation, you can instill your principles and shape your child's outlook on personal safety.

# If Your Child Is Lost or Missing

- ◆ Call the police. Ask that your child be entered into the National Crime Information Center.
- ◆ Search your home. Call neighbors and friends.
- ◆ Keep a list of all steps taken. Keep a record of names and telephone numbers of the contacts you make.
- ◆ Gather current photographs. Be ready to provide a description of your child, including identifying marks such as scars or tattoos. Include clothing worn at the time of disappearance and any personal items taken. Also, gather dental records and fingerprint samples if available.
- ◆ Contact the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children at **1-800-THE-LOST**; and Arkansas Missing Children Services Program of the Attorney General's Office at **1-800-448-3014**.
- ◆ Contact the National Runaway Switchboard, which operates a 24 hour confidential hotline for teens and their families. The National Runaway Switchboard can be reached at 800-621-4000.



*The "Arbor of Hope" is a special area of reflection in MacArthur Park in Little Rock dedicated to missing children and their families.*

# Arkansas Missing Children Services Program

The Arkansas Missing Children Services Program (AMCSP) is part of Attorney General Dustin McDaniel's Community Relations Division. It serves as the statewide clearinghouse, and is the main point of contact for the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC).

With the passage of "Suzanne's Law," young adults who are between the ages of 18-21 at the time of disappearance, can now be listed and receive services from NCMEC and AMCSP.

In May, the Arkansas Missing Children's Services Program hosts an annual event for families of missing children, as well as a statewide child safety poster contest for elementary school students.

## Program Highlights

- The AMCSP offers a toll-free hotline for reports and sightings of missing children (1-800-448-3014);
- Provides referrals for families, law enforcement, social-service agencies, and other state clearinghouses;
- Assists in the creation of and distribution of missing children fliers;
- Maintains a Web page with child safety information, statistics, and posters of Arkansas's missing children that have been reported to AMCSP ([www.ArkansasAG.gov](http://www.ArkansasAG.gov)); and
- Provides child safety materials and resource speakers to schools and communities throughout the state.

## 6. Listen to Your Child

Help your children build self-esteem by letting them know that they're important to you. Help them to trust you by letting them speak openly, which, in turn, will help you stay in touch with what's happening in their lives.

## 7. Try to Be Honest

Every child deserves honest answers and explanations that are age-appropriate. Always being honest will build a lasting relationship based on trust.

## 8. Be Patient

By listening patiently, you allow your children to think at their own pace, and let them know that they are worthy of your time.

## 9. Use Everyday Opportunities to Talk

It's important to try to talk with your kids about tough issues often, but there isn't always time in the day to sit down for a long talk. Also, kids tend to resist formal discussions about today's toughest issues, often categorizing them as "just another lecture from mom and dad." However, if you use quiet moments that arise in everyday life as occasions for discussion, your children will be a lot less likely to tune you out.

## 10. Talk About It Again, and Again

Since most young children can only take in small bits of information at a time, they won't learn all they need to know about a particular topic from a single discussion. That's why it's important to let a little time pass, then ask your child to tell you what he/she remembers about your conversation. This will help you correct any misconceptions and fill in missing facts.

# Basic Child Safety Rules

## Teach your child:

- ◆ Their full name, address, and telephone number;
- ◆ Their parents' or caregiver's full names; and
- ◆ How to dial 911 and explain an emergency.

## Make sure your children know:

- ◆ Never to answer the door when they are home alone, and never go to the door alone even if another adult is at home.
- ◆ Never to say that they are home alone when answering a phone call.
- ◆ The layout of your neighborhood and whose homes they may and may not visit without you.
- ◆ Never to get into another person's vehicle or enter another person's home without a parent's permission.
- ◆ Never take gifts or food from strangers or anyone else without asking a parent first.
- ◆ Never to play in deserted or isolated areas and not to walk or play outside alone.
- ◆ Never to keep secrets from you. They should tell you if someone has asked them to keep a secret from you.

# Steps to Take If Your Child Runs Away

- ◆ Search your home. Call neighbors and friends, and the police. Ask that your child be entered into the National Crime Information Center.
- ◆ Keep a list of all steps taken and a record of names and telephone numbers of the contacts you make.
- ◆ Be ready to provide a description of your child, including identifying marks such as scars or tattoos. Include clothing worn at the time of disappearance and any personal items taken. Also, gather photos, dental records and fingerprint samples if available.
- ◆ Contact the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children at **1-800-THE-LOST**, and Arkansas Missing Children Services Program of the Attorney General's Office at **1-800-448-3014**.
- ◆ If a vehicle was used to leave, write down the make, model, color, license plate number, and if possible the VIN number.
- ◆ Check your phone bills for unusual long-distance calls. This may provide information as to where your child has gone. Also check recent Web sites visited on your computer. Work with law enforcement or someone knowledgeable about computers to ensure that you don't erase key information.
- ◆ If you receive a collect call from your child, stay on the line after your child hangs up. The operator should return. Explain the situation, and ask them to help you determine where the call originated.

## Teens and Running Away

### Signs that a child may be thinking of running away include:

- ◆ Changes in behaviors or patterns, including changes in eating and sleeping habits; in interaction with friends and family; and in mood.
- ◆ Rebellious behavior such as truancy, breaking rules at home and/or school, and being argumentative.
- ◆ Disclosure of intentions to run away either by hinting, threatening, or telling others.

### Tips to prevent your child from running away:

- ◆ Pay attention when they are talking to you and be open and honest with them. This includes letting them know when you are pleased or displeased with their behavior.
- ◆ Always provide accurate information about drugs, sex, and alcohol by answering your children's questions, but not lecturing them. It is important to help your children see all the possible consequences of a particular decision.
- ◆ Encourage responsible decision-making, and if you feel it becomes necessary, seek professional help.

## Basic Child Safety Rules (continued)

- ◆ Talk openly with your children and remind them it's always **OK** to say "**NO**" to anything that makes them feel scared, uncomfortable, or confused, and they should tell you if anything or anyone makes them feel this way. They should also tell you, school authorities, or a police officer about anyone who threatens them.
- ◆ If lost or separated from you in a store or mall, they should go to the nearest cashier or a mom with kids.
- ◆ If someone grabs them and tries to take them forcefully, teach them to kick and yell, "**Help! This is not my Mom/Dad!**"



**“Phone Friend”** is an additional resource for your child. This telephone help line operates 24 hours a day in the Northwest Arkansas Crisis Intervention Center. It offers assistance to children who may be home alone and need help, or might be faced with difficult situations. No matter where you are in the state, your child can call toll-free 1-888-723-3225.

## Basic Safety Rules for Teens

- ◆ Encourage your teens to inform you of their whereabouts at all times and to check in with you if there is a change in plans.
- ◆ Warn your teens to **never** hitchhike. They should always have a secure and definite ride to and from locations.
- ◆ Teach your teens to avoid shortcuts through isolated or deserted areas.
- ◆ Inform them that they should go quickly to the nearest public place and seek help if they are being followed.
- ◆ If they are approached for money, clothing, or other items, instruct them to give them up rather than risk personal injury.
- ◆ Assure your teens that they can talk to you and call you to pick them up any time, any place, no matter the situation.



## Tips to Remember

- ◆ These games can be quite addictive. Parents should set up guidelines as to when and where their child can play.
- ◆ You can restrict your children's online playmates to only a select group of approved friends.
- ◆ The "mute" feature allows you to disable your child's ability to talk with other players during a game, whether it's typewritten text or voice chat over a headset.
- ◆ Certain online services provide parents with the option to view a list of players their children have interacted with during an online session. This can be helpful in determining whom your child can and cannot play.
- ◆ Many teens are using the Internet as a way to hurt others through words and comments. Make sure your child knows that sending hurtful messages can have consequences.
- ◆ You can notify a game's publisher or online service provider about an offender. Check the "Terms of Service" for instructions on how to file a complaint about another player. Be sure to include as much information as possible about the player in question.



## Online Games

While online games provide fun and entertainment, the players are often anonymous and may pose a threat to your child. They could also be exposed to inappropriate material.

Here is a quick primer to help you understand some of the different types of online games.

### Role Playing Games

The object of the game is to allow players to take on the identity of a character and play against or with other people who have also assumed alternate identities. The players work their way through various scenarios in an imaginary world.



### Multi-User Virtual Environments

These Web sites offer a virtual or realistic community in which users create a character of themselves known as an "avatar." Once created, they roam through this virtual world and interact with other avatars. The avatars represent other people sitting at their computers doing the same thing. Avatars allow people to be whomever they want to be and do whatever they want to do with anonymity.

### Video Game Consoles

These are video games that provide a "live" feature. An individual can either invite their friends to participate in a video game or allow the video game system to reach out and pick random individuals with whom to play. Most offer a voice feature where one can actually talk to the other players during the game.

## Internet Safety Tips for Parents

The Internet continues to serve as a vast resource for both education and entertainment. However, we need to understand that with millions of other people online, it is a tool that needs to be used wisely.

**Educate Yourself First.** The first step to understanding how to teach your children to navigate the Internet safely is to find out what is out there yourself.

**Keep Computers Out of Your Child's Bedroom.** Keep all computers (even laptops) in a family room, as your child will be less likely to do unacceptable things in plain sight.

**Manage Your Child's Time Online.** Create a schedule and limit when and how long your child can be online.

**Learn to Compromise and Always Keep Open Lines of Communication.** Open communication and trust is the key. If your children come to you about pornography or being approached by a stranger on the computer, they should be welcomed. Reacting by taking away their Internet access may only cause them to feel a sense of broken trust and cause them to not come to you if there is an incident in the future.



## Online Social Networking

Teenagers are attracted to social networking sites because they allow kids to create profiles, keep in touch with their friends, and post as much or as little information as they would like through videos, photos, and blogs. Because of the personal information sometimes posted, many parents do not allow their children to be on these sites. Keep in mind, however, if a child is determined to be on a site, he/she WILL find a way. Teens can access these sites from friends' homes, public spaces with open wireless networks, or even a cell phone.

As a parent, you should keep in mind that some teenagers have two different accounts. They have one for mom and dad, and they have one for their friends. Again, open communication is the key. Talk to your teenagers and warn them that if they can't show you their account then they are probably putting themselves at risk.



## Minimizing Risk on Social Networking Sites

- ◆ Remind your children that the information posted on these sites is still a reflection of who they are and what they post today can have an effect on their future.
- ◆ Tell your children NOT to put their photos on the Internet for public viewing as these photos can be manipulated and saved by anyone.
- ◆ Encourage kids to use gender neutral screen names or nicknames. Make certain it does not reveal any identifying information. Also, stay away from names that might come across as sexually suggestive.
- ◆ Remind kids to use privacy settings on social networking sites so that only those on their friends' lists are able to view their pages. Public pages could put them at risk as there are millions of people on the Web.
- ◆ Online profiles aren't always representative of their creators. Remind your teens to only add people that they actually know to their list of friends.
- ◆ Encourage teens to be themselves but to exercise the same basic safety principles they do in the real world.
- ◆ Instruct your teen not to share personal information online. This includes name, address, school name, and phone number.
- ◆ Tell your teens they should talk to you if they want to physically meet a person that they have met online. If you think it's safe, any meeting should take place in public with a trusted adult present.