



## Tip Sheet: student safety when traveling between school and home

In light of recent reports of attempted abductions in our community, we want to take this opportunity to remind our families of safety guidelines as your children travel between school and home.

Twin Rivers Unified School District places a high priority on student safety, both in our schools and in our community. Each day you place your children's safety in the hands of Twin Rivers employees, and you also place your trust in the community in which you live. The tips noted below (from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children) will help families lessen the opportunity for abduction and better safeguard their children. Please take time to review these suggestions with your children.

### Safety Tips for walking to and from school:

- **Take the safest routes to and from school, stores and friend's houses.**
- **Always take a friend with you when walking, biking, or standing at the bus stop. Make sure you know your bus number and which bus to ride.**
- **Say NO if anyone you don't know or a person who makes you feel scared, uncomfortable, or confused offers a ride.**
- **Quickly get away and yell, "This person is trying to take me away," if anyone tries to take you somewhere or is following you. If anyone tries to grab**

**you, make every effort to get away by kicking, screaming and resisting. Don't be embarrassed to make a scene.**

- **Never leave school grounds before the regular school day ends. Always check with the office before leaving school early.**
- **Never take shortcuts or walk through alleys to get to or from school faster.**

The Twin Rivers Police Department operates 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. Please take the time to program their dispatch number into your telephone and cell phones: **916-286-4875**.

### Some serious statistics to consider, from the U.S. Department of Justice:

- 797,500 children (younger than 18) were reported missing in a one-year period of time studied resulting in an average of 2,185 children being reported missing each day.
- 203,900 children were the victims of family abductions.
- 58,200 children were the victims of non-family abductions.
- 115 children were the victims of "stereotypical" kidnapping. These crimes involve someone the child does not know or a slight acquaintance who holds the child overnight, transports the child 50 miles or more, kills the child, demands ransom, or intends to keep the child permanently.

Andrea J. Sedlak, David Finkelhor, Heather Hammer, and Dana J. Schultz. U.S. Department of Justice. "National Estimates of Missing Children: An Overview" in National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway, and Thrownaway Children. Washington, DC: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, October 2002, page 5.

## Tip Sheet: Internet safety



The internet is an incredible tool that can bring a world of information into your home and right to your fingertips. If you learn how to navigate this vast network it can become a valuable resource for you and your family. Kids can go online almost anywhere - from a computer at home, a friend's house, library, school, video game console or even from their cell phones. Many coffee shops, bookstores and restaurants offer wireless access to the Internet.

The Internet offers an enormous array of entertainment and educational resources, but also presents some risks. Kids need help learning to navigate the Internet and should never be allowed to go online without supervision or established ground rules.

Some of the things to watch out for include companies that try to sell things, pictures that you don't want to see, and people who want to meet kids for selfish or illegal reasons.

Talk with your children and set up guidelines for going online. The following rules are recommended for children online by NetSmartz.org:

- Keep the computer in a common room.
- Never share personal information such as address, telephone number, parents' or guardian's work address/telephone number, or the name and location of your school without parents' or guardian's permission.
- Never respond to any messages that are mean or in any way make one feel scared, uncomfortable, or confused.

Never meet in person with anyone first "met" online without checking with parents or guardian.

Consider having your child sign an Internet safety pledge, as a reminder to be safer online and review it regularly.

Make Internet safety a priority family concern. Educate yourself and learn about the risks you and your family face online. Seek out resources such as [NetSmartz.org](http://NetSmartz.org) to promote safety discussions and create safer boundaries for your children online.

**Some serious statistics to consider from a recent study asked youth ages 10 to 17, about their online behaviors:**

- 56% report posting personal information online
- 43% interact with unknown people online
- 35% admit to having unknown people on their friends list
- 28% use the Internet to make rude comments to others
- 26% have sent their personal information to people they met online
- 15% download images from file-sharing programs
- 13% have knowingly visited x-rated sites
- 9% have used the Internet to embarrass or harass people
- 5% have talked to people they didn't know about sex online

Wolak, Janis, Finkelhor, Mitchell and Ybarra. "Online Predators and their Victims: Myths, Realities, and Implications for Prevention and Treatment." *American Psychologist* 63:2. February-march 2008: 111-128.