



## **HOME ALONE?**

### **Latchkey Kids**

You're not the only one! There are many kids who are home alone sometime during the day. You might enjoy the responsibility of caring for yourself, but, maybe you get bored, lonely, or even scared sometimes. There are some things you can do to make sure you're safer when you're alone at home. Be sure to discuss these with your parents. They'll feel better too, knowing you're more able to care for yourself.

### **"TIPS" FOR KIDS**

Keep the house key with you. Don't hide it in the yard or under the doormat. Someone could see you getting it.

If you come home and notice a window or door open or damaged, DON'T GO IN! Instead, go to a trusted neighbor, call a parent, and call the Sheriff's Department.

As soon as you get home, lock the door and call your contact to let them know you're safe. Keep the doors and windows locked when you're inside.

Always check with a parent before letting anyone into the house. Even someone you know needs permission from Mom or Dad to visit.

If you have a phone answering machine, let it answer all calls and "screen" the callers. Pick up the phone only if it's someone you know well. Never let a caller know you are home alone.

Know how and when to call 9-1-1 in an emergency. Have a list of emergency numbers on hand such as the Sheriff's Department, Fire **9-1-1**, ambulance, parents at work, a trusted friend, neighbor, close relative, and school.

### **FOR PARENTS**

You should:

- Know where your children are at all times.
- Establish strict procedures for picking up your children at school, at a friend's, after a movie, etc.
- Do not let your children accept rides from people with whom you have not made previous arrangements.
- Create and use a family code word.
- Tell your children never to go with anyone who does not know the code word.
- Listen attentively if your children talk about anyone they encounter in your absence.

## Teach your children...

- ....their full names, your full name, address, and telephone number.
- ....how to reach you or a trusted adult and how to call for police assistance.
- ....to keep all doors and windows locked and only admit authorized people into the house.
- ....never to leave the yard without your permission.
- ....that a stranger is anyone they don't know well.
- ....they are safer walking or playing with friends.
- ....to always to come straight home from school unless you have made other arrangements.
- ....never to go with anyone who does not know the family code word.
- ....to check in with you or a trusted friend, relative, or neighbor after arriving home.
- ....to tell you if anyone asks them to keep a secret, offers them gifts or money, or asks to .
- ....to scream, run away, and tell you or a trusted adult if anyone attempts to touch or grab them.
- ....not to give out any information on the telephone, (name, address, etc.) or indicate that they are home alone.