5 KEY WAYS TO EMPOWER

AND PROTECT YOUR CHILDREN DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Many children and young children have been affected by school closures and strict containment. Therefore, children have to spend most of their time at home. This lockdown is a time for parents to be proactive in your children's safety. There are 5 key ways to protect your children during COVID-19 pandemic as follows:

1.Keep communication open, fewer children at risk

It's very important for parents to reinforce everyday preventive action and teach your children to manage risk when approached by strangers in both offline and online;

- have open dialogues with your children on whom they are communicating with;
- how they feel about them.

Parents should always be alerted to signs of distress in children that may emerge in connection with their activity.Keep the communication open.

2.Teach your children how to be smart to strangers

Social distancing is a good practice to help children to stay away from the virus but not from danger strangers. Help your children practice smart habits and online and how to handle dangerous offline scenarios. Teach your children to embrace the power of saying "NO" in situations that make them uncomfortable:

Say "NO" to strangers' invitations.

"STAY AWAY" from strangers immediately.

"TELL" parents

3.Help your children to manage risk for themselves

It's crucial for children to understand this process to help empower them to make confident, smart decisions when they engage in uncomfortable situations as they move toward independence. Parents should encourage children to use decision-making steps when children get an invitation from strangers:

- ✅ 1) Do you feel comfortable?
- ✅ 2) Do your parents know where you are?
- ✅ 3) Is there any help around?

If there is a "NO" in any of these, leave immediately.

4. Protect your children from harm

With COVID-19 going on at the moment, parents are equipped to protect their children from the virus but often, they forget their children could potentially be exposed to harm. It's important for parents to teach their children about safety in each age group:
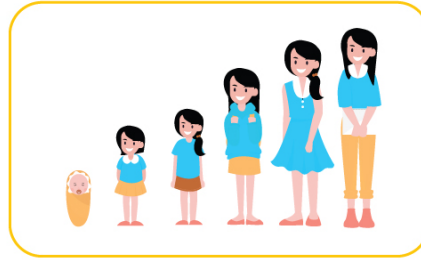
0-3 years old
- always ensure they are in sight and reachable, should never be left alone.

4-6 years old
- always ensure they are in sight and in hearing range. Should never leave them unattended.

7-9 years old
- always ensure caretakers can intervene when it comes to danger. Should never leave them out of sight.

10-12 years old
- may leave them alone as long as children are not in circumstances requiring inappropriate responsibility.

13-15 years old
- maybe left unsupervised or travel as long as they are safe and be reachable by phone.

15-18 years old
- may travel alone and be left unsupervised. Empower them by letting them make their own safe decision. Instead of being the disciplinarian, parents can take on a role of mentor and guide.

Important to be aware of the safety of the surrounding neighborhood. Report suspicious activity or persons to law enforcement authorities. Don't let your children be near them.

5. Listen to your children

As children go through their day, they experience many moments of exhilaration and frustration. Listening to your children it's the skill you as a parent can use.

- ✅ listening to them you are communicating that they are worthy of your attention
- ✅ strengthens the parent-child bond
- ✅ allowing them to share insight into their emotional state.

Acceptance is key when you are listening to your children, it's important to know that there is no judgment or evaluation of what they are saying