

PRÄVENTION *konkret*

Keeping safe on the way to school and during leisure time

As at: 12/2017

Those dear little children grow up so quickly – they were running through the neighbourhood hand in hand with you just yesterday – and now they are going out to meet their boyfriend or girlfriend alone or going to school or sport. New freedoms also involve new risks. The kidnapping of children in the middle of a road is a crime that occurs very rarely from a statistical point of view. It is more likely that children will meet other children or young people who threaten them, make trouble, push them around, beat them and can therefore be a threat to the child's well-being.

In order to give their children a sense of security and reduce their own fears, parents should prepare their children well for going to school alone or being out and about in their leisure time.

Agree on rules of behaviour with your child for their journey to school and during any leisure time. Take into account your child's level of development and the individual circumstances in your family.

Example:

- Which route to school or which route to leisure activities should the child use? (The shortest route is not always the safest one.)
- How can the child reach its parents in an emergency?
- Who should the child contact if any incidents occur on the way to school or during leisure times? (e.g. shops, doctors' practices, public authorities or personal contacts)
- How should the child behave if it is spoken to by an adult/young person?
- Are there any other children in the neighbourhood with whom the child can go to school? (Groups offer protection)
- How should the child behave if it recognises threatening situations?

This not only applies to difficult situations on the way to school or in leisure times: take a few minutes every day to talk to your child about what he or she has experienced during the day – including the negative things.

Children who face emergency situations need one thing above all: people who are observant and act. We would therefore ask you to pay attention to your surroundings; do not look away if you witness situations where others – particularly children – are in danger.

You can find more information on the subject of moral courage here: www.aktion-tu-was.de



In an emergency!

- If a child is being harassed, running away to other people or to shops, practices, school etc. is the best alternative for a child seeking help.
- If that is not possible, the child may do anything that helps draw other people's attention to his or her situation (screaming, scratching, biting, kicking).
- If strangers have asked your child to accompany them or get into a vehicle or if you witness a situation in which a child is being harassed, inform the police immediately!
- Intervene if a child is clearly being harassed – e.g. by asking whether everything is OK.
- If you are making an emergency call to the police (110), describe the location, the person, the situation and even the vehicle, if relevant, as precisely as possible; this is very helpful.
- However, please remember that children are children and should never be blamed if they get into difficult situations – despite all the rules governing behaviour.

You can obtain more information about this topic, including the effectiveness of self-defence training courses for children, at: www.polizei.sachsen.de

