



- Select a backpack for your child that has wide, padded shoulder straps, as they are comfortable and lessen the stress on the shoulders.
- Look for a padded backpack, which makes for easy carrying and comfort. It also protects the child against sharp edges on objects inside the pack.
- Don't over pack. The backpack should never weigh more than 15-20 percent of your child's body weight, especially in the younger years.
- Never let your child sling a backpack over one shoulder. It can strain muscles and/or cause loss of equilibrium. Always use both shoulder straps.
- Teach your child to organize and balance the backpack by using all of its compartments. Pack heavier items closest to the center of the back.

Child Safety



Over 2,500 children are reported missing every day. How can you help protect your child from those who intend harm? Safety Expert Tom Patire, founder of the CDT Family Training Centers, offers some of his trademarked Tom's Tips®:

- Talk to your child about safety. Gently explain that some people do bad things and want to hurt children. Make sure that your child understands that "bad guys" can seem friendly.
- Have your child team up. There is increased safety in numbers, so whether your child is heading to school, the park, the movies, anywhere, he should always go with friends.



- **Explain the difference between a “good touch” and a “bad touch.” Tell your child that no one should touch her in her private areas (those parts covered by a bathing suit). If anyone does, she should shout, “No, don’t touch me there!” and be sure to tell you about it.**
- **Describe dangerous situations. Kids like to help. An abductor will often exploit that by asking for help finding a lost pet. Teach your child never to aid an adult who’s looking for a lost puppy, kitten or any type of animal.**
- **Show your child whom to trust. Tell him that if he gets lost or separated from you, he should go to a trustworthy adult, such as a police officer, security guard, store personnel, a mom with children or a pregnant woman and ask for help.**