



KIDNAPPING

SAFETY ALERT

A child goes missing every five hours in South Africa! NGO for Missing Children SA, Bianca van Aswegen, said that abductions were on the up and **only 1% of child trafficking victims were ever found**. Kidnappings have been on the increase and not only girls are vulnerable, but boys are in danger as well. **Never wait 24 hours before reporting** a missing child, as this window is **the most crucial** when anyone goes missing. People still think they need to wait, but that is not the case. We urge parents to make their children, teenagers and young adults aware and arm them with the necessary information regarding kidnapping safety.

What YOU should do:

- Know your child's whereabouts at all times
- At a very early age, teach your child their address, telephone number and your first and last name
- Teach them how to call **10111** for help
- Make sure children know how to make local and long-distance telephone calls
- Teach your children to scream as loudly as possible, and that it is okay to do so when afraid
- Never leave children alone in a car, not even for a few seconds
- Establish strict procedures for picking up children at school, after movies, at friends' homes, etc.
- Establish a family code word that only you, your child and a trusted relative or friend knows. Teach your child to ask for the code word when approached by someone offering them a ride
- Remind your children to never accept a ride from someone you don't know, even if the child knows them
- Talk to your children about child abduction in a simple, non-threatening way
- Listen to your child when he/she discusses anyone they have met or spoken to, unbeknownst to you
- Have photographs taken of your children at least four times a year (especially for pre-schoolers). Make note of birthmarks or other distinguishing features
- Have your child fingerprinted and store the prints in a safe, easily accessible place in your home
- Use a mobile app like [Google Family Link](#) to ensure you can always locate your child through their phone. The app is a live location map showing where the child's device is, making it easier to track whereabouts of the child

Teach your children to:

- Never leave home without your permission. Very small children should play only in areas away from the street, such as a backyard, or in a play area supervised by a responsible adult
- Never wander off, avoid shortcuts through alleys or deserted area (use the buddy system)
- Come straight home from school unless you have made other arrangements
- Never enter anyone's home without your approval
- If accosted by a stranger in a mall, scream 'This is not my Daddy!' and get behind the nearest shop counter
- Scream, run away and tell a trusted adult if anyone attempts to touch them, or offers them a ride
- Never give any information over the phone including their name and address, or indicate they are alone
- Keep doors locked and admit only authorized people into the house