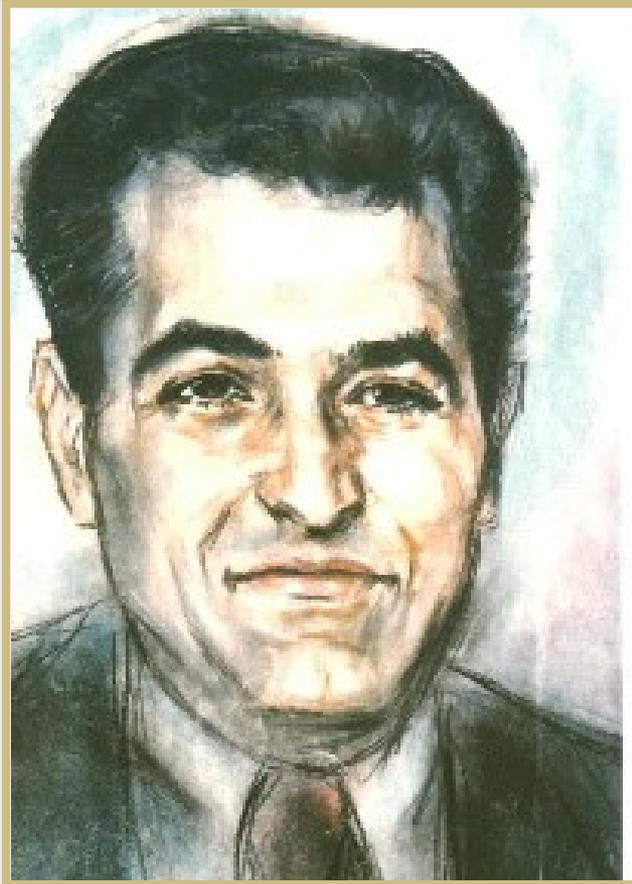


# **Your Child's Personal Safety**

**David P. Fornshell**  
**Warren County**  
**Prosecutor**



# Potential Abductors Have No Distinguishing Characteristics



- Male or female
- Come from any background
- Teenager or adult
- Usually not strangers
- Acquaintances or family members
- Trust your instincts

# How to Talk to Children About Personal Safety



- Good communication is a key to helping your child stay safe.
- Be open.
- Let your child know he or she can talk with you about anything.
- Teach your child to trust their instincts.
- Teach your child that it's okay to say "NO" to an adult if asked to do something they're uncomfortable with.

# How to Talk to Children About Personal Safety

- Build a close relationship.
- Pay close attention.
- If your child talks about spending time with an adult, listen carefully.
- Discuss with your child the details of their day.
- Believe what your child tells you.



# Danger Signs (Grooming)

- Receiving gifts from an adult when you aren't present or without your permission.
- Receiving extra attention from – or spending time alone with – an adult.
- Changes in behavior, such as secrecy.
- Your child tells you they are uncomfortable around someone.
- Your child uses sexually explicit language.



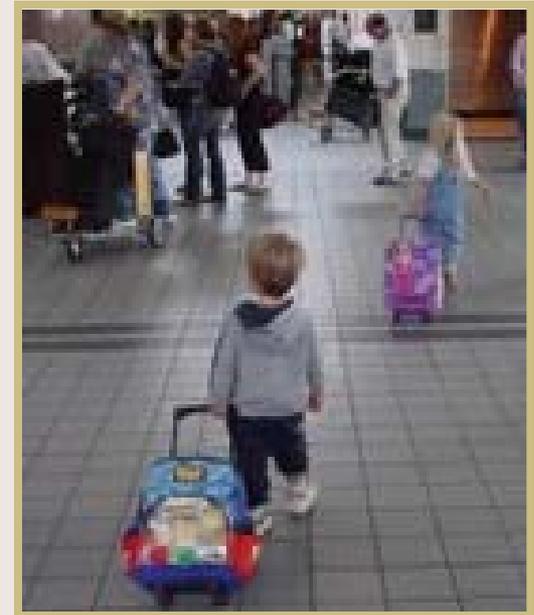
# The Best Defense is KNOWLEDGE

- Get to know your child's friends and their families well.
- Get to know teachers, coaches and any other adults your child spends time with.
- Know where your child is at all times and who your child is with.
- Know what your child is doing online.



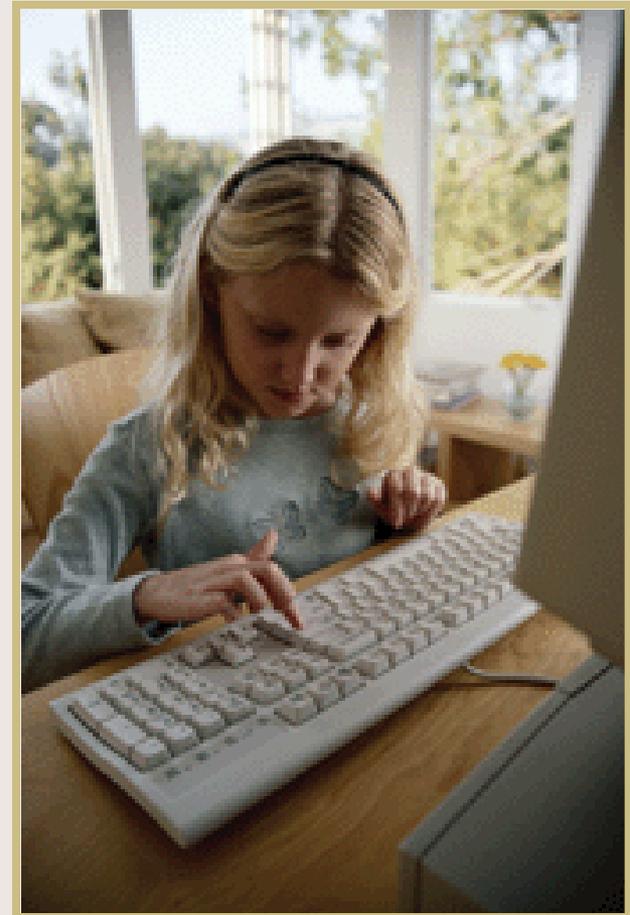
# Additional Protections

- Every child should know
  - Phone number (including area code)
  - Home address
  - How to reach parents at all times
- What else can parents do?
  - Avoid putting your child's name on clothing and other belongings
  - Have a secret code word
  - Never leave your child alone in a public place
  - Have an emergency plan



# Rules for the Internet

- Never give personal information over the Internet.
- Never agree to meet someone they “talked” with online.
- Never respond to offensive or threatening messages.
- Limit chats to people you and your child know personally.
- Set up the computer in a common area.



# Rules for the Internet: “My Space”

- Monitor your child’s page.
- Do not allow the posting of photographs.
- Your child should never post personal information.
- If your child has a profile, set it to “private” so that only his or her friends can view the profile.
- Purchase internet safety software such as Net Nanny.



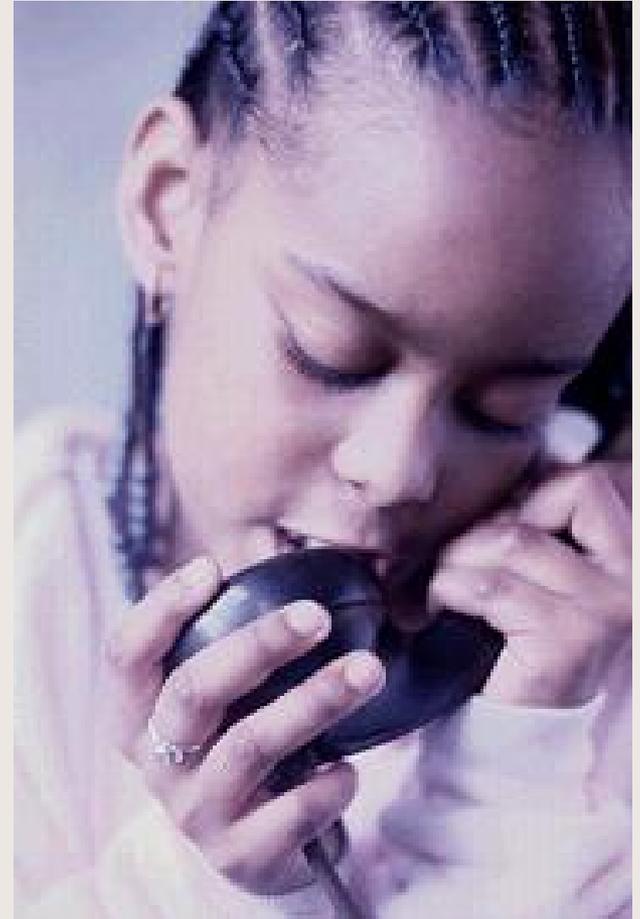
# Guidelines for Children Who Are Home Alone

- The exact age when a child may be left alone depends on their maturity.
- Usually it's around 12.
- Ask your child's health-care provider for advice.
- Whether your child is ready to be left alone.
- The appropriate length of time.



# Guidelines for Children Who Are Home Alone

- Keep all outside doors locked.
- Never tell a caller or anyone online that you are home alone.
- Never open the door for anyone.
- Call a parent as soon as you get home.
- Go to a trusted neighbor's if something looks strange.



# Choosing Child Care



- Interview potential caregivers and check their references.
- Drop in unannounced occasionally to check on your child and the caregiver.
- Ask your child for his or her opinion of the caregiver.

# Practice, Practice, Practice.

## “What would you do if . . .”

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- Someone asks for directions?
- Someone tries to touch you or makes you feel uncomfortable?
- Someone follows you home?
- Someone says he or she is supposed to take you home but doesn't know the secret code?
- Someone says he or she will give you a present if you go inside a building or car?
- Someone asks for help finding a lost pet?
- Someone online asks you to meet them?

# The Unthinkable: Tips In Case Your Child is Missing

- Keep in a safe and accessible place
  - A current description and current photograph of your child
  - Current medical and dental records
  - DNA sample and fingerprints
- Learn more about personal safety and child abduction from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children: [www.ncmec.org](http://www.ncmec.org)



# The Prosecutor's Office



**David P. Fornshell**  
**Warren County Prosecutor**

- Victim-Witness Advocates are available.
- We can help make contacts and referrals to law enforcement agencies.
- Additional resources are available on our website:

[www.co.warren.oh.us/Prosecutor](http://www.co.warren.oh.us/Prosecutor)