

Child Safety Guidelines

It is imperative for parents to teach their children that *Hakodosh Boruch Hu* made it incumbent on their parents to protect them, and that their parents can only fulfil this obligation if the children follow the rules that their parents teach them. There is no need to go into further detail other than to say that this is part of our way of life as *Yidden*.

1. **It is permissible** for a child to respond to or ask any normal looking person such straightforward questions as, "Where is a particular place?" or for directions etc, as long as the person does not digress into further conversation on matters not relevant to the child or his direct question. **It is forbidden** under any circumstances for a child to go with a person who asks him/her to show the person a particular place or who offers to show the child the place he is looking for, or offers him/her a ride etc. **Familiarise your children** with the "**4 Iameds**", **Lo – To say "No"**, **Litzok – to Scream**, **Larutz – to Run**, **L'Saper – to Tell**.
2. Train children to answer questions directed to them with, "**I have to ask permission from my father/mother**". There have been cases where a person has told a child, "**It's OK, I've already spoken with your father/mother and he/she gives you permission.**" Train your children in such circumstances to insist on their own position and respond to the person: "**I have to hear for myself that my father/mother gives me permission.**" Train your children that in these and similar circumstances they must **not believe** what strangers tell them.
3. **It is forbidden** for a child to open the door to a stranger when his/her parents are not at home. It is forbidden under any circumstances for the child to say "My parents are not at home." Children should be taught that the correct response to say in these circumstances is, "My father/mother is not available to open the door." Similarly, when answering the telephone, children should be taught not to tell strangers that their parents are not at home now, but should say that they are not available to come to the phone now.
4. **It is forbidden** to send young children anywhere unaccompanied and without proper supervision. Even in cases of children who are somewhat older and more "independent", they may not be sent anywhere (whether to school, Shule, outside Shule during davening, or to the park etc) without parents actively taking steps to know at all times during the absence, where their children are and where they are going, and to give them clear parameters where they can and cannot go. Parents **are also obligated** to check from time to time to ensure that their children are in the place(s) where they are supposed to be. A child is **not permitted** to go to a friend or neighbour's house without permission from his/her parents. A child who is late for school **should not** be sent to school alone without a "late note" which also notes the exact time the child left home to go to school.

In addition, we need to constantly *daven* that *Hakodosh Boruch Hu* will protect our children *mikol tzara uepega ra b'ruchniyus u'vegashmius* and in that merit we will be *zoche* to the *Geulah Sh'leimah BB"A*.