



SUMMER SAFETY TIPS

How to Report a Tip

 **Call** 713.222.TIPS (8477)

 **Text** TIP610 plus your tip to CRIMES (274637)

 Use our **Mobile App**
Download app name: Crime Stoppers Houston

 Go to **[crime-stoppers.org](https://www.crime-stoppers.org)**

Tipsters will remain anonymous and could be eligible for a cash reward of up to \$5,000.

Did you know?

- Texas law does not specify an age you can safely leave your child home alone.
- It is illegal for a parent to allow a child under 14 years to ride a bike without a helmet.
- “It is a crime punishable under Texas law to leave your child unattended in a car.”
- It is unlawful to leave your pet in an unsafe condition, including a hot car.
- It only takes 20 minutes for the inside of a car to reach 104° when it’s 75° outside and 10 minutes when it’s 85°.

SUMMER CAMPS

Questions to consider when choosing a summer camp:

- Are employees checked for criminal history including the National Sex Offender registry?
- What is the camp doing to reduce the risk of bullying and abuse?
- What type of training is required for staff? Is there any pertaining to bullying and abuse prevention?
- What is the camp’s discipline policy for staff misconduct as well as campers?
- How will your child be supervised? Request to see the schedule and ask questions if something is unfamiliar!
- Search the camp online for reviews.
- Is the camp licensed by the state and accredited by the ACA (American Camp Association)?

HOME ALONE

According to DFPS, you are accountable for your child’s care and inadequate supervision can be considered neglectful supervision. If you are planning on leaving more than one child home alone, think of the youngest when reading through the following:

- How old, emotionally mature and capable is your child? Does your child have a mental or physical disability?
- Does your child generally make good decisions?
- How does your child generally handle unexpected situations?
- Is the home environment a safe one?
- Are there hazards or risks in the neighborhood?
- Does your child have basic first-aid knowledge?
- What is your child’s ability to respond to illness, fire, weather, or other types of emergencies?
- Does your child know where you are and have the knowledge and means to contact you?
- Does your child have other responsible adults he/she can contact if you are not available?
- How long will your child be left alone?

If after reviewing the above, you feel comfortable leaving your child home alone, consider the following:

- Set rules for going outside, using the computer, having friends over, screen time, etc.
- Create a schedule for your child so he/she knows what to expect, including times to check in.
- Secure items that pose potential dangers such as firearms, alcohol, prescription drugs, over-the-counter drugs, car keys, lighters, etc.
- Check all windows and doors and utilize parental controls on computers and televisions.
- Make sure they are not answering the phone for anyone they do not know.
- Is there a neighbor you trust to check in on your child?
- Write down the home address as well as emergency numbers such as 911 and poison control.
- Have a practice run, then start with leaving your child for short periods of time and work your way up.
- Have an emergency plan in place and practice it. Practice first aid.



HIRING A SITTER

If you choose to hire someone to watch your child consider the following:

- There is no legal babysitting age in Texas - Consider experience caring for children your child's age and call references!
- Check databases for criminal history including the National Sex Offender registry.
- The Red Cross recommends a minimum babysitting age of 11 to 15 years old.
- Listen to your child if he/she discloses disapproval of the sitter or feels uncomfortable with the sitter.
- Discuss discipline and expectations and introduce your sitter to your kids and your home prior to the first job.
- Leave a list of emergency contacts in the event that you are unreachable.
- Review people who may or may not be allowed in your home.



HOT CAR SAFETY

- You are committing a crime if you intentionally leave your child or pet in a motor vehicle for longer than five minutes if:
 - the child is younger than 7 years of age; and
 - not attended by someone in the vehicle who is 14+ years old
- Call 911 immediately if you see a child unattended in a car.
- Place an item in the backseat that you need, such as a cell phone or briefcase, to ensure you look before you leave / lock your car.
- Parking in a shaded area with the windows cracked DOES NOT prevent from heat stroke or over-heating.
- Utilize drive-thru services when possible such as cleaners, banks, restaurants, pharmacy, etc.



HEAT SAFETY

- Use sunscreen with a minimum SPF 15.
- Reapply sunscreen after 2 hours or after being in the water.
- Wear a hat to protect your face and neck.
- Stay in the shade as much as possible.
- Drink plenty of water when in the sun (min 16 ounces / hr).
- If exercising in the sun, make sure to drink water every 20 minutes.
- If exercising in the sun, gradually work up to longer periods of sun exposure (the sun is strongest between 10am - 2pm)
- If exercising in the sun, wear light colored and lightweight clothing, preferably made out of absorbent materials.



CYBER SAFETY

Children have more access to the Internet than ever before through their mobile devices, electronic portable games, home computers, etc. Even if they don't own a device that is Internet-ready, they are more than likely in the presence of those who do. It is important to talk to your child about Internet safety:

- Keep computers in a common area.
- Utilize parental controls on computers to restrict how much time your child is online as well as what times they can be online.
- Not only can you restrict certain websites, you can also block new ones from being accessed without parental approval.
- Periodically review content on any device your children can use to access the Internet including cell phones.
- Talk to your child about what to do if they encounter pop ups and if inappropriate content appears.
- Review the online don'ts – don't give out personal information, don't send pictures of yourself, don't meet anyone offline!



BIKE SAFETY

Proper hand signaling helps drivers, pedestrians, and other bikers know your intentions, keeping you and other road users safe.

- **Follow the Law:** You have the same rights and duties as drivers. Always ride with traffic, in the rightmost lane, headed in the direction you are going. You may be in the left lane if you are turning left.
- **Be Predictable:** Make your intentions clear to everyone on the road. Ride in a straight line and don't swerve between cars. Signal and check behind you well before changing your lane position.
- **Be Visible:** Use bright white lights on front of your bicycle and bright red lights on back, in addition to reflectors. Wear bright, reflective clothing in low light conditions, but also during the day.
- **Think Ahead:** Plan your route carefully to avoid dangerous streets.
- **Ride Ready:** Check that your tires are properly inflated, brakes are working, chain runs smoothly and quick release levers are closed. Leave the earplugs and mobile phone off while cycling. *Always wear a helmet – it's the law in Houston and can reduce the risk of head injury by 85% in a crash.*



WATER SAFETY

- Always supervise children when in or around water.
- If you step away, designate a responsible adult to supervise.
- Teach your child to swim and become CPR certified.
- When boating, all ages should wear approved life jackets.



PET SAFETY

- If kept outdoors, ensure your pet has plenty of water and shade.
- You may not leave a dog outside and unattended by use of a restraint that unreasonably limits the dog's movement. Exemption: if the restraint is a length shorter than the greater of 5x the length of the dog or 10 feet
- If you are traveling, leave your pet with a reputable kennel or hire a pet sitter.
- If driving, pull over often for your pet to relieve themselves and drink water.
- It is unlawful to leave your pet in unsafe conditions and/or causes injury to the pet, including a hot car.
- Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in dogs. Apply sunblock every 3-4 hours and don't cut their hair short.