



La Porte Police pass along childcare safety tips for the holiday shopping season

12-15-2011

With Thanksgiving having passed and the Christmas season upon us, the La Porte Police Department advises child caregivers that extra vigilance should be exercised when shopping with young children. Therefore, in an effort to promote a safe holiday excursions, LPPD offers the following tips suggested by the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC):

- **When in a public facility always supervise your children, and always accompany young children to the restroom.**
- **Make certain your children know to stay with you at all times while shopping and always check first with you or a trusted adult before they go anywhere.**
- **Make a plan in the event you become separated; have children meet you in a pre-designated spot if they become lost.**
- **Teach younger children to look for people who may be sources of help such as a uniformed law-enforcement, a security officer, store salesperson with a nametag, or a person with a nametag who is working in the information booth.**
- **Advise children they should stay close to where they first became separated and never leave the store/mall or go to the parking lot to look for you or your vehicle.**
- **Do not leave children alone at public facilities such as video arcades, movie theaters, or playgrounds as a convenient “babysitter” while holiday shopping.**
- **Never leave children alone in toy or specialty stores.**
- **If you allow your older children to shop unsupervised, have them take a friend.**
- **Have older children check-in with you on a regular basis while they are out.**

Nothing takes the place of your supervision when you are in a public place with your children. Therefore, if you are going holiday shopping and feel you will be distracted, make other arrangements for the care of your children. It’s very easy to get distracted with all the sights, sounds, and crowds of holiday shopping, and the

La Porte Police and NCMEC understand this. So take proactive measures to avoid any predicaments or serious events and make certain young children stay with you at all times and older children check-in on a frequent basis. For more information about child-safety topics, please visit NCMEC's website at www.missingkids.com. Additionally, if you are aware that a child is missing, do not hesitate to call the local police in your area. Finally, if you ever have questions regarding child safety, please contact La Porte Police Department at 281-842-3183.