

# Peoria Police and Fire Departments Public Safety Media Relations



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## **NEWS RELEASE**

DATE: August 5, 2009

For Immediate Release

### **School is getting close to starting, is your child ready to be left at home before or after school?**

Peoria Police and Fire provide you with some questions you can ask your child to see if he/she is ready.

The Peoria Police and Fire Departments want to make sure you and your kids are ready for the responsibility of being a "Latch Key Kid". By discussing the following items with your child you should get a good idea if he/she is ready to be alone or if you as a parent have more work to do.

(See how your children's answers compare to the recommended answers below each question).

**Question:** You are at home alone and a stranger calls asking to speak to Mom or Dad. What do you say?

**Answer:** Mom and Dad are very busy. May I have your number so they can call you when they are free? **NEVER** tell anyone that you are home alone.

**Question:** A friend calls and asks you to come to his house, since his parents aren't home, either. What should you do?

**Answer:** Mom and I have a rule that I can't go anywhere without her permission. I'll be glad to play with you at school tomorrow. **NEVER** invite him to your house without your parent's permission.

**Question:** You drop a glass of milk and it breaks. What should you do?

**Answer:** Use a broom and dustpan to sweep up all the pieces of glass. Make sure you get every little piece. **NEVER** use your fingers to pick it up. If any liquid was spilled, clean it up with a mop.

**Question:** Your younger brother/sister has a can of some cleaning products in his hand. You are not sure if he/she swallowed some. What do you do?

**Answer:** Call 9-1-1.

- Mom should have the number taped to the phone.

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- Follow their instructions exactly
- Call Mom or Dad so they can come home quickly

**Question:** You need to reach Mom or Dad at work. What is their work phone number?

**Answer:** Have the child memorize it and have it written down next to the telephone. Some times people forget things, like phone numbers, when in an emergency.

**Question:** You are playing on the front lawn and a stranger drives by very slowly and tries to talk to you. What do you do?

**Answer:** You:

- Go into the house, lock the doors and look through the window.
- If the car doesn't leave, call 9-1-1 and tell the operator exactly what you saw.
- Remember the color of the car and what the driver looked like.
- Especially, try to remember the license plate number.

**Question:** A neighbor that you don't know very well offers to take care of your little brother/sister for you if you will go to the store for them. They offer to give you some money. What do you do?

**Answer:** Tell the neighbor that your parents don't permit you to go to the store without their permission. **NEVER** break the rules that your parents make.

**Question:** When you get home from school, you don't have your key in your pocket. What should you do?

**Answer:** Go to a neighbor that you know real well and ask if you can call your parents at work so that they will know where you are.

**Question:** You smell smoke or the smoke alarm sounds. What should you do?

**Answers:**

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- Call 9-1-1 and get out of the house
- Wait for the fire trucks on the front lawn.

**Question:** The door bell rings and a person say's he has a delivery for your parents. What do you do?

**Answers:** Ask him to leave it on the front porch. Tell him your Mom is busy and can't come to the door

- If he says he needs a signature
- Tell him he'll have to come back later.
- Also, discuss what is to be done for the other people who come to the door.

There is no specific age at which children can be left alone, even though we recommend that no child under the age of 12 be left alone for long periods of time. However, several factors should be considered before you leave your child alone.

- How mature is the child?
- How trustworthy is the child?
- Do they have a safety plan?
- Is there a neighbor close by who the child can call on if something happens?
- Does the child know how to call 9-1-1?
- Do they know how to reach a parent quickly?
- How long is the child left alone? An hour after school before a parent arrives home may be fine, when all day may be unacceptable.
- Is the child expected to supervise younger children? If so, for how long?

As we said, this is a difficult situation to assess because some ten year olds may be able to handle certain situations that a fourteen or fifteen year old may not be mature enough to handle.

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You don't want your child home alone and want a fun and safe place for them to go before and after school? Sign them up the City of Peoria AM/PM program.

AM/PM Recreation Program  
August 10, 2009 - May 20, 2010

The City of Peoria AM/PM Recreation Program is now open for registration. The program provides children enrolled in Kindergarten to 14 years of age an opportunity to participate in a variety of activities before and after school in a safe secure environment. The Program's schedule of activities gives the participants the opportunity to explore new experiences through games, science, arts and creative play that will expand learning in this recreational based program. The Program is licensed by the Department of Health Services and accepts Department of Economic Security funding.

The program starts August 10, 2009 and runs until May 20, 2010. The AM program hours are 6:00 am until school opens and PM program hours are school dismissal to 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Programs are located in all elementary schools within Peoria city limits. Costs for the program are as follows: AM \$6.00 per day, PM \$9.00 per day; AM/PM \$14.00 per day; or \$56.00 per week.

The City of Peoria also provides care during Columbus Day Break, Winter and Spring Breaks and Testing Break Care throughout the year. The hours for break camps are 6:00am -6:00 pm and the cost is \$24 per day/ per child.

For more information go to [www.peoriaaz.gov/recreation](http://www.peoriaaz.gov/recreation) or call 623-773-7137.

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