



WAKEFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT

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March 2018: School Resource Officer Monthly Safety Message

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We wanted to go over a couple important safety topics that parents should make sure children of any age understand. Some of the recent tragedies are obviously difficult for children to understand, but they also open the door to teachable moments.

The first topic is that **IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING**. Sometimes we don't give them enough credit, but children are very observant and see things in school, on social media, and out in the community that just don't seem "right" to them. They need to know who the trusted adults are in their life that they can tell their concerns to. Who are the people they could turn to both in school and at home to tell?

Also, we all hope that when our children are not with us, that they are polite and respectful to adults, but we also want them to also understand that if an adult asks them to do anything that they are uncomfortable with, that they know what to do. It's a sad reality that there is a small minority of adults that have bad intentions and it can be very difficult for children to be able to differentiate between trusted adults and strangers. Children need to understand that not doing a "favor" for a stranger or not getting in the car with an unknown adult is not being disrespectful. For example, holding the door for others at school is being nice but can also be dangerous if the person is not known to them. If an unknown adult tells a child that they lost something and asks for help they are under no obligation to help them. It's a tricky road to maneuver, but definitely something that needs to be discussed. After talking with some children in the schools, we have realized that in most cases they would rather hold the door or look for what is lost rather than be perceived as unhelpful or rude. It's important for kids to know that *adults help adults and kids can help kids*.

If you as parent have any questions about these comments or how to talk to your kids about safety out and about in the community do not hesitate to contact one of your School Resource Officers.

Thank you,

Officer Mike Pietrantonio - Officer Kelley Tobyne - Officer Jason Skillings
Wakefield Police Department