



WAKEFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT

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Dear Parents and Guardians,

April 2, 2018

The Wakefield Police School Resource Officers would like to take this opportunity to dedicate this month's safety message in observance of the National Campaign for Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention. We believe that every child has a right to a safe childhood free of violence. April, Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Month, is an important time to start the conversation in our communities about how we can keep our children safe.

There are four areas parents and guardians can be vigilant within your child's life to ensure their safety. These four areas include in the home, playdates and sleepovers, school/ sports and activities, and the Internet.

In the Home:

- Promote an open door policy during the day. Don't promote isolation and secrecy.
- Take note of sibling dynamics. Bullying and dominating behavior should be addressed and corrected.
- Keep an eye out for behavioral changes in your children (depression, anxiety, isolation).

Play Dates and Sleep Overs:

- Take the time to introduce yourself and get to know the parents.
- Ask how they handle TV, internet and video games.
- Sleepovers can increase the opportunity for abuse. Familiarize yourself with the family members and the different age ranges in the home.
- Try to gauge the family's parenting style.

School/ Sports and Other activities:

- Avoid activities where your child will be alone with an adult or an older juvenile (group settings and or public spaces help minimize this opportunity).
- Ask about employee/ volunteering screening and abuse prevention training for staff.

The Internet:

- Keep Computers, Smartphones and tablets in common areas and OUT of bedrooms.
- Monitor all cell phone/ texting- there are services that enable parents to remotely supervise usage. (by law, Children under the age of 13 should not be on any social media)
- Discuss the dangers of communicating online or sharing photos and personal information.

For those of you who are looking for more information on this topic Please attend the presentation Project Safe Childhood on April 25th at the Galvin from 7-8:30 PM. Presented by the US Attorney's Office and the Wakefield Police Department.

Thank you,
Officer Pietrantonio, Officer Skillings and Officer Tobyne
