



# United States Army Criminal Investigation Command

Media contact: CID Public Affairs Office  
703-806-0372

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



## CID tips on safeguarding children on and off military installations

**FORT BELVOIR, Virginia**, August 3, 2007 – The daily challenges of keeping children safe and teaching them how to avoid becoming victims of crime requires more than just parental advice; it takes a joint effort between law enforcement personnel, Soldiers, family members and Army civilians who live both on and off military installations.

The U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command, commonly known as CID, provides a worldwide network of CID Special Agents with the experience to help provide timely safety tips and resources that every parent should consider when safeguarding their children.

According to CID Special Agent Angela Janysek, chief, Persons Crime, Investigative Operations Division, families should always take precautions and be aware of the potential for crimes directed against their children.

“Families with small children should be aware of their surroundings both on and off an installation,” Janysek said. “Parents can’t be expected to watch their children every minute of every day, but understanding the safety risks children face on a daily basis can help prevent them from becoming victims of crime.”

Janysek has investigated felony-level crime for more than 11 years and her experience has shown that communities work best when there is a collaborative effort between the community and law enforcement to identify potential crime problems or disorder.

“For law enforcement personnel, it takes the anticipation, recognition, and the appraisal of a particular crime risk and the initiation of an individual to take action to help eliminate or reduce the threat of a criminal act,” Janysek said. “However, we can’t do it all alone. Crime prevention requires the active participation of members within a community, with the ultimate goal of helping a community find solutions to their particular problems and concerns. It involves all elements of a community to ensure the safety of their children.”

With the increase in deployments, many families are faced with raising their children in one parent homes and under difficult circumstances for long periods of time.

According to CID Special Agent John Dippel, ensuring the safety of families and the children of deployed Soldiers goes a long way toward maintaining good morale of Soldiers serving far away from home.

“Children are the future hope of every mature generation and families are the heart and soul of Soldiers deployed overseas on the battlefield,” Dippel said. “With deployments being extended, the longer tours can be difficult for families and their children. Knowing that their families are safe back home is of paramount importance to those deployed.”

Dippel further explained how families can take preventive measures to protect themselves and their children when loved ones are deployed.

“I strongly advise not to advertise the fact your spouse is currently deployed,” Dippel said. “Although patriotic items in windows, yards and vehicles are a tremendous show of support to our war fighters, advertising the fact that you’re home alone may not be the best message to send and may open the door to child predators.”

Dippel said that children should be taught at a very young age how to contact law enforcement personnel, and who trusted friends or neighbors are if the need should arise.

“Make sure all important contact information is posted and available for easy access by children in case of emergencies,” Dippel said. “Children should also know who to allow anyone into their homes, and that people outside the family and neighborhood circle should be well identified before anyone is let into your home.

For many years, children were taught never to talk to strangers and to stay away from people they don’t know. However, according to Dippel, today there is more for parents to consider when teaching their children about strangers.

“Teaching children to stay away from strangers is a good idea,” Dippel said. “But, this concept is sometimes very difficult for some younger children to grasp and many times we see the perpetrator is someone the child already knows. It’s much more helpful to build a child’s confidence and teach them how to respond to a potentially dangerous or uncomfortable situation, rather than just teaching them to look out for a particular type of person.”

In today’s high-tech world children spend a lot of time on the Internet and according to Dippel a good chance exists they could share personal information when requested by strangers in chat rooms, on websites or via email messages.

“Internet safety is a big concern for parents of small children,” Dippel said. “There are predators on the Internet who are looking to take advantage of small unsuspecting children. So, it’s important for parents to teach their children not to trust strangers they may come in contact with on the internet.”

Dippel explained that parents should take time to teach their children about visiting approved sites and to ensure negative or sexually-explicit material or email is not being viewed by children. They also need to be taught to inform their parents if they do receive messages of this type.

CID's Computer Crimes Investigative Unit has a very effective outreach initiative to help assist parents with information on how to prevent Internet crime against children at:

[http://www.cid.army.mil/CCIU\\_Outreach.htm](http://www.cid.army.mil/CCIU_Outreach.htm)

"There are also many books and Internet safety tips for kids that all parents should be aware of to help their children avoid becoming victims of Internet crime," Dippel said. "Parents should teach their children to never give out personal information, such as home address, telephone numbers or the name and location of their school."

According to CID officials, these additional tips can help parents teach their children how to safely navigate the Internet:

- Have children tell parents right away if they come across any information that makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Children should never agree to get together with someone they meet online.
- Children should never send their picture or anything else to a stranger they meet online, without first getting a parent's permission.
- Children should not respond to any messages that are hateful or in any way make them feel uncomfortable.
- Parents should consider loading a child safety program on their Internet to block unwanted material

In today's face-paced world, children should be under the care of responsible adults at all times according to CID officials, regardless of the constant challenges parents, guardians and those who care for children face.

"Young children should never be left alone in homes or cars under any circumstances," Janysek said. "Leaving young children home or in vehicles alone is a recipe for disaster. Accidental fires, poisoning and injuries can occur and parents will be held accountable if such a disaster should occur. It is a criminal offense to leave a minor unattended, even for a short while."

Other basic child safety measures include:

- Taking note of vehicles parked outside your homes that don't belong. If a vehicle reappears, it could be a sign that your home is being observed by someone who has criminal intent. Trust your gut and contact police.
- Call the Military Police or local police if living off post, to report suspected predators or individuals who don't seem to fit - have them checked out.
- Avoid opening your doors to strangers; talk through the door and if necessary, call the Military Police if they request or need help.

- Always know where your child is and when they are going somewhere and when they are expected to be home.
- Make children aware that people can try and trick them or lure them with candy, pets or other excuses to get them alone.
- Always try to use the buddy system when your child is going somewhere.
- Teach children that safety trumps manners
- Write down the address and phone number of your house for your child in case they have to provide it to the police or emergency personnel.
- Discuss and rehearse fire prevention and evacuation procedures.
- Teach your children to tell you right away if someone touches them inappropriately.
- Thoroughly check references and available information on people or child care centers who care for your children

“There are many other safety precautions families can implement when living on or off military installations,” Janysek said. “When walking with your children, stick to the main walkways and away from wooded or secluded areas. If you have to walk at night, use areas that are well lit and frequently used by other neighbors and continue to be aware of your surroundings. It’s also a good idea to have a well-charged cell phone with you at all times.”

According to Dippel, lighting around the home is also an important consideration, especially when living off post.

“Good quality lighting, both inside and outside the home, should be a top priority for homeowners,” Dippel said. “Security locks and the installation of peepholes is also a great, simple security tool to consider.”

According to Dippel, having a well-lit home and safety devices like peepholes will help to prevent harm to children who might open doors to strangers.

For more information on child safety, visit [www.cid.army.mil](http://www.cid.army.mil), or the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children website at: [www.missingkids.com/](http://www.missingkids.com/).

# # #

Editor’s note: To download high resolution versions of the CID Lookout logo visit [http://www.cid.army.mil/lookout\\_logos.html](http://www.cid.army.mil/lookout_logos.html)

**CID Lookout** is a U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command (USACIDC) initiative to partner with the Army community by providing a conduit for members of the Army family, to help prevent, reduce and report felony-level crime.

The USACIDC, commonly known as CID, is an independent criminal investigative organization that investigates serious, felony-level crime such as murder, rape, sexual assault, robbery, arson, fraud, and even cyber crime or intrusions into the Army networks (see CID Cyber Lookout).

Solving and preventing these types of crime cannot be achieved solely by CID Special Agents and the Military Police. Together, professional law enforcement officers and the Army community must work hand-in-hand to fight serious crime. As such, CID is *On Point for the Army* and depends heavily on Soldiers, family members and civilian employees to *Be On The Lookout* and provide assistance in keeping the *Army Strong* and safe.

CID Lookout provides the latest information to the Army community aimed at helping Soldiers protect themselves, their families and to reduce their chances of becoming crime victims.

For more information on CID or to report a felony-level crime or provide information concerning a crime, contact your local CID Office or the Military Police, or visit [www.cid.army.mil](http://www.cid.army.mil).