

Got kids?

Important tips for back to school and year-round safety

It's "back to school" time, and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department San Dimas Station has some tips for staying safe.

Returning to school can be fun and exciting, with every day bringing new experiences, but it can also be difficult for some children. Kids today are faced with far more than learning new material. Interacting with teachers and other students, bullying, peer pressure and school violence are just a few of the challenges children face. You can help prepare your children for the experiences they will face at school each day and help create a safer school environment. We've assembled some advice on how to protect your children, and how to teach them to protect themselves.



Getting to School:

- Give yourself plenty of time as you and your children adjust to the new school schedule.
- Map out a safe way for your children to walk to school or to the bus stop.
- Work with other parents in the neighborhood to ensure that children in the neighborhood are supervised closely to and from school.
- Work with your neighbors and your child on identifying "safe houses" in the neighborhood; homes where your child is familiar and can ask for help if need be.
- Point out places they should avoid such as vacant lots, alleyways, and construction areas.
- Encourage your children to use the "buddy system."
- Teach your children to never speak to strangers or go anywhere with a stranger, and let them know it's okay to report if a stranger tries to approach them.
- Teach your children to always be aware of their surroundings. Be aware of slow moving vehicles or parked vehicles that appear to be occupied. Choose a different route or walk on the other side of the street.



- Children AND PARENTS need to pay attention to traffic signals and use crosswalks with a crossing guard if available. Don't cross streets mid-block, or unload passengers away from the curb.
- The speed limit in all school zones is 25 miles per hour.

Bus Safety:

- Make sure your children arrive at least five minutes early for the bus.
- Make sure your children know to stand on the sidewalk while waiting for the bus.
- Teach your children to make sure the bus driver can see them before walking in front of the bus, and to never walk behind a bus.
- Be aware that bullying often happens on the bus. Ask your children about their bus rides, who they sit with, and what goes on in the bus. Encourage them to report any bullying behavior.

After School:

- Have your children check in with an adult as soon as they get home.
- Show them how to properly lock all doors and windows.
- Make sure they know to never open a door to a stranger.
- Establish a set of rules; who can come over, when homework must be done, and any chores they must do before you get home.
- Find a trusted neighbor who will allow your children to come over in case of an emergency.
- Establish strict rules regarding Internet usage.

At School:

- Teach your children to resolve problems without fighting.
- Encourage your children to report bullying behavior, either as a victim or a witness.
- Ask school officials about the safety and emergency plans for the school, all schools are required to have one.

Bullying:

- Listen to children and encourage them to talk about their day.
- Take all complaints about bullying seriously, if you don't your child may not tell you next time.
- Watch for symptoms such as withdrawal, a drop in grades, or new friends.
- Notify the school immediately if you think your child is being bullied.
- Praise your children when they are kind to others.
- Teach children self- protection skills; how to walk and talk confidently, stay alert to their surroundings, and to stand up for themselves verbally.
- "SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING" – Parents and children alike should be aware of their surroundings. If you or your child becomes aware of something or someone suspicious near the school, report it to law enforcement. We want to know!

Electronic safety

- Cell Phones are a small, powerful, valuable tool. Teach children and teens how to keep them from being lost or stolen, and assure that the "lock screen" is locked and password protected. Warn students of the dangers of electronic communications, [such as sexting](#), bullying, and predators.
- Teach by example: If you expect your child to drive without talking on a cell phone or texting, you must model this behavior. Don't use a cell phone while driving!
- Cell phones are often stolen in robberies, either by force or "snatch and run" incidents. Teach students to be aware of this possibility, and to maintain awareness of their surroundings.
- Social Media: Many children [and teens now use social media platforms](#) like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and [many others](#). Experts agree that parents must closely monitor this activity, and many would say you should insist on knowing the passwords to the accounts of your children, or at least follow and friend them to monitor what is sent. The following links to articles may shed light on these issues:
 - [Social Networking Sites for Kids](#)
 - [USA Today: "The smartest apps now enable kids to chat informally with select groups of friends without bumping up against texting limits and without being monitored by parents, coaches and college admissions officers."](#)
 - [Web MD: Should You Monitor Your Teen's Online Activity?](#)

If you would like further information on school safety, or are interested in other crime prevention topics, please contact the San Dimas Sheriff's Station Crime Prevention Unit at 909-450-2763 or by email at SanDimas@lasd.org.

[San Dimas Sheriff's Station - Web site](#)

[Twitter](#) <https://twitter.com/sdmlasd>

[Facebook](#) <https://www.facebook.com/SanDimasSheriffsStation>

Receive Text/Emails: www.Nixle.com

Or in the [City of San Dimas, Code Red](#) <http://bit.ly/130HiGY>

Sheriff's Headquarters Bureau Newsroom

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
4700 Ramona Blvd., Monterey Park, CA 91754
Phone: (323)267-4800

SHBNewsroom@lasd.org

Twitter: @LASD_News http://twitter.com/#!/LASD_News

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/LosAngelesCountySheriffsDepartment>

Receive Text/Emails: www.Nixle.com

Partner to prevent or report crime by contacting your local Sheriff's station. Or if you wish to remain Anonymous, call "LA Crime Stoppers" by dialing 800-222-TIPS (8477), texting the letters TIPLA plus your tip to CRIMES (274637), or using the website <http://lacrimestoppers.org>

To receive detailed, up-to-date information directly from the LASD via e-mail, register for "Nixle" alerts at www.Nixle.com and register for "LASD – San Dimas Station, Los Angeles County Sheriff" and also register for your local LASD station area. Or, text your zip code to 888777 to receive text alerts only. Standard text messaging rates may apply, depending on your calling plan.