

## **When and how should I talk to my child about emergency procedures?**

One of the biggest obstacles parents have is aiding their children in acquiring the skills necessary to cope with stressful situations and overcome challenges. It's important that parents speak with their children about what to do if an emergency arises. This conversation should include a discussion of trusted family members and friends that can be contacted if the child is in need and how to reach them. It's a good idea to review this information with your child and post it in the home where they will have access to it. Talking with children about how to dial 911 and the circumstances in which it would be appropriate to call is also crucial.

Parents are encouraged to talk with young children about the emergency workers in their community so that they feel comfortable locating and approaching a police officer or fireman if needed. Providing realistic examples of emergency scenarios allows young children to be prepared and provides them with the confidence to handle these emergent situations. It's important to develop plans to safeguard your family in the event that there was a fire in the home or a stranger approached your child. When in doubt, children should be encouraged to seek help. Parents are encouraged to not delay this conversation as it can be one of the most important lessons that you share with them.