



Latch Key Kids and After School Safety Tips:

Parents should consider the following:

- Can your child be trusted to go straight home after school?
- Can he or she easily use the telephone, locks, and kitchen appliances?
- Can your child follow rules and instructions well?
- Can your child handle unexpected situations without panicking?
- Can he or she stay home without being afraid?

What you can do as a parent:

- Make sure your child is able to care for themselves if left alone.
- Teach them some basic safety rules.
- Make sure you know where your kids are, what they will be doing, and who they are with.
- Talk it over with them and listen to their concerns and ideas. Work out rules on having friends over, homework, household chores, and television. Remember that staying at home can build a child's self-esteem, sense of responsibility, and practical skills.

Teach your children:

- How to get a hold of you and post important numbers by the phone.
- To check in with you or a neighbor immediately upon arriving home.
- How to dial 9-1-1.
- To never accept gifts or rides from anyone they do not know well.
- How to use the door and window locks, and alarm system, if you have one.
- To never open the door for anyone without your permission.
- To never tell others that they are alone. When answering the phone the child should say "Mom or Dad cannot come to the phone right now."
- To carry a house key on them in a safe place. DO NOT hide a key near the house.
- How to escape in case of a fire.
- To let you know about anything that frightens them or makes them feel uncomfortable.

Most importantly, COMMUNICATE with your child and keep the lines of communication open.