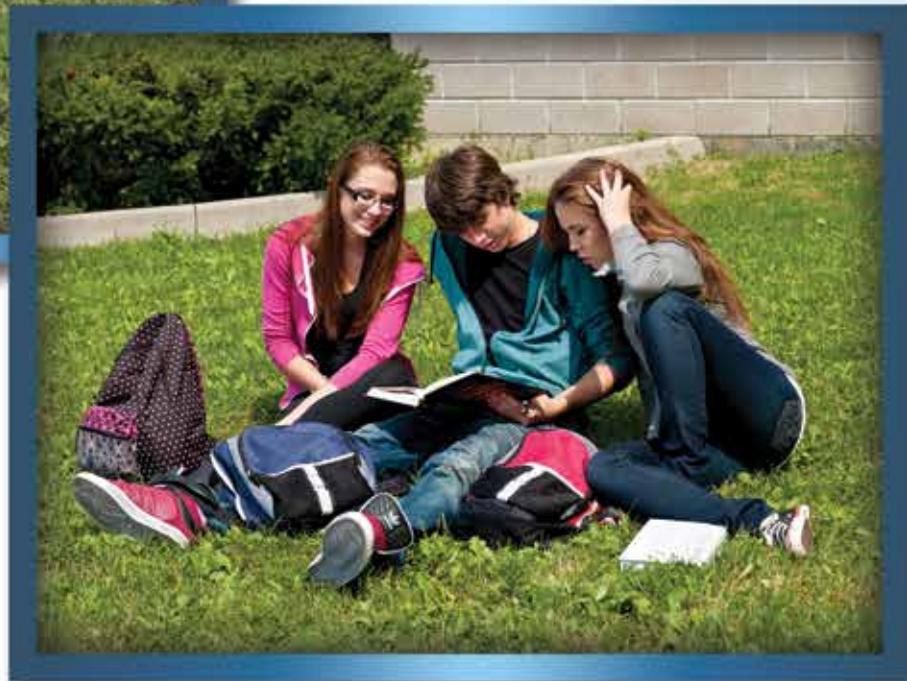
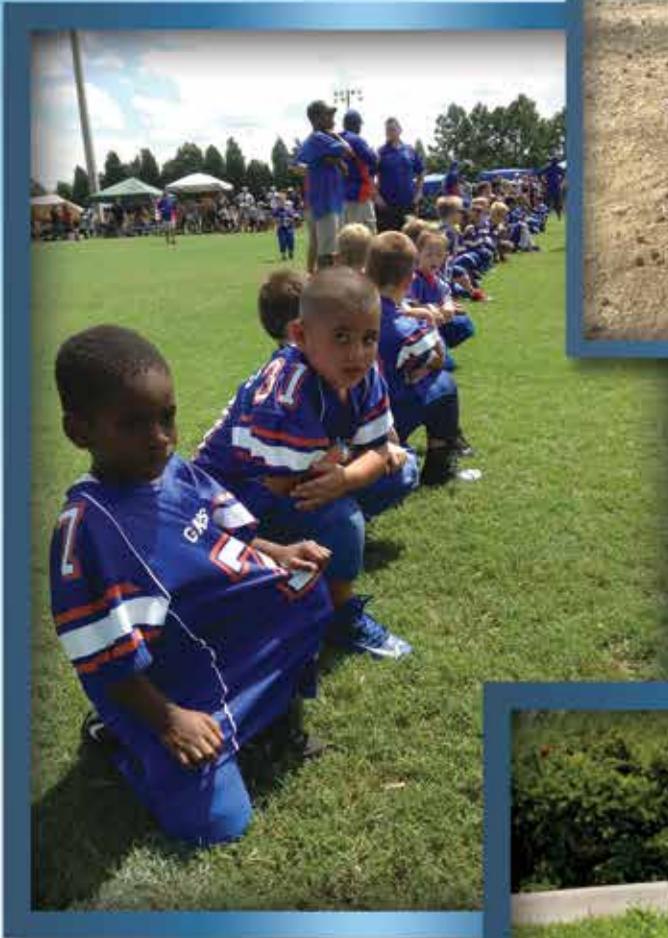


CHILD AND TEEN SAFETY

What every parent should know!



Keep up to date on breaking safety issues — Like us on Facebook ([Facebook.com/PascoSheriff](https://www.facebook.com/PascoSheriff)) & follow us on Twitter ([@PascoSheriff](https://twitter.com/PascoSheriff))



This safety information booklet is brought to you by your state and local leaders. We want you to be informed so together we can help protect our most precious asset, our children.

We Fight As One



Sheriff Chris Nocco
Pasco County



Pam Bondi
Florida's Attorney General



Kurt Browning
Pasco County School Superintendent



Wilton Simpson
Florida State Senator



Richard Corcoran
Florida State Representative

Missing Children

Courtesy: KidsHealth.Org

One of the challenges of being a parent is teaching your kids to be cautious without filling them with fear or anxiety. Although some dangers do exist, you lessen the chances that your child will be abducted.

The circumstances surrounding missing and/or abducted children are often quite different from the way it is often portrayed in TV shows and movies.

Here are some of the realities of child abduction:

Most kids who are reported missing have run away or there has been a misunderstanding with their parents about where they were supposed to be.

Of the kids and teens who are truly abducted, most are taken by a family member or an acquaintance; 25 percent of kids are taken by strangers.

Almost all kids kidnapped by strangers are taken by men, and about two-thirds of stranger abductions involve female children.

Most abducted kids are in their teens and kids are rarely abducted from school grounds.

Strategies for preventing abductions:

According to KidsHealth.Org, about 2,100 missing children reports are filed each day in the U.S. Many cases might be solved more easily if parents can provide a few key pieces of information about their kids, like: height, weight, eye color, and a clear, recent photo. And make sure your kids have safety information that could help to prevent an abduction.

These strategies may help:

Make sure custody documents are in order.

Have ID-like photos taken of your kids every six months and have them fingerprinted.

Keep your kids' medical and dental records up to date.

Make online safety a priority. The Internet is a great tool, but it's also a place for predators to stalk kids. Be aware of your kids' internet activities and chat room "friends," and remind them never to give out personal information. Avoid posting identifying information or photos of your kids online.

Set boundaries about the places your kids go. Supervise them in places like malls, movie theaters, parks, public bathrooms, or while fundraising door to door.

Never leave kids alone in a car or stroller, even for a minute.

Choose caregivers — babysitters, childcare provid-



ers, and nannies — carefully and check their references. If you've arranged for someone to pick up your kids from school or day care, discuss the arrangements beforehand with your kids and with the school or child-care center.

Avoid dressing your kids in clothing with their names on it — children tend to trust adults who know their names. Talk to your kids often about safety. Give them the basics on how to avoid and escape potentially dangerous situations.

It is important for you to teach your kids to:

Never accept candy or gifts from a stranger.

Never go anywhere with a stranger, even if it sounds like fun. Predators can lure kids with questions like "Can you help me find my lost puppy?" or "Do you want to see some cute kittens in my car?" Remind your kids that adults they don't know should never ask them to help or to do things for them.

Run away and scream if someone follows them or tries to force them into a car.

Say no to anyone who tries to make them do something you've said is wrong or touch them in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable.

Always tell you or another trusted adult if a stranger asks personal questions, exposes himself or herself, or otherwise makes them feel uneasy. Reassure kids that it's OK to tell you even if the person made them promise not to or threatened them in some way.

Always ask permission from a parent to leave the house, yard, or play area or to go into someone's home.

Keep these other tips in mind, too:

Make sure younger kids know their names, address, phone number including area code, and who to call in

Continued on page 3

Missing Children *(Continued from page 2)*

case of an emergency. Review how to use 911 or a local emergency number. Discuss what to do if they get lost in a public place or store — most places have emergency procedures for handling lost kids. Remind them that they should never go to the parking lot to look for you. Instruct kids to ask a cashier for help or stand near the registers or front of the building away from the doors.

Point out the homes of friends around the neighborhood where your kids can go in case of trouble.

Be sure your kids know whose cars they may ride in and whose they may not. Teach them to move away from any car that pulls up beside them and is driven by a stranger, even if that person looks lost or confused. Develop code words for caregivers other than mom or dad, and remind your kids never to tell anyone the code word. Teach them not to ride with anyone they don't know or with anyone who doesn't know the code word.

If your kids are old enough to stay home alone, make sure they keep the door locked and never tell anyone who knocks or calls they are home alone.

If your child is missing:

Because the first few hours are the most critical in missing child cases, it's important to provide officials with information about your child immediately. A 2006 study revealed in the rare cases when a child is killed, it happens within the first three hours of the abduction. Because of that small window, it is imperative parents immediately report when a child goes missing and have current photos, clothing information, fingerprints and other pieces of descriptive items to give to law enforcement agencies.

If your child has been abducted, contact local law enforcement right away. They'll ask you for a recent picture of your child and will probably ask you many questions about the time and location you last saw your child and what your child was wearing.

You may also request that your child be entered into the National Crime and Information Center (NCIC). Other clearing houses such as the Child Protection Education of America (866-USA-CHILD) and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (800-843-5678) can offer information and support during the search.

After notifying the authorities, try to stay calm. You'll be able to remember details about your child's disappearance more easily if you remain rational.



Bicycle safety

According to KidsHealth.org, every year, about 300,000 kids go to the emergency room because of bike injuries, and at least 10,000 kids have injuries that require a few days in the hospital. Some of these injuries are so serious that children die, usually from head injuries.

Head trauma can mean brain injury. That's why it's so important to wear your bike helmet. Wearing one doesn't mean you can be reckless, but a helmet will provide some protection for your face, head, and brain in case you fall down.

A helmet how-to:

KidsHealth.org recommends that bike helmets should have a sticker that says it meets standards set by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). If your helmet doesn't have a CPSC sticker, get one that does. Wear a bike helmet **every time** you ride, even if you are going for a short ride. Your bike helmet should fit you properly. You don't want it too small or too big. Never wear a hat under your bike helmet. If you're unsure if your helmet fits you well, ask someone at a bike store. Once you have the right helmet, you need to wear it the right way so it will protect you. It should be worn level and cover your forehead. Don't tip it back so your forehead is showing. The straps should always be fastened. If the straps are flying, it's likely to fall off your head when you need it most. Make sure the straps are adjusted so they're snug enough that you can't pull or twist the helmet around on your head.

Be seen!

It's important to wear bright clothes and putting reflectors on your bike also can help you stay safe. It helps other people on the road see you. And if they see you, that means they're less likely to run into you. Daytime riding is the safest so try to avoid riding your bike at dusk and later.

You'll also want to make sure that nothing will get caught in your bike chain, such as loose pant legs, backpack straps, or shoelaces. Wear the right shoes — sneakers — when you bike. Sandals, flip-flops, shoes with heels, and cleats won't help you grip the pedals. And never go riding barefoot!

Florida child car seat laws

According to the Florida Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles it is the responsibility of the supervising adult to ensure that any child under 5 years old is seated in a federally-approved child car seat. Failure to do so could result in a fine and points against your driver's license.

Use the following car seat guidelines from while driving with a child in your vehicle.

Birth–1 year old:

Use a rear-facing child car seat in the back seat of the car.

1 year old–3 years old:

Use a rear-facing child car seat in the back seat until they outgrow the weight and height limit of the child car seat. Normally when children are over 1 year old and weigh over 20 pounds, you can switch to a forward-facing car seat.

4 years old–7 years old:

Use a forward-facing child seat in the back seat until they reach the weight and height limits recommended by the manufacturer.

8 years old–12 years old:

Use a booster seat in the back seat until your child is big enough to use the car's seat belt.

Never put your child in a child car seat in the front of a vehicle with a passenger air bag. It is always safest for your child to ride in the back seat.

Pool safety

Sadly, Florida is among the top states in the nation in relation to drowning deaths for children under 5 years old. About 1,000 children drown each year in the United States. Between 2011 and 2013, 200 children under the age of 5 died as a result of accidental drowning in Florida. Of those, two were from Pasco County. In all, 83 Pasco County residents – children and adults – have died from drowning from 2004-2013.

Florida Statute Chapter 515, the Residential Pool Safety Act, requires only one of four specific safety barriers for all swimming pools built after 2002. As a result, many backyard pools are readily – and dangerously – accessible to young children.

Florida Safe Pools is a water safety campaign estab-



lished by Florida Sun-coast Safe Kids Coalition led by All Children's Hospital. Since most young children gain access to the pool when least expected, Florida Safe Pools promotes the use of multiple "layers of protec-

tion," which include barriers and alarms, to help parents and guardians. For more information, please visit their website at www.flsafepools.com.

The 1st layer of protection starts with you:

- Pool safety starts with the caregiver. Persistent supervision will help keep your little ones from accessing the pool area.
- Limit distractions to yourself so you remain a constant vigil on children.

The 2nd layer starts inside the home:

- Door alarms should be on all exterior doors leading to a pool area.
- Access to exterior doors should be limited to adults.
- Childproof door locks should be in place.
- Have a clear view of the pool from inside the house.

The 3rd layer starts outside the home:

- The backyard should be fenced.
- A safety fence should surround the pool.
- Self-closing gates should be included on the pool fence.
- Alarms should be placed on gates.
- Keep furniture away from the fence, since little ones love to climb!
- Hot tubs should have a locking cover.

The 4th layer begins in the pool area:

- Keep toys & floating objects out of the pool, since these can entice children.
- Remove trip hazards away from the pool's edge.
- Keep water levels 3-4 inches from the top.
- Wave alarms can be placed in the pool.
- Pool covers can be used when pool is not in use.

Reduced price car seats available at:
www.allkids.org/body.cfm?id=1257

Synthetic Drug Deception

What is Spice?

DrugAbuse.gov describes “Spice” as a wide variety of herbal mixtures that produce experiences similar to marijuana (cannabis) and that are marketed as “safe,” legal alternatives to that drug. Sold under many names, including K2, fake weed, Yucatan Fire, Skunk, Moon Rocks, and others — and labeled “not for human consumption” — these products contain dried, shredded plant material and chemical additives that are responsible for their psychoactive (mind-altering) effects.

The labels are deceiving!

Labels on Spice products often claim that they contain “natural” psycho-active material taken from a variety of plants. Spice products do contain dried plant material, but chemical analyses show that their active ingredients are synthetic (or designer) cannabinoid compounds.

The Pasco Sheriff’s Office has made a concerted effort to reduce the availability of Spice in stores and gas stations, but it remains available for purchase via the Internet. Because the chemicals used in Spice have a high potential for abuse and no medical benefit, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has designated the five active chemicals most frequently found in Spice as Schedule I controlled substances, making it illegal to sell, buy, or possess them. Manufacturers of Spice products attempt to evade these legal restrictions by substituting different chemicals in their mixtures, while the DEA continues to monitor the situation and evaluate the need for updating the list of banned cannabinoids.



Spice products are popular among young people; of the illicit drugs most used by high school seniors, they are second only to marijuana. They are more popular among boys than girls — in 2012, nearly twice as many male 12th graders reported past-year use of synthetic marijuana as females in the same age group. Easy access and the misperception that Spice products are “natural” and therefore harmless have likely contributed to their popularity. Another selling point is that the chemicals used in Spice are not easily detected in standard drug tests.

Sheriff Chris Nocco worked with county commissioners to pass a county ordinance that makes it illegal to possess or sell Spice.

How does spice affect the brain?

Spice users report experiences similar to those produced by marijuana—elevated mood, relaxation, and altered perception—and in some cases the effects are even stronger than those of marijuana. Some users report psychotic effects like extreme anxiety, paranoia, and hallucinations. Spice abusers who have been taken to Poison Control Centers report symptoms that include rapid heart rate, vomiting, agitation, confusion, and hallucinations. Spice can also raise blood pressure and cause reduced blood supply to the heart (myocardial ischemia), and in a few cases it has been associated with heart attacks. Regular users may experience withdrawal and addiction symptoms.

We still do not know all the ways Spice may affect human health or how toxic it may be, but one public health concern is that there may be harmful heavy metal residues in Spice mixtures. Without further analyses, it is difficult to determine whether this concern is justified.

MDMA

MDMA, commonly called Molly or Ecstasy, is increasingly becoming a larger problem in Pasco County. It is a synthetic, psychoactive drug that has similarities to both the stimulant amphetamine and the hallucinogen mescaline. It produces feelings of increased energy, euphoria, emotional warmth and empathy toward others, and distortions in sensory and time perception.

How Is MDMA abused?

According to DrugAbuse.gov, MDMA is taken orally, usually as a capsule or tablet. The popular term Molly (slang for “molecular”) refers to the pure crystalline powder form of MDMA, usually sold in capsules. The drug’s effects last approximately 3 to 6 hours, although it is not uncommon for users to take a second dose of the drug as the effects of the first dose begin to fade. It is commonly taken in combination with other drugs.

How does MDMA affect the brain?

MDMA acts by increasing the activity of three neurotransmitters, serotonin, dopamine, and norepinephrine. The emotional and pro-social effects of MDMA are likely caused directly or indirectly by the release of large amounts of serotonin, which influences mood (as well as other functions such as appetite and sleep). Serotonin also triggers the release of the hormones oxytocin and vasopressin, which play important roles in love, trust, sexual arousal, and other social experiences. This may account for the characteristic feelings of emotional closeness and empathy produced by the drug; studies in both rats and humans have shown that MDMA raises the levels of these hormones.

The surge of serotonin caused by taking MDMA depletes the brain of this important chemical, however, causing negative after effects - including confusion, depression, sleep problems, drug craving, and anxiety —



that may occur soon after taking the drug or during the days or even weeks thereafter.

What are other effects of MDMA?

MDMA can have many of the same physical effects as other stimulants like cocaine and amphetamines. Drugs like these include increases in heart rate and blood pressure. MDMA users may experience other symptoms such as muscle tension, involuntary teeth clenching, nausea, blurred vision, faintness, and chills or sweating.

In high doses, MDMA can interfere with the body’s ability to regulate temperature. On rare but unpredictable occasions, this can lead to a sharp increase in body temperature (hyperthermia), which can result in liver, kidney, or cardiovascular system failure or even death.

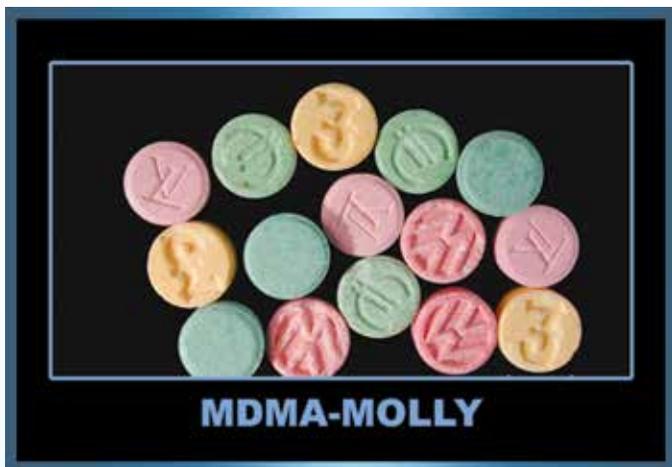
Methamphetamine

DrugAbuse.gov describes Methamphetamine as (also called meth, crystal, chalk, and ice, among other terms) an extremely addictive stimulant drug that is chemically similar to amphetamine. It takes the form of a white, odorless, bitter-tasting crystalline powder.

Meth is taken orally, smoked, snorted, or dissolved in water or alcohol and injected. Smoking or injecting the drug delivers it very quickly to the brain, where it produces an immediate, intense euphoria.

How does Methamphetamine affect the brain?

Methamphetamine increases the amount of the neurotransmitter dopamine, leading to high levels of that chemical in the brain. Dopamine is involved in reward, motivation, the experience of pleasure, and motor function. Methamphetamine’s ability to release dopamine rapidly in reward regions of the brain produces the euphoric “rush” or “flash” that many users experience. Repeated methamphetamine use can easily lead to ad-



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Methamphetamine *(Continued from 6)*

diction—a chronic, relapsing disease characterized by compulsive drug seeking and use.

How is Meth made?

Meth is made in the United States and Mexico and according to DrugAbuse.gov, most of the methamphetamine abused in the United States is manufactured in “superlabs” here or, more often, in Mexico. But the drug is also easily made in small clandestine laboratories, with relatively inexpensive over-the-counter ingredients such as pseudoephedrine, a common ingredient in cold medicines. To curb production of methamphetamine, pharmacies and other retail stores are required by law to keep logs of purchases of products containing pseudoephedrine; individuals may only purchase a limited amount of those products on a single day.

Methamphetamine production also involves a number of other, very hazardous chemicals. Toxicity from these chemicals can remain in the environment around a methamphetamine production lab long after the lab has been shut down, causing a wide range of health problems for people living in the area.

Gang awareness

More than 50,000 gang members, associates and those suspected of gang activity have been documented in Florida, according to statistics from the state’s Attorney General’s Office. In a 2012 report, Pasco County had 895 middle and high school students who were gang affiliated.

To combat this issue, parents and guardians must take a positive, active role in the lives of their children. According to the National Gang Center, parents should be on the lookout for signs of possible gang affiliation, which include: withdrawing from family and longtime friends, interests in gang-influenced music, videos and movies, drastic change in attire and/or hairstyle, having weapons, unexplained cash or jewelry, and declining school activity.

Also, be on the lookout for the use of hand signs, wearing the apparel of certain sports teams, tattoos, interest in some graffiti, as well as symbols and numbers written on paper or in books. For more information, visit:

NationalGangCenter.gov and FloridaGangReduction.com.

Bullying

Bullying is defined as an unwanted, aggressive behavior aimed at exerting power, whether real or perceived, over another person. It’s displayed in several forms, in-



cluding physical, verbal and social. This is an activity that happens more than once or has the potential to take place numerous times. According to DoSomething.org, more than 3.2 million students nationwide are targeted by bullies.

Not only is this behavior taking place in person, but it is also being carried out online. This form of bullying is defined as “cyberbullying.” Individuals have taken to technology, whether by texting, chatting or on social media sites, to harass others. According to StopBullying.gov, parents should ensure there is an open dialog between themselves and their children to discuss bullying. Parents must convey to their kids that bullying is unacceptable. Kids are encouraged to tell their parents when they experience bullying and learn how to safely stand up to bullies.

To combat cyberbullying, monitor your child’s activities online as well as their text messages. Join the social media sites they frequent and include them as a “friend” or “follower.” In addition to establishing rules about how your kids utilize their electronic devices, encourage them to let you know when they are targeted by a bully. Also, make sure you have the username and passwords to every account your child is using.

For more information visit: StopBullying.gov or DoSomething.org.





The Internet and Social Media

Keep the computer in a public part of your home, such as the family room, living room or kitchen, so that you can check on what your kids are doing online and how much time they are spending there.

Monitor your child's use of the Internet and social media as much as possible. Monitor every site they visit or social media platform they use. Make sure you have a conversation with them regarding their Internet usage. Your child should be willing to visit their favorite websites in the presence of their parents. If they are unwilling to do so, they may be hiding something.

Kids should never post personal information that includes school or home addresses, or phone numbers. That can lead to victimization. Also, never meet with someone you just "met" online.

Adjust privacy settings to require people to get your permission to add you as a friend or follow you and make sure no one can see your page unless they are an approved friend or follower.

For all ages, emphasize that everything sent over the Internet or a cell phone can be shared with the entire world, so it is important they use good judgment in sending messages and pictures and set privacy settings on social media sites appropriately.

Discuss with kids of every age what "good judgment" means and the consequences of poor judgment, ranging from minor punishment to possible legal action in the case of "sexting" or bullying.

Be aware that information you give out in blogs could also put you at risk of victimization. People looking to harm you could use the information you post to gain your trust. They can also deceive you by pretending they know you.

Never give out your password to anyone other than your parent or guardian. Only add people as friends to your site if you know and trust them in real life.

Think before posting your photos. Personal photos should not have revealing information, such as school names or locations. Look at the backgrounds of the pictures to make sure you are not giving out any identifying information without realizing it. The name of a mall, the license plate of your car, signs, or the name of your sports team on your jersey or clothing all contain information that can give your location away.

Never respond to harassing or rude comments posted on your profile. Delete any unwanted messages or friends who continuously leave inappropriate comments. Report these comments to the networking site if they violate that site's terms of service. Remember to make a point of discouraging kids from gossiping, spreading rumors, bullying or damaging someone's reputation using texting or other tools.

To keep kids safe, have your kids and teens show you where the privacy features are for every social media venue they are using. The more private, the less likely inappropriate material will be received by your child, or sent to their circle of acquaintances.

Be sure **you** are where your kids are online: instant messaging, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc. Have a policy requiring that you and your child "friend" each other. This is one way of showing your child you are there, too, and will provide a check and balance system by having an adult within arm's reach of their profile. This is important for kids of all ages, including teens.

Show your kids you know how to use what they are using, and are willing to learn what you may not know how to do.

Create a strategy for monitoring your kids' online social media use, and be sure you follow through. Some



Internet & Social Media *(Continued from page 8)*

families may check once a week and others more sporadically. You may want to say “Today I’ll be checking your computer and cell phone.” The older your kids are, the more often you may need to check.

Consider formal monitoring systems to track your child’s email, chat, instant messaging and image content. Parental controls on your computer or from your Internet service provider, and commercial programs are all reasonable alternatives.

Set time limits for Internet and cell phone use. Learn the warning signs of trouble: skipping activities, meals and homework for social media; weight loss or gain; a drop in grades. If these issues are occurring due to your child being online when they should be eating, sleeping, participating in school or social activities, your child may have a problem with Internet or social media addiction. Contact your pediatrician for advice if any of these symptoms are occurring.

Check chat logs, emails, files and social networking profiles for inappropriate content, friends, messages, and images periodically. Be transparent and let your kids know what you are doing.

Multitasking can be dangerous — even deadly. Be sure to stress to teens the importance of not texting, Facebooking, using the phone, listening to ear buds or earphones, or engaging in similarly distracting activities while driving. These forms of distracted driving are illegal in many states because they are so dangerous. And caution kids of all ages about using mobile devices while walking, biking, babysitting or doing other things that require their full attention.

The problem of “sexting”

“Sexting” refers to sending a text message with pictures of children or teens that are inappropriate, naked or engaged in sex acts. According to a recent survey, about 20 percent of teen boys and girls have sent such messages. The emotional pain it causes can be enormous for the child in the picture as well as the sender and receiver—often with legal implications. Parents must begin the difficult conversation about sexting before there is a problem and introduce the issue as soon as a child is old enough to have a cell phone. Here are some tips for how to begin these conversations with your children:

- For the initial part of the conversation, it is important to first learn what your child’s understanding is of the issue and then add to it an age appropriate explanation (see next bullet).



- Use examples appropriate for your child’s age. For younger children with cell phones who do not yet know about sex, alert them that text messages should never contain pictures of people (kids or adults) without their clothes on, kissing or touching each other in ways that they’ve never seen before. For older children, use the term “sexting” and give more specifics about sex acts they may know about. For teens, be very specific that “sexting” often involves pictures of a sexual nature and is considered pornography.
- Make sure kids of all ages understand that sexting is serious and is a crime! In all communities, if they “sext”, there will be serious consequences, quite possibly involving the police, suspension from school, and notes on the sexter’s permanent record that could hurt their chances of getting into college or getting a job.
- Experts have noted that peer pressure can play a major role in the sending of texts, with parties being a major contributing factor.

Mental Health

Due to the many facets of growing up, it is imperative parents detect and seek out help for any mental health needs their children may require. Kids undergo many changes in life, including friendships, relationships, social circles, and physical growth. Those changes can be startling for some. Parents must help nurture their child’s transition by providing support and proper guidance. Be alert for signs your child may be experiencing depression or withdrawal from friends, family or class-

mates. Warning signs include mood swings, substance abuse, difficulty concentrating, unexplained weight loss, or physically harming themselves, among others, according to the Mayo Clinic.

For tips on how to help foster a positive environment for a child's positive mental health or how to detect depression or any other issues, go to Kidsmentalhealth.org, or MayoClinic.org. Local resources in the Tampa Bay area include Baycare Health (Baycare.org/behavioralhealth), and the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI.org).

Curfew Laws

Pasco County's curfew ordinance prohibits minors from being at certain locations during specific days and times. Minors are not allowed at or inside a public place or establishment between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m. Sunday through Thursday, except on legal holidays.

Also, minors may not be, or remain in, a public place or establishment between the hours of 12:01 a.m. and 6 a.m. Saturday, Sunday, and legal holidays. Minors who have been suspended or expelled from school may not be, or remain in, a public place, establishment, or within 1,000 feet of a school during the hours of 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. during any school day.

There are exemptions to the Pasco County curfew ordinance, which include if a minor is:

- Accompanied by a parent or by another adult authorized by the minor's parent to have custody of the minor.
- Involved in an emergency or engaged, with his parent's permission, in an emergency errand.
- Attending or traveling directly to or from an activity that involves the exercise of rights protected under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution.
- Going directly to or returning directly from lawful employment, or who is in a public place or establishment in connection with, or as required by, a business, trade, profession, or occupation in which the minor is lawfully engaged.
- Returning directly home from a school sponsored function, a religious function, or a civic organization sponsored function.
- On the property or the sidewalk of the place where he resides, or on the property or sidewalk of an adult

next door neighbor with that neighbor's permission.

- Engaged in interstate travel or bona fide intrastate travel with the consent of the minor's parent.
- Attendance at an organized event held at and sponsored by a theme park or entertainment complex as defined in Florida Statute 509.013 (9).

Runaways and sex trafficking

Runaway children are a target for adults looking to exploit them, including sexually. One in seven endangered runaways reported to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children in 2013 were likely sex trafficking victims. A girl will first become a victim of prostitution between the ages of 12 and 14, on average.

Who is a trafficking victim?

Trafficking victims can be boys or girls of all races and ethnicities. They can come from wealthy families or poor ones in cities, suburbs, or rural areas. Under the Trafficking Victims Reauthorization Act of 2005, anyone under the age of 18 who is used for a commercial sex act is automatically a victim of human trafficking, regardless of whether he or she is a "willing" participant. Trafficking victims over age 18 must have been subject to force, fraud, or coercion.

Signs of those involved in human trafficking include that the individual:

- is not free to leave or come and go as they please.
- is under the age of 18 and providing commercial sex acts.
- shows signs of physical or sexual abuse.
- is not allowed or able to speak for themselves.



Safety Booklet Resource Page

For the most recent safety tips and trends, follow us on Twitter and Facebook

PascoSheriff.us



@PascoSheriff



Facebook.com/PascoSheriff



Websites

Florida Department of Children and Families — MyFLFamilies.com

KidsHealth.org

Florida Attorney General — MyFloridaLegal.com

Safe Florida — SafeFlorida.net

Florida Dept. of Motor Vehicles — FLHSMV.gov/SafetyTips/CPS.htm

Florida Safe Pools — FLSafePools.com

Pasco County Bully Reporting Form — PascoSchools.org

DrugAbuse.gov

Mental Health: BayCare Health — Baycare.org/behavioralhealth

KidsMentalHealth.org

MayoClinic.org

National Alliance on Mental Illness — NAMI.org

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children — MissingKids.com

Human Trafficking — CATFHT.org

Florida Department of Juvenile Justice — DJJ.state.fl.us

Gang Prevention: NationalGangCenter.gov

FloridaGangReduction.com

Reduced price car seats available at www.allkids.org/body.cfm?id=1257

Phone Numbers

The Florida Abuse Hotline accepts reports 24 hours a day and 7 days a week of known or suspected child abuse, neglect, or abandonment and reports of known or suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a vulnerable adult. To make a report you can call 1-800-962-2873 (1-800-96-ABUSE) or report online at ReportAbuse.dcf.state.fl.us/

Human Trafficking — Tampa Bay Area Task Force Hotline at (727) 562-4917 or the National Trafficking Information and Referral Hotline at (888)373-7888

Runaway Hotline — 1-800-RUNAWAY

Missing Children Information Clearinghouse — 1-888-FLMISSING

Pasco County Public Safety Communications Center: Non-Emergency (727) 847-8102

Pasco Sheriff's Office Administration (727) 847-5878