



KS2 WALKING HOME UNACCOMPANIED

In order to ensure children's safety, only children in Key Stage 2 are allowed to walk home on their own. Children in Key Stage 1 need to be collected by an adult (it is not appropriate for an older sibling in KS2 to walk them home).

This does not mean that all children in KS2 are ready to walk home on their own. Parents need to consider their child's age, maturity and independence, as well as their distance from the school and the safety of the route before making a decision about whether or not it is safe for each child to walk home unaccompanied by an adult.

HELPFUL TIPS FOR ASSESSING YOUR CHILD'S READINESS

How do you know if your child is ready to walk or ride his/her bike to and from school? By discussing possible scenarios with him/her. Ideally, your child should know the following twelve points before she/he is ever alone in public. Talk about each one of the twelve points listed below from Gavin de Becker's book, *Protecting the Gift* to help establish their readiness or areas to support them with:

- 1 Does your child know how to honour his feelings? If someone makes him uncomfortable, that's an important signal.
- 2 Are you as the parent strong enough to hear about any experience your child has had, no matter how unpleasant?
- 3 Does your child know it's okay to rebuff and defy adults?
- 4 Does your child know it's okay to be assertive?
- 5 Does your child know how to ask for assistance or help?
- 6 Does your child know how to choose who to ask?
- 7 Does your child know how to describe the situation he finds himself in?
- 8 Does your child know it's okay to strike, even to injure, someone if he believes he is in danger, and that you'll support any action he takes as a result of feeling uncomfortable or afraid?
- 9 Does your child know it's okay to make noise, to scream, to yell, to run?
Does your child know that if someone ever tries to force him to go somewhere, what he screams should include, "**This is not my father/mother**"?
Onlookers seeing a child scream or even struggle are likely to assume the adult is a parent.
- 11 Does your child know that if someone says, "Don't yell", the thing to do is yell? The corollary is if someone says, "Don't tell", the thing to do is tell.
- 12 Does your child know to fully resist ever going anywhere out of public view with someone he doesn't know, and particularly to resist going anywhere with someone who tries to persuade him?