

*It's time to go back ... to school*

# Knowledge can help keep children safe if they are home alone

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Fred Dier and his associates invite your inquiry.

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While it may not be the ideal situation, it's not unusual for children to come home to an empty house after school. To help set parents' minds at ease, The National Crime Prevention Council offers the following safety rules:

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Parents should keep a list of numbers for their office(s), a neighbour, a relative, the police and fire departments and the local poison control centre near each phone in the home.

- ✓ Parents should make sure their children
- ✓ Parents should tell their children never to let a stranger in the house or apartment when they are alone.
- ✓ In case there is a fire, children should know an escape plan that includes a normal exit and alternatives, like a window.
- They should leave the home or apartment immediately if they smell smoke or hear the smoke alarm go off; they can call the fire department from a neighbour's home or a public telephone.
- ✓ Parents should teach their children not to enter their home if things don't look quite right.
- They should go to a neighbour or work out an arrangement with another parent who lives or works nearby.
- ✓ Parents should let their children know that they always want to hear about anything that scares them or makes them feel uneasy. This includes receiving strange phone calls or being bullied.
- ✓ Parents should never hang a house key around their children's necks.
- This is a telltale sign to others that their parents won't be home after school.

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