

Protecting Our *Children*

Amusement And Theme Park Safety Tips

(NAPSA)—Before visiting an amusement or theme park, riding a roller coaster, or going down a waterslide, families should plan their visit with safety in mind, the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) recommends.

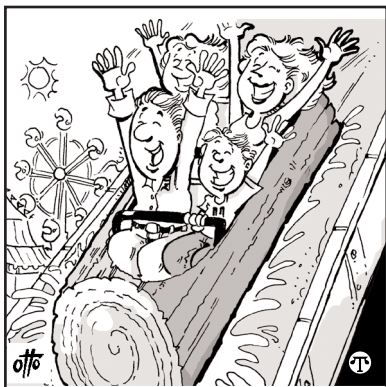
“Sit down together to map out your visit,” says Nancy A. McBride, national safety director for NCMEC. “Keep the mood light by talking about all of the fun you will have but discuss safety with your kids before visiting an amusement or theme park. Having a plan before you get there will lessen chances of mishaps later.”

NCMEC recommends discussing these safety tips:

Be able to find each other. Charge and turn on cell phones and pagers. Make sure children and teens know how to contact parents. Encourage children to wear bright colors so they can be easily spotted and to carry identification. Do not allow children to wear clothing or carry items that display their name.

Do not go anywhere alone. Children should not be alone or isolated with anyone, even a character in costume, while at the park. Younger children should be accompanied on rides but if they ride without you, wait in line together, put the child on the ride and meet at the exit. Older kids should take a friend with them on rides and on any other park attractions.

Discuss how to “Meet Up” if separated. If your family becomes separated, agree that everyone will go to the closest Help or Infor-



A little advance planning can help make a trip to an amusement park safer and more fun.

mation Center. Children should not wander the grounds or parking lots searching for you. If your child becomes lost or needs help, instruct him or her to talk to a park employee wearing a name tag or a mother with children. If you become separated in the park, report your child as missing and be prepared to give an accurate description of your child.

Have fun and always be aware of your surroundings. Get information about the park before your visit and review the park layout together. Locate information or security when you get there and report suspicious or inappropriate behavior to authorities.

For more information and to download a free copy of “Know the Rules—For Child Safety in Amusement or Theme Parks” go to www.missingkids.com or call NCMEC’s 24-hour toll-free hotline at 1-800-843-5678.