

Does your child know the 'Going home poem'?

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Hello, this is from a group of parents working to make sure every small child knows their home address by heart. It's so simple any child can do it, costs nothing, but the good it can do is unlimited.

First you teach the child to sing the 'Going home poem'. Not really a poem, this is nothing more than the child's name and address in a singsong format. Something like this:

'My name is Susie Smith . . . (you want to start off with the child's name, of course) This will start off the 'poem'. Even a very stressed child will remember their name.

'I live at 1243 Hard Road' . . . so on and so on Be sure to include the town name and state, as there is nothing to prevent your child from getting lost in another state.

If a young child can repeat a TV jingle, they can learn the Going home poem. You tell the child to tell the Going home poem to their friend the policeman, or a mother with children. They can spot mall security people as police. Together this should safely cover just about every situation.

Nothing is more frustrating to a cop than to have a obviously lost small child clamp up, perhaps because of stress, or because they remember they 'shouldn't talk to strangers'. Equally hard to work with is a child that wants to talk but just knows their name and not their home street address.

This is not a label in some clothes that might be lost, this is inside the child's head. Even if you have moved after the child has learned the Going Home Poem the police now have a valid address, they can use computers to track down your current address from that.

Make a dry run

Now, you can do a dry run to see how well things might work. Go to a donut shop in the morning, and see if your child can spot the policeman. Say to the child 'Pretend you are lost. Who is your friend here?' Then see if the child can identify the policeman.

Then tell the child will go up and tell the policeman the 'Going home poem'. Short of a real problem, this is as good a test as you can get.