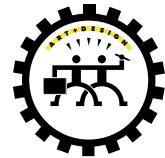


# Stay ALERT STAY Safe

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MCGILL

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Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police

For information on our wide range of additional Stay Alert...Stay Safe materials, available free of charge to schools and community groups, please contact:

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# Stay ALERT STAY Safe





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## an introduction for adults

Founded in 1986, Stay Alert...Stay Safe® is a non-profit national street proofing organization. The program offers a carefully researched range of integrated education materials, all designed to help children gain confidence in handling potentially difficult situations and give them the tools that can help them stay safe.

This booklet introduces important basic safety rules, including the program's essential key message: **Children should listen to their instincts and act on these feelings.** In particular, with over 75% of crimes against children involving someone the child knows, children must learn not to take ANY situation for granted. They must ALWAYS Stay Alert and Stay Safe!

We urge you to read the booklet with the child and help to reinforce the safety messages by encouraging use of the games and quizzes inside and by ongoing discussion and use of additional safety materials. **Role playing** can be a particularly valuable exercise: talk about different situations and ask the child to act out or discuss how they would respond. This continued reinforcement is extremely important...the development of safety skills can't be a one-off effort but should be seen as a continual process, using resource materials as helpful tools.

With this in mind, families and other concerned adults are encouraged to develop ongoing safety programs, tailored to specific local needs. Additional Stay Alert...Stay Safe materials are available for this purpose, free of charge to schools and community groups. We welcome your involvement and your commitment to help our children Stay Alert...Stay Safe!

cover illustration par joseph sherman

# Hi guys!

We're Bert™ and Gert™, the "Alert Twins".™ They call us that because we're real smart at sniffing out danger around us. And that's important because even though most people are good, there are still a few who aren't very nice and could mean real danger for kids. Now the good news is that we know most of their nasty tricks and we know how to outsmart them! And by the end of this booklet, guess what? Yes! You'll be real smart at spotting danger, just like us. And that's a great way to stay safe! So come on guys...let's get going!



illustration by joseph sherman

## first,

**let's start with some important facts!**

My name is \_\_\_\_\_

I am \_\_\_\_\_ years old

My telephone number is \_\_\_\_\_

I'm learning how to **Stay Alert and Stay Safe!**

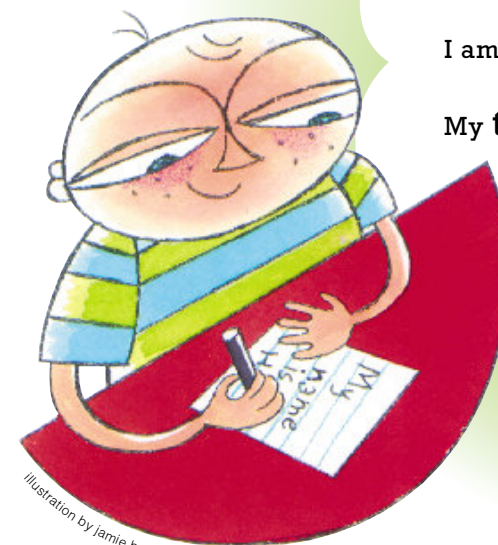


illustration by jamie bennett



# turn up your radar!

You didn't know you had radar? Well you do! Some people call it instinct, and it's an important weapon because it tells you when danger could be around.

The Alert Twins have radar on our watches. They beep and flash when danger's close. Your radar is tucked safely inside your tummy and your head, but it's just as strong as ours.

You know it's working when you get a funny feeling deep inside that seems to say: "I don't like this. Something feels wrong." And when you get that feeling, it's really important to listen to it and get away **fast**.

It's never silly to feel a bit scared. **Always** trust your instincts. It's the best way we know to spot danger before danger can hurt you. So turn up your radar and keep it turned up. Stay Alert and Stay Safe!

## talk it over!

Next important rule...if something goes wrong, even just a tiny bit wrong, it's not your fault and you don't have to face things all alone. **TALK IT OVER!** Talk to a parent or teacher, or someone else you feel you trust.

**You must tell someone if something bad happens. So remember, no secrets, no matter what anyone says!**

If it's just too hard to talk about, write a note. Or phone **Kids' Help Line: 1-800-668-6868.**

It's a special phone line for kids who need help or advice. And almost every kid needs some of that sometimes, right?

sniff and listen  
watch and think.  
always trust your own instinct!

### adult tips

- Encourage discussion with your child every day. Talk about good things that have happened and not so good things. Stress the importance of "telling" and establish a "no secrets" rule. For birthdays etc., talk about keeping gifts "a surprise", not a secret.

# ground rules

Right! Some situations invite danger. So play it smart. **AVOID** them!

- **avoid** hanging out around lonely parks, woods, parking lots or even school yards late after school.
- **work out** the best route to school or other places you go to often, check it with a parent and then stick with this route.
- **say No** if a grown-up invites you alone into their home or car, unless your parent knows where you are and has said it's ok.
- **if someone** knocks at the door when you're home alone, ignore the knock. If you're scared, call the emergency number. Never open the door!
- **always** pretend you've got grown-up company when you're home alone. If the phone rings for your parent, say they're too busy to come to the phone right now. Never say they're out.
- **discuss** and write down your house rules with a parent.



### SCHOOL

### adult tips

- Check out the neighbourhood with your child. Warn of hazards and point out Block Parent homes and other safe places.
- Know your child's world. ie. routes to school or friends' homes and play areas.
- Develop a back-up "buddy" system with a neighbour or friend whom your child can get help from when you're out.
- Establish an information/message centre in the house (on fridge or bulletin board) where you and your kids can leave notes detailing where everyone is and when they'll return. Have a firm rule that no one can leave home without filling it in. And that includes **you!**

# stranger alert!



Anyone you don't really know is a stranger.  
And any stranger should make you turn up your radar!

I don't know you so I'll stay alert.  
I'll keep my distance And I won't get hurt!

The "Alert Twins" know that in real life, it's not always easy to tell the good guys from the bad guys.

Bad guys can look like good guys. And bad guys can think of lots of tricks to make you think they're nice.

But if you stay alert and follow the rules, you can take control!

- **say No** if someone you don't know asks you to go anywhere with them, no matter what they say.
- **step well back** if a stranger stops to ask for directions. Make sure you're at least a grown-up's arm's length away from the person or car, so you can get away fast if you need to.
- **always remember** no one has the right to make you do *anything*.



illustration by margaret hainaway

## adult tips

- Re-inforce that strange looking people aren't the only ones who might be dangerous.
- Make sure your child knows how to reach you at all times, and clearly post and keep reminding your child of the emergency number.
- Role playing is very important — take your child to a pay phone frequently to ensure he or she can confidently phone from there. Also teach them how to call home collect.

## QUIZ #1



**DRAW A LINE** from each of the **WORDS** to the best **DEFINITION**.

**SECRETS** ◦

◦ always work this out with a parent.

**ROUTE** ◦

◦ when somebody does something you do not like, do this.

**FRIDGE/BOARD** ◦

◦ surprises are better than these.

**RADAR** ◦

◦ our family's message centre is here.

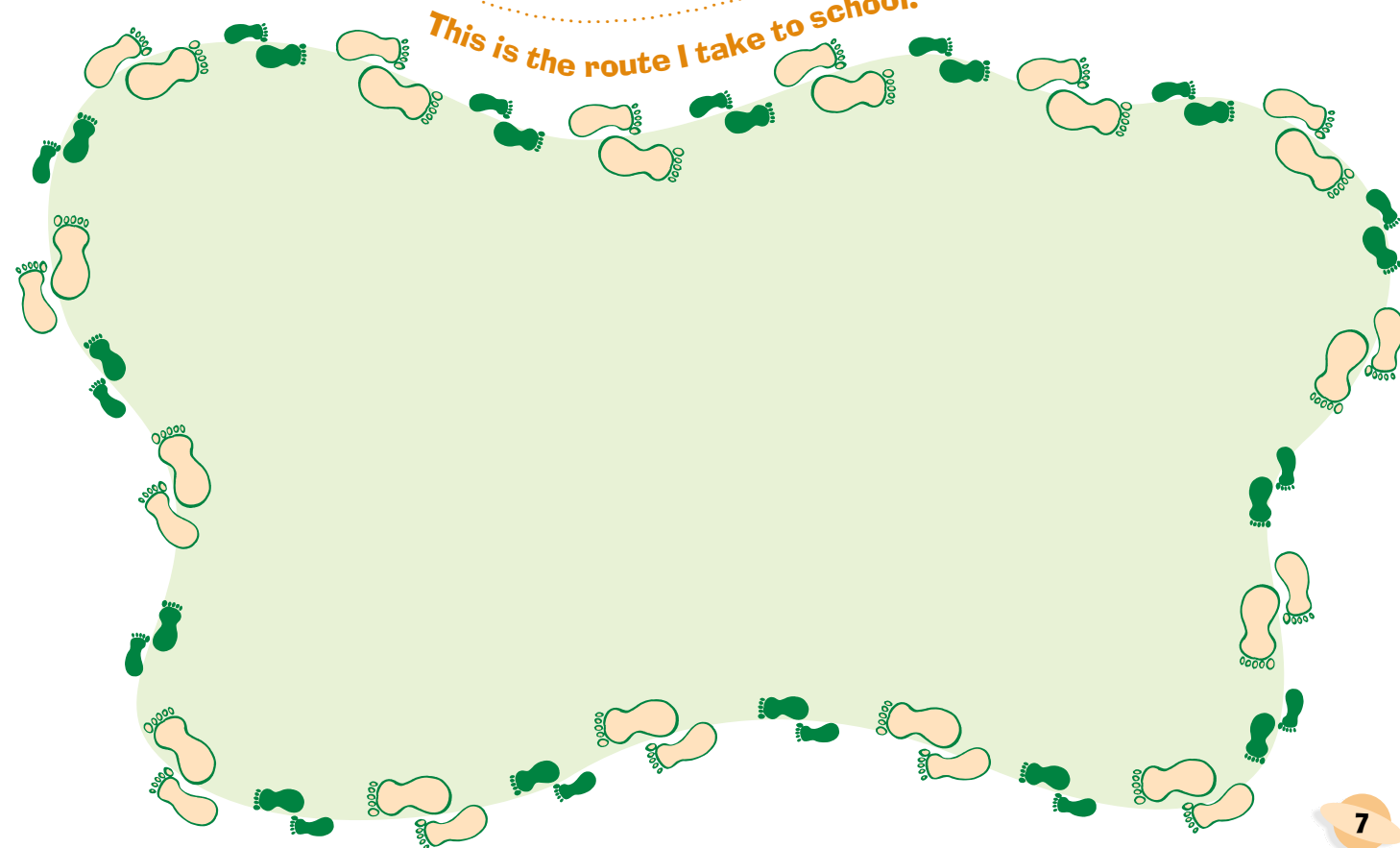
**TELL** ◦

◦ little voice inside that says "I don't like this."

## Look how much I've learned so far!

My name is

This is the route I take to school.





# danger in safe places

Are you ready for a tough lesson, because this is one: things aren't always what they seem to be. People who you know really well who seem nice, can sometimes turn out to be not so nice.

Most people who seem good are good people. But it's really important for you to know that sometimes people are just pretending to be nice. They might wait for a chance to be alone with a kid to try to trick him or her into danger.

## • stay alert...stay safe!

Always pay attention to your radar, even with people you know. If things don't feel quite right to you, get away fast!

• **don't trust** people who act one way in front of other grown-ups, and then treat you in a different way when they talk to you alone. It might mean they're trying to hide something from other grown-ups. If they act extra nice to you or try to share secrets when grown-ups aren't around, turn up your radar fast and tell another grown-up.

• **always say No** if someone asks you to go alone into their home, car or office unless a parent has said it's ok and knows where you are. Follow this rule with everyone... even people you know well.

“No! No!  
I won't go anyplace  
with you all  
alone!”

**follow these rules with all grown-ups**, even with really important ones. If a neighbour, a teacher, a coach or even your parent's friend asks you to go off alone with them, you must still say NO. Don't be afraid of getting told off. Tell them you're following the Stay Alert...Stay Safe rules. If these are OK grown-ups, and most of them are, they'll understand why you're saying No and will be proud of you.

## adult tips

- Don't invite a child to be alone with you without their parents' knowledge. Innocent invitations confuse a child's understanding of safety rules and may leave you open to false allegations. Always aim to have other kids or adults around.
- Be sure to screen anyone who'll be alone with your child.
- Be alert if an adult seems to be taking an undue interest in your child.
- Encourage open dialogue with your child and stress the "no secrets" rule.

## apartment safety

Apartments are cool places to live. Just remember to follow our simple safety rules:

- **walk the building** with your parent and check out safe places and places that could be dangerous. Make sure your parent knows where you like to play.
- **stay away** from lonely places like stairwells and storage rooms.
- **stand by** the control panel in an elevator. If someone gets on who you don't like, press lots of buttons and get off at the next floor. If you feel scared, knock and scream at the closest apartment door.

**Never leave the mall without the grown-up you came with, unless they have said it's ok.**

## adult tips

- Discuss what you'll do if the child gets lost. Arrange a meeting place.
- Don't allow the child to go to public washrooms alone. If necessary, ask another shopper to take the child into the washroom and tell them you'll wait by the door outside.



## shopping mall safety

Bert and Gert have some special tips here to make sure our friends stay safe and have fun!

- **try to stay close to** the grown-up you're shopping with.
- **agree on a meeting place** where you'll both wait if you get lost.
- **ask for help** from someone who works in a store if you feel scared.
- **say No** if someone asks you to go anywhere with them, unless your parent has said it's ok and knows where you are.

illustration by rene zamic

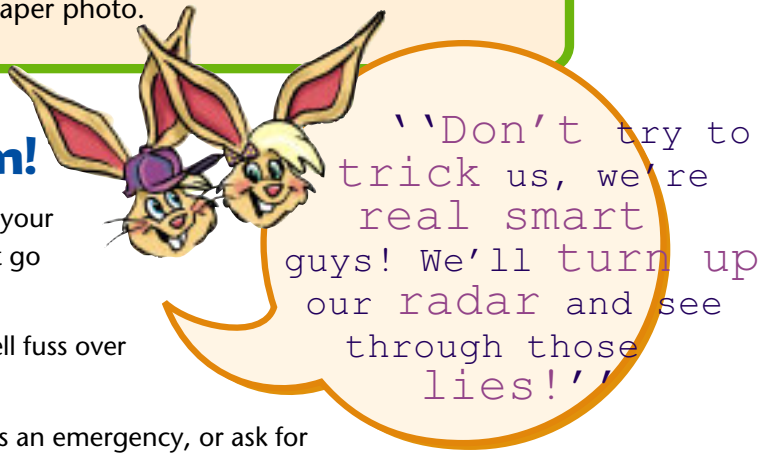
# stay alert for tricks!



People who mean danger can think up clever tricks to make children go off with them. But no one's going to fool you because you've got your radar turned up, right? Here are some tricks to look out for. You might be able to think of some more.

• **bad people** might try to make you go off with them by promising you something that would make you really happy. It might be a kitten, a toy, or just an ice-cream on a hot day. If someone offers you something like this, get your radar working fast! Why does this grown-up want to give you or show you something for nothing? It could mean danger!

• **another trick** is to say that if you go off with them, something special will happen. If you're good at sports, they might pretend to be a scout who wants you to go with him to meet a great team captain. If you dance, they might lie and say they want you to be in a show. Or maybe they might phone and say they want you to be in a movie or in a newspaper photo.



## don't go anywhere with them!

Get your parent to phone the person instead, and if your parent thinks the person's for real, make your parent go with you to meet them.

Always be alert when grown-ups you don't know well fuss over you. This is a time to get your radar working!

• **dangerous people** might pretend there's an emergency, or ask for your help. They might pretend your Mom or Dad has been rushed to hospital and say they've come to take you to them. Or sometimes they'll say your brother or sister or pet has been hurt and will try to panic you into going with them for help.

## don't go

Always check with a grown-up you trust before you go off with anyone. If someone you love was really hurt, this grown-up you trust would help you.

• **some bad grown-ups** might knock on your door and pretend they're sick or need help for the car. Don't answer the door. Ignore them! If someone really needs help, they'll go to a neighbour.



These are just a few of the tricks the **Alert Twins** know about. If you keep your **radar on**, you might spot some **more**.  
Tell your **parent** about them.

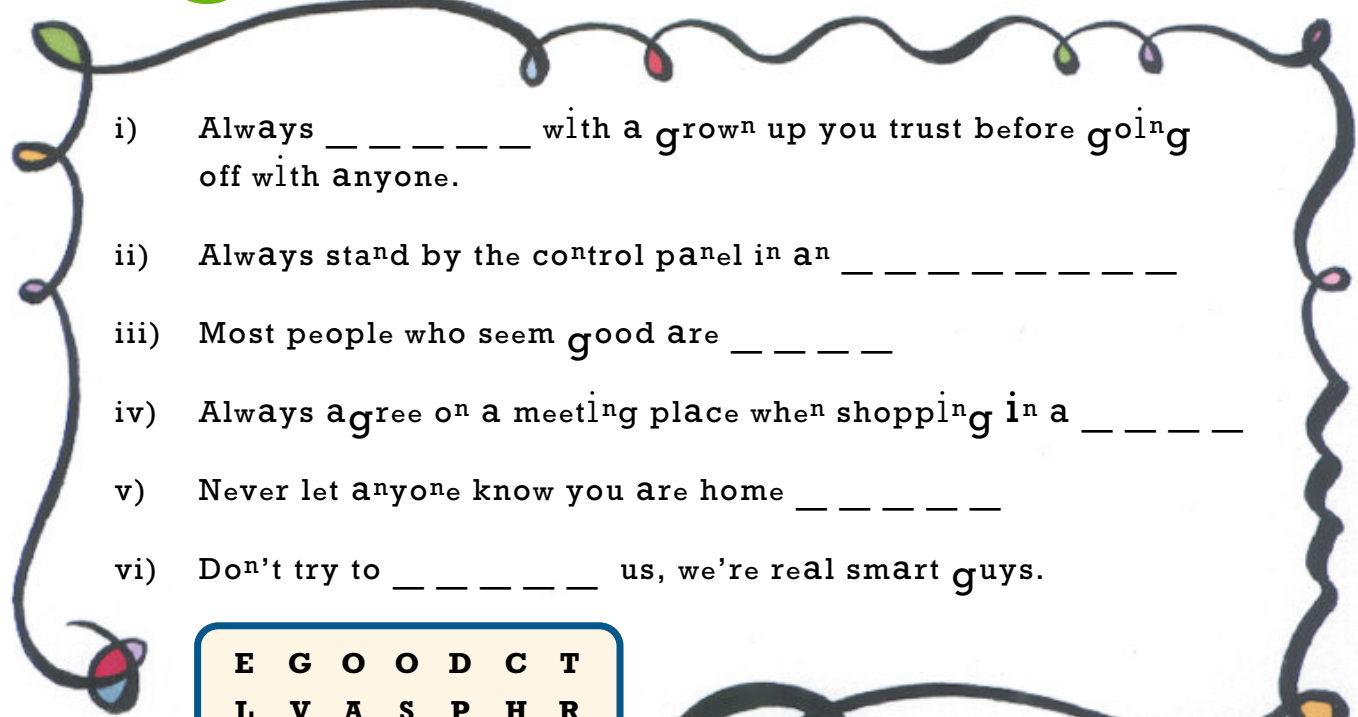
## adult tips

- Be alert if your child receives offers of publicity or stardom, either through phone calls or approaches in person. Always screen such appointments and accompany your child to them.
- Be extra alert if your child's photo is published in the media with his or her name. Such publicity can unfortunately prompt undesirable approaches.
- Don't let your child wear clothing that displays his or her name clearly. It gives would-be abductors an advantage.

## QUIZ#2

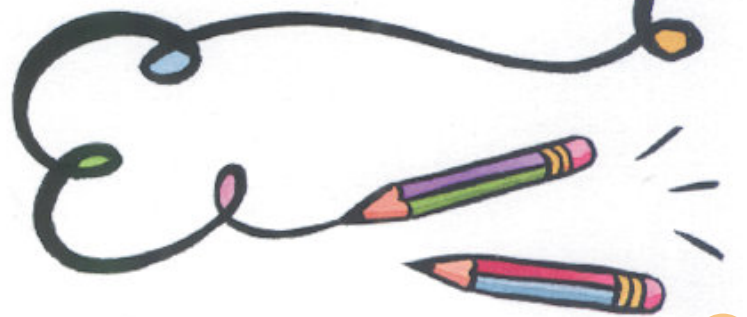
### Word Search

Now I know even more!



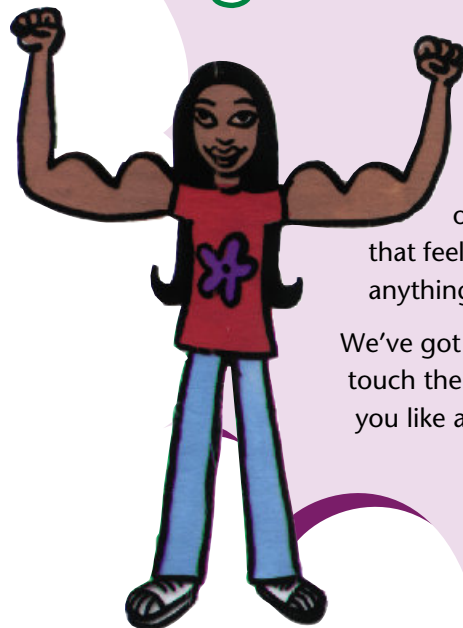
- Always \_\_\_\_\_ with a grown up you trust before going off with anyone.
- Always stand by the control panel in an \_\_\_\_\_
- Most people who seem good are \_\_\_\_\_
- Always agree on a meeting place when shopping in a \_\_\_\_\_
- Never let anyone know you are home \_\_\_\_\_
- Don't try to \_\_\_\_\_ us, we're real smart guys.

E G O O D C T  
L V A S P H R  
E M B L F E I  
V A Y M R C C  
A L O N E K K  
T L U M O S A  
O X Y F D X L  
R M A L L B E





# body alert!



**Your body belongs to you and no one but you!**  
It's your duty to protect it. That's why you try not to let other kids hurt you by fighting, kicking or things like that.

But fighting and kicking aren't the only things that the Alert Twins and our friends protect our bodies from. We don't let anyone touch us in a way that feels uncomfortable, and that includes too much tickling, hugging... anything we don't like. We say NO!

We've got a special rule, too. If anyone except your parent or doctor asks to see or touch the part of your body that your swimsuit covers, get away fast. Even if it's someone you like a lot, no one's got the right to do this, so tell your parent straight away.

# bully alert!

The Alert Twins think bullies are a real pain.

So we've got some special tips to help you stop them acting like that:

- **always** tell a parent or other grown-up about bullies. They can help you and your friends.
- **if** a bully bothers you at school, stick with your buddies and play close to a teacher.
- **always say No!** if a bully tries to make you give him or her something that belongs to you.

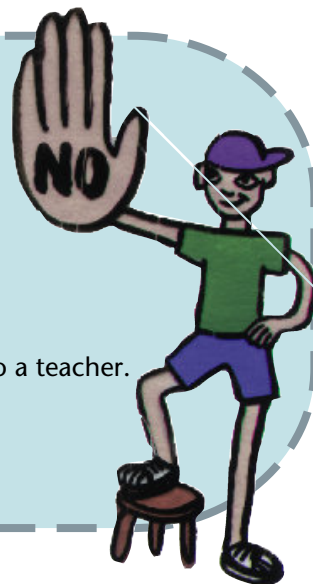


Illustration by Fiona Smyth

**Be firm with bullies and they'll often back away!**

## adult tips

- Self-confidence is a good defence against a bully. Give your child opportunities to exercise independence in a safe way, which will help build self-esteem.
- Talk to your children about their friends. Ask how they get along. Encourage open communication.
- Encourage social opportunities for your child. Organize sleep overs and other gatherings at your home. Keep a close eye on the way friends treat your child.

# when you need help!



Every kid gets in a spot where they need help sometimes. Right? It's bound to happen. Maybe you get lost, or you lose the money you need to get home. Or maybe it's your parents' fault and they don't turn up to collect you from school or from the playing field.

So what do you do? You turn up your radar! When kids feel upset or scared, Bert and Gert know they don't always think straight. They sometimes panic. And that makes them easy targets for people who might want to play tricks on them. Not the Alert Twins and you, though, right!

Tell the helper you have chosen what has happened and ask them to phone your parents or to wait with you until they arrive.

• **always choose the person** you want to help you. Don't go off with someone who comes up to you. They might see you as a target because you're upset. So you choose your helper. Safe people to choose to ask for help are: police officers & fire fighters, block parents, mothers with children, uniformed bus or subway drivers, teachers, people who work in stores.

# if you're in danger...

Stay calm and think through the situation you're facing. If you end up in real danger, you can still get help and save yourself.

- **if** someone grabs you, scream loudly and keep screaming. Scream out "Help! I don't know you!" It isn't babyish to scream. It's very smart indeed.
- **spin round** and round fast to stop someone from grabbing you.

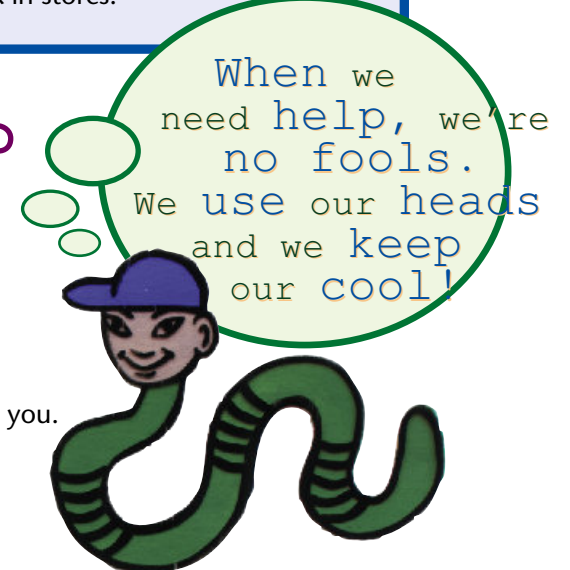
**Scream, bite, kick, get down on the ground and squirm like a worm!** This works really well because it's hard for someone to pick you up! Try to learn this line and practice squirming like a worm!

- **if** you can, run away fast and keep screaming. Head for crowds, stores, a block parent's house or a house with children's toys and bikes outside.

- **if** you're trapped in a car, try to leap out when the car stops at stop-lights.
- **if** the car door is locked, open the window and scream loudly.
- **phone** the emergency number for the police. They will find you.

## adult tips

Make sure your child knows the emergency number and home phone number and address. Teach him or her how to call home collect.



# QUIZ#3

Fill in the blanks

- a) My **body** belongs to \_ \_ .
- b) I will say \_ \_ if a **bully** tries to take something that is mine.
- c) I will \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ the person I want to **help me** if I am in trouble.
- d) If someone **grabs** me I will \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ , \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ and \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ .

Answers - a) me; b) No; c) choose; d) scream, bite, kick

I have completed all the quizzes and filled in the Central Control

My **name** is .....



Illustration by Margaret Hathaway

I know how to use a **pay phone**.

My **telephone** number is .....

And I know the **emergency number** in my area!

For a **FREE** Stay Alert...Stay Safe **colouring sheet** and **sticker**, please send a **self addressed, stamped envelope** to Stay Alert...Stay Safe.

REMEMBER — KEEP *your* **RADAR Up!**

# central control



This is a real vital page, kids. It's where we work out our safety plan and check that we've covered all our bases to stay safe. Fill it in right now with the adult you live with, and then agree on a real safe place to keep it. It's a VERY important document!



My emergency number is .....

My parent's or work number is .....

The other grown-up I can always call for help is .....

telephone .....

The kids' help phone number is **1-800-668-6868**

My doctor's number is .....

My best friends' numbers are .....

On my route to school, these are safe places where I could get help.

My best friends are

If something happened that bothered me, I could tell my parents and:

Write down the name and phone number of another grown-up you trust.

Illustration by Fiona Smyth

Design by Eng-Cheek Lau, Reactor Art + Design