

Children First: Safe and Secure



Section III—Parent's Corner

Tips for Shopping With Your Child

Picture yourself shopping somewhere you had absolutely no interest in the merchandise. Sounds boring doesn't it? Your child is more than likely not going to be interested in where you want to shop. A nice outing can turn into an ordeal in just a few moments. Here are a few guidelines that can help you and your children have a pleasant time while shopping.

Plan Ahead

Choose a time when you and your child are not tired (avoid nap time) or hungry. If either of you is not in a happy frame of mind, your patience may be strained.

Discuss with your child the rules for shopping. For example tell him that running in the store is not allowed.

Agree on Rewards for Good Behavior - Keep it simple, such as a choice of a favorite snack food, or a stop at the park.

Promise to read a story or play a game at home.

Make Shopping Fun

- ◆ Focus on really enjoying the experience with your child.
- ◆ Play games such as asking him to count how many people are wearing blue or ask him how the things you are buying are used.
- ◆ Count how many steps it takes to get from one end of an aisle to the other.
- ◆ Play "I see something " at the checkout register and have your child guess what you see.



If All Else Fails...

If your child gets out of control or embarrasses you, stop, pick him up, or take him by the hand out of the store, or to a private place. Talk to him quietly, eye to eye and tell him that his behavior is not appropriate. Wait quietly for your child to calm down. Ask him if he is ready to try again. Be specific as to what he needs to do differently (for instance, when we go back to shop you must not run).

Go home if the child cannot calm down. If the shopping can't wait, find a sitter and return alone.