Teaching Children How to Dial 911

Children who know how to call 911 in an emergency could save a life. Teach your child how to dial 911 and tell dispatchers the location of the emergency.

It's best to call 911 from a landline, but if one isn't available, your child should know how to call from your mobile phone. Here are step-by-step instructions for teaching your child how to dial 911.

1. **Make sure your child can say her first and last name and provide her address or location.**

   Some 911 centers don't have the ability to automatically locate a caller. So teaching your child to identify a location by buildings, signs or other landmarks is important.

   Tip: Making up a rhyme or song can help make it fun and easy to remember this important information.

2. **Explain the different emergency situations that might require your child to call 911.**

   Here are some examples:
   - Fire
   - Medical emergency
   - Car accident
   - Stranger danger

   Please ensure that your child understands that 911 should only be called if there's an actual emergency. Explain that 911 should never be called for practice, as a joke, or for any other non-emergency reason. Doing so could prevent 911 dispatchers from quickly responding to someone in a real emergency situation.

3. **Walk your child through the steps for how to dial 911 on your mobile phone.**

   If you have a security lock on your Home screen, show your child how to unlock it.

4. **Go over your mobile phone’s keypad several times to help your child become familiar with dialing the 911 number.**

   Have your child practice making a phone call from your mobile phone by calling a family member or friend. Remember not to actually call 911 with your child, unless it's an emergency. If you accidentally call 9-1-1, stay on the line and tell the call taker that you do not have an emergency.

5. **Practice, practice, practice.**

   The more repetition you can provide, the easier it will be for your child to recall the steps, even in a stressful emergency situation.