

What to Do If You See Child Abuse in a Public Place

Start a conversation with the adult to direct attention away from the child.

- "It can be hard for the little ones to be shopping so long."
- "My child sometimes gets upset like that, too."
- "Children can really wear you out sometimes. Is there anything I can do to help? "

Divert the child's attention (if misbehaving) by talking to the child.

- "That's a great baseball cap. Are you a Cardinals fan? "
- "I like your t-shirt. Did you get that on vacation?"

Look for an opportunity to praise the parent or child.

- "He has the most beautiful eyes."
- "That's a very pretty shirt on your little girl. Where did you get it?"

If the child is in danger, offer assistance.

- If the child is left unattended in a grocery cart, stand near the child until the parent returns.
- If the child is in immediate danger, call the police immediately; especially if the child is in a hot car alone!

Avoid negative remarks or looks.

- Negative reactions are likely to increase the parent's stress or anger, and could make matters worse for the child.

Report child abuse and neglect to the appropriate authorities. Call the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline at 1-800-552-7096.

Contact Greater Richmond SCAN for more information on how to get involved and prevent child abuse and neglect at 804-257-7226 or www.grscan.com or www.FAMRichmond.org.

