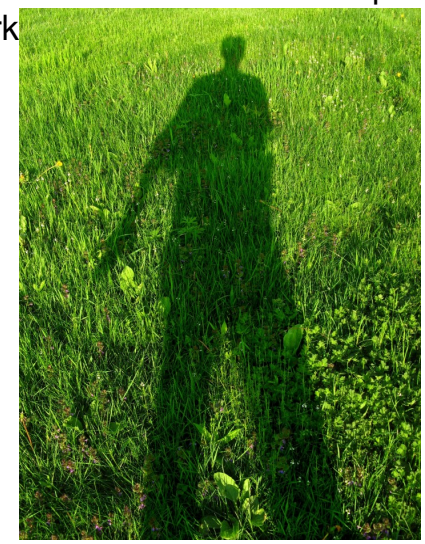
Stranger Danger has become a buzzword of modern times, and youth have always been warned â€œdonâ€™t talk to strangers.â€Â

The Center for Missing and Exploited Children however reports that â€œdonâ€™t talk to strangersâ€ simply does not work



Â Part of the problem is the definition of the word â€œstranger.â€Â When asked, many youth defined a stranger as someone mean or ugly.Â Youth do not tend to look at attractive, helpful people as strangers.Â And if the person has spoken with and interacted with the youth a couple of times, they are officially not a stranger.Â And of course the term â€œstrangerâ€ does nothing to help when the perpetrator is a family member or family friend.Â Many times the term â€œstrangerâ€ is not taken seriously enough by youth.Â

And other times, it is taken too seriously. Â For example, a youth who was lost avoided his rescuers because he was taught â€œdonâ€™t talk to strangers.â€Â

It is vital for our Scoutsâ€™ safety to move beyond â€œstranger danger.â€Â Unfortunately there are those who want to hurt children and they are particularly attracted to youth programs of any kind.Â As Scout Programs dedicated to keeping our Scouts safe, we instill in them a few simple guidelines to help keep them safe:Â

- Whatever your age, no one has the right put to their hands on you inappropriately
- If you are scared or uncomfortable in any way, it is okay to say no to an authority figure
- Always be in the presence of at least on other youth or with two adults
- Take another Scout if youâ€™re using the restroom
- Take another Scout if youâ€™re stepping away from the group
- If you do get lost, stay where you are unless it is an unsafe location
- If lost or confused, listen for the Code word or phrase made up by your team, when the person says that word, it is safe to approach them for help

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We instill in our Scouts the uncommon trait of common sense, and the understanding that their feelings or â€œsixth senseâ€ is just as valid in them as in an adult.Â It is

better to be safe than sorry.Â Â