



## Child Safety Matters™

## Safety Connection: Parent Welcome & Opt-Out

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your child's school, in an effort to protect your child and meet statutes regarding child safety education, will be providing the *MBF Child Safety Matters™* program to students in the coming months. *MBF Child Safety Matters* is a prevention education program developed by the Monique Burr Foundation for Children (MBF), based on the latest research, and reviewed and endorsed by national experts. The program educates and empowers Kindergarten through 6th grade students to prevent, recognize, and respond appropriately to bullying, cyberbullying, all types of child abuse, digital abuse, and other digital dangers.

### Why does your child need a safety program?

- 28% of students have been bullied
- 1 out of 10 children will be abused before their 18th birthday
- 9 out of 10 children between ages 8 and 16 have viewed explicit online material
- 1 out of 7 children has been solicited online

The *MBF Child Safety Matters* program addresses the critical safety issues faced by children today. The program teaches these topics to children in easy to understand language, and engages children in a fun classroom program with activities, games, and appealing take-home reinforcement items.

Children learn that adults are responsible for their safety. They also learn the *MBF Child Safety Matters* 5 Safety Rules and other strategies to help adults keep them safe. Schools, communities and society benefit from safer children who perform better academically and enjoy healthier, happier, more productive lives.

*Every child deserves to be safe!*

### IF YOU **"DO NOT"** WANT YOUR CHILD TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM, COMPLETE THE FORM BELOW, AND CUT & RETURN THE FORM TO YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL.

Because bullying, cyberbullying, and abuse are very real dangers to children, and because *MBF Child Safety Matters* is age appropriate, fun, and provides students with critically important safety information, we ask if you decline your child's participation that you please educate them using an alternative program to better protect them.

If you have any concerns or questions, please discuss them with your child's classroom teacher or the school counselor prior to declining the program. You can also learn more about the *MBF Child Safety Matters* program and child safety at [www.mbfchildsafetymatters.org](http://www.mbfchildsafetymatters.org) or by downloading our "Child Safety Matters" app from the App Store or Google Play.



I understand returning this form means **I DO NOT WANT MY CHILD TO PARTICIPATE** in the *MBF Child Safety Matters™* lessons. I UNDERSTAND THEY WILL NOT RECEIVE THE CRITICAL SAFETY INFORMATION contained in the program.

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Reason for declining program \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

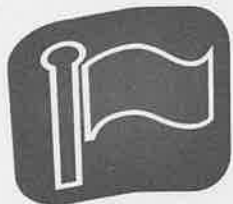
Parent/Guardian Email \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian Phone \_\_\_\_\_

### How to Use the Safety Rules to Better Protect Your Child



#### 1. Know What's Up

Talk to your child. Listen to them. Ask them questions about times when they are away from you. Know whom they are with and what they are doing. Learn about the technology and devices your child is using or has access to. Learn how to talk with them and what to talk about by using tools and resources available on the program website, [www.mbfchildsafetymatters.org](http://www.mbfchildsafetymatters.org), or by downloading the "Child Safety Matters" app from the App Store or Google Play.



#### 2. Spot Red Flags

Teach your child about important safety concepts such as their body and boundaries, personal space, respecting themselves and others, safe vs. unsafe situations, and secrets and tricks. Also teach them correct names for their private body parts and about digital safety. If you are talking to your child, and educating them about the dangers present in society, and how to spot the red flag behaviors that may lead to those dangers, it minimizes their risk of being victimized.



#### 3. Make a Move

When you suspect your child is being harmed, trust yourself and make a move to keep them safe. If your child tells you about abuse or bullying that has happened to him or her or another child, praise them for telling you and take action right away. Call a professional who can determine what happened and act in the best interests of the child. Report any school related bullying immediately to the school. **Report any suspected child abuse immediately to your state's child welfare agency.**

For state child abuse reporting numbers/agencies, visit [www.childwelfare.gov/organizations](http://www.childwelfare.gov/organizations).



#### 4. Talk It Up

Talk about child safety because Child Safety Matters. Talk to other adults. Talk to your child using everyday opportunities to discuss safety and safe vs. unsafe situations. Ask your child to spot red flags and use the Safety Rules to protect themselves using role-play opportunities. Let your child know they can talk to you about anything, so if the need arises they will feel more comfortable talking to you about difficult topics. Tell others about the MBF Child Safety Matters program, what you've learned, and what your child has learned, so they too become better educated and empowered.



#### 5. No Blame | No Shame

Let your child know that no matter what happens to them, they are never to blame because adults are responsible for keeping kids safe ALWAYS. Let them know that no matter what they are told, they should never be ashamed to tell you or another Safe Adult about red flags, abuse, or anything else they need to tell you to help keep them safe. If your child is a victim, remember you are not to blame and you should not be ashamed to seek help. Support is available.

Every child deserves to be safe!