



# Wander Wear<sup>®</sup>

Preventing kids from getting lost

[www.wander-wear.com](http://www.wander-wear.com)

## Frequently Asked Questions

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### 1. How often do children get lost?

Kids get lost all the time – over 2000 times each day, affecting 90% of American families. 7 out of 10 children will get lost at least once in their lives. The Department of Justice reports that there are over 1.3 million children lost or missing each year. Of these incidents, there are approximately 100 kidnappings compared to 800,000 children lost for other purposes that are not of their own will (family-related snatchings, lost for benign reasons such as wandered away, etc.). However, Wander Wear research found that 90% of the time, lost child incidents are never even reported.

### 2. Why do children get lost?

Every parent understands the profound fear of potentially losing a child in a public place such as a mall, amusement park, at the beach, or while traveling. In the blink of an eye, even a well-behaved child can wander off to fulfill his/her natural curiosity. Sometimes a child will find it fun to hide or playfully run away from the parent resulting in the two being unable to find one another. A favorite cereal character or interesting toy can innocently lure a child easily away from a momentarily distracted parent or caregiver. A child who gets off at the wrong bus stop or takes the wrong path home is lost. Sometimes a child will be waiting to be picked up from school or another activity while a parent is unaware that his/her watch stopped working. While the child waits unattended, he/she is “lost” for that period of time until the parent realizes the problem and gets the child.

### 3. What can happen to a child that gets lost, even for a few moments?

While most cases result in a quick and safe return of the child to his/her parent or caregiver, a lost child can get scared, hurt, or in the worst but least likely case, abducted. Even if the separation is only a few seconds, the child can get traumatized and/or get hurt. Parents often describe with emotional detail a time when they lost their child AND often recall a time when they were children themselves when they got lost from their own caregiver perhaps 30 or more years later. Lost child memories are indelible and while they may not be as evidently destructive as physical harm, all parents would certainly like to avoid the situation from ever occurring.



Wander Wear's mission is to help parents and children to learn the best ways to prevent a child from getting lost and if it does happen, to minimize the time of separation.

#### 4. Why don't people talk about accidental wandering more often?

Sometimes parents are embarrassed to admit that they ever lost a child in a public place. It makes them feel that they are not 'good' parents or they fear being scorned by their spouse. However, in knowing that virtually every child and every parent will experience being separated from one another, a 'good' parent will actually admit that it can happen to them and he/she prepares for it. By knowing some basic safety tips, parents can teach themselves and their children what to do in case they get lost.

#### 5. What are the best tips for preparing adults and children in case they get separated?

Wander Wear developed a comprehensive "Away from Home" checklist that describes best practices that every parent can do without spending a lot of money or time. You can find these "lost saving" tips on our website at:

<http://wander-wear.com/pdf/SafetyChecklist.pdf>.

The tips were compiled by researching agencies and surveying hundreds of parents to understand the most practical and effective ways to prevent a child from getting lost and then what to do if they do get lost. Wander Wear also developed a children's book, "[When Whizzly Wanders](#)" that helps explain to children in an entertaining way, what to do to stay safe in public places. The book is written using fun rhyme and bright, whimsical pictures. Children really love the book and will easily learn what to do if they get lost.

#### 6. What kinds of products are on the market today?

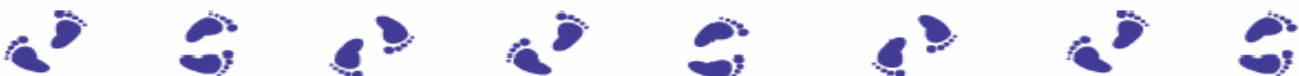
We'll categorize the products into three groups: low tech, mid-tech and high-tech.

In the low-tech arena, these are products that do not require batteries and are relatively inexpensive. There are products that allow parents to write contact information on to the product and attach it to their children in different ways. Some clip on to a child's clothing (like the [Wander Wear Parent Locator Tags](#)). Other products stick on clothing or inside the child's shoes. There are bracelets with Velcro and other small gadgets that are strung through a child's shoelaces. There are even tattoos that you can use to note contact information semi-permanently right on a child. Finally, there are child leashes/harnesses that are used by some parents to physically keep a child very close by.

Other low-tech products aim to help spot a child more easily using brightly colored clothing such as [Wander Wear Easy-to-Spot shirts and hats](#). Typical prices for these low-tech solutions are \$1.00 - \$30.00.

In the mid-tech area, these are products that require a battery and have a restricted range of use. Usually there is a part of the device that is put on the child (e.g. a small pin, button, wristband, or keychain) and the caregiver carries a larger receiver (sometimes as big as a cell phone or iPod). Various different types of devices are available. Some use common radio frequency or sound waves to detect the location of the child(ren). Some devices will emit a loud noise or visual cue on the parent's receiver if the child wanders off beyond a certain distance. Other devices offer some visual directional assistance to help locate the child to the specific location. Some devices offer both visual and audio cues. All of these devices have a limited range and may be subject to obstacles or other interferences. Typical cost for these devices ranges from \$35-\$300 and will vary as to how many tracking tags are included in the kit.

High-tech devices use GPS, cellular, and/or RFID technology to allow the parent to track the whereabouts of the child either in a restricted area (i.e. an amusement park) or outside in general. Some devices claim to have indoor location detection capabilities and ranges will vary by the product and type of technology used. The devices tend to be larger in size than the low or mid-



tech devices and require batteries as well as clear transmission signals. The child will wear an oversized wristwatch-like transmitter or other device while the parent has their own type of receiver (e.g. cell phone, handheld computer, etc.). Prices are typically \$200 – \$400 per device and sometimes require an additional monthly service charge of \$30 or more.

When selecting a product to use, it is important to note the following issues:

1. Is the apparatus age appropriate? Will the child play with it and potentially lose it or break it? Can a small child handle the size of the apparatus and will they voluntarily want to wear it?
2. How far do you want your child to be able to wander? Do you want to have the child right next to you at all times or is it OK for the child to have a few feet or more to explore and play? Is the environment one where you will be able to hear an audible sound (e.g. an amusement park) or the kind of place that you do not want an alarm to potentially go off often (e.g. a kids show or library)?
3. Is the device waterproof so that it can be used at water parks, beaches or other places where the child may get wet?
4. Does the device require batteries and is the parent willing to replace them regularly? Does this impact the convenience of the product so that it is easy to use whenever it is needed, even unexpectedly?

## 7. When will we be able to embed computer chips under the skin of a child?

While chips are already being implanted under the skin of pets, it is unlikely that we will have pervasive use of this technology for children soon. The issue is not the technology but rather the privacy that is questioned when a child can be located and exposed to other people. Even with the highest levels of security, parents will always question if predators will have the ability to tap into a computer system to find and harm a child. Therefore, in our opinion, this technology may never be available in the US where privacy is the utmost concern. There are also the physical questions on how safe the chip would be inside a child's growing body.

## 8. Why does Wander Wear advocate that children should talk to strangers?

There is a significant difference in a stranger approaching your child and talking to them versus a child that needs help and then proactively approaches an unknown adult. We advocate teaching your child to find another mommy if they get lost. Even young child at age 2 or 3 can easily identify mommies and mommies are easily found in family-oriented venues. It is much easier and quicker for a young child to find another mommy than a security guard or policeperson. It is hard to even describe to the child what a typical security guard or venue employee looks like. Mommies are usually eager to help a distressed child and statistically, mommies (females) are less likely to hurt a separated child.

## 9. What is the purpose of a Wander Wear Parent Locator Tag™?

Wander Wear Parent Locator Tags are specially designed to help parents reunite with their children if they are accidentally separated from them in a public place such as an amusement park, beach, ballpark, mall or airport. Parents can write up to 2 cell phone numbers on the back of a tag to make it easy for another adult to contact the parent/caregiver to reunite him/her with the child.

When accidentally separated, most children will get nervous and forget a parent's cell number. Perhaps the child is with a friend's parent or other caregiver at that time and he/she definitely won't know how to easily contact the responsible adult in case they get separated. Some children may be too young or have special needs that restrict them from being able to ask for help. Wander Wear can help ensure that each child has the necessary information with them that can



assist another responsible adult to contact the child's parent/caregiver.

The tags are inexpensive (MSRP \$3.99) and do not require batteries or subscription services. The tags can be clipped on the child's clothing, on the back of a young child to prevent him/her from removing it, inside an older child's clothing or pocket, or even sewed into clothing for children with special needs who require extra security measures of keeping the tag securely on the child's clothing.

The tags are reusable and waterproof. They feature 'Whizzly', the Wander Wear kid-loved monster that delights children and makes them excited to wear the tags.

#### 10. Isn't it dangerous to put contact information on a child?

Often parents are told not to put the child's name on the outside of the child's clothing where it is visible to strangers. The reason is that a child predator could use the child's name to make the child believe that they know each other and that the child should feel safe. It is important to remember that most abductions are done by family members or other individuals who the child really does know. Out of 1.3 million lost and missing children, there are about 100 traditional kidnappings from non-family members in the U.S. each year. Despite this, child abduction is a very real and frightening event that all parents should understand and teach their children what to do around strangers and people that are not trusted guardians. Child abduction experts note that even if the child's name is unknown, child predators can use several other ways to lure a child away. Therefore, while we don't see a direct correlation in endangering a child with or without their name visible, we don't see a real reason to do it and we suggest that you don't broadcast the child's name on their clothing, backpacks or other visible gear. Most importantly, **DO NOT PUT THE CHILD'S ADDRESS ANYWHERE THAT IS VISIBLE TO STRANGERS!** The child's home address isn't very helpful if you are out and lose the child anyway. Having a stranger bring your child to your home isn't the best course of action. This would also provide a predator with information that could harm your child at any time when they are at home. **YOU SHOULD PROVIDE A CELL PHONE NUMBER THAT IS VISIBLY ACCESSIBLE ON YOUR CHILD.** This is quite safe and cannot lead a predator to any additional information about the child that could harm him/her. The cell phone number should be of the adult that the child is out with so if the child does get lost, another adult can call the 'on-site' caregiver immediately. Parents should teach their child(ren) how to ask another mommy for help in calling the cell number if the child gets lost. This empowers the child to assist in reuniting the adult caregiver and child quickly.

#### 11. What is the purpose of Wander Wear Easy-to-Spot™ apparel?

The Wander Wear clothing line was inspired by common advice from leading experts in child safety such as the Center for Missing and Exploited Children that recommends the use of brightly colored clothing when visiting crowded venues such as amusement parks. In Wander Wear tests, we found that the bright yellow and green used in our apparel gives a caregiver a "third eye" so that they can quickly spot the child in a crowd, even at a distance.

By using extremely bright colors, the clothing makes it easier to spot a small child in a crowd. Additionally, if other parties such as the police or venue authorities are helping to find the lost child, it will also be easier for them to spot the unique colors. Additionally, by using Wander Wear as a child's special "Away From Home" clothing, it can aid a distressed parent/caregiver to more easily remember what the child is wearing to provide helpful identification information to assisting individuals.

