



Help. Anytime. Anywhere.

911 Education Tools for Children

The following information and activities will assist with teaching children about the province-wide 911 service, how to use 911 properly and what to expect if there is a need to call 911.

It is important to discuss with children what 911 is for and how the 911 service is to be used. The following information is provided in this document to assist those wanting to teach children about the province-wide 911 service:

- **When to call 911**
- **How to call 911**
- **Helpful Tips**
- **Fun Activities**

When to Call 911

You should only call 911 if there is an emergency and you need help right away from the police, fire fighters or an ambulance.

So how do you know if there is an emergency?

There are two questions you can ask yourself to help determine if the situation is an emergency and you should call 911.

The first question you should ask yourself is:

Do I need help fast from the police, fire department or ambulance?

The second question you can ask is:

Is there a danger to anyone's health, safety or property?

If you answer yes to either or both of these questions then you need to call 911 right away!

Here are some questions to ask children to see if they understand when to call 911:

Would you call 911 if there's been a car accident? Yes!

- Should you call if you see a crime, like someone hurting someone else or breaking into a person's house? YES!
- What if someone suddenly seems very sick and is having a hard time speaking or breathing? YES!
- What if someone collapses or you can't wake them? YES!
- What if someone's house is on fire? YES!

Sometimes people are confused about when to call 911. These are examples of when not to call:

- If you lost your pet.
- If you can't find your favorite toy or your homework from last night.
- If your cat got into a fight with another cat.
- If your brother or your friend dares you to call.
- If your bike was stolen, (you can call the police directly for this one).
- If your dog ran away.

*NEVER call 911 as a joke or just to see what might happen. When the 911 Call Taker has to take the time to talk to people who don't have a real emergency, other people who call and need help right away might have to wait. If you're not sure whether there's a real emergency and there are no adults around, it's a good idea to make the call. You could save someone's life.

How to Call 911

Calling 911 for help is the most important thing anyone can do in an emergency.

If you're going to be the one making the emergency phone call, here's what to do:

1. Take a deep breath to help you calm down.
2. Call 911 – you may hear some rings or a message to stay on the line. **DO NOT HANG UP!**
3. When the call is answered by 911, a 911 Call Taker will ask you what the emergency is.
4. It is very important to tell the 911 Call Taker what has happened and what you see.
5. When asked by the 911 Call Taker, give your phone number and the name of the community you are calling from. Your phone number is sometimes located on a sticker on your phone.
6. The 911 Call Taker will tell you that you are being transferred to the police, fire department or ambulance service you need. **DO NOT HANG UP!**

7. Explain to the emergency responder (police, fire department or ambulance service) what happened. (They will need all the information you can provide, so give as many details as you can.)
8. Follow all instructions carefully.
9. Stay on the phone until they say it's OK to hang up.

After calling 911 for help, your first thought might be to rush over to the situation, but stop and look before you do. Make sure the scene is safe. If it's not, wait in a safe place until a grown-up or the emergency team arrives.

Helpful Tips

- It's important to make sure you are safe before you call 911. If your home is on fire, leave the house before calling 911. You can always call from someone else's house or from a cell phone.
- It's a good idea to know the address and phone number you are calling from in case your call accidentally gets disconnected. The 911 call taker needs to know where you are and how to reach you. The police, firefighters, or ambulance crew need to know where you are to provide help for the emergency.
- You may feel scared or nervous if you have to call 911. That's OK. Just stay as calm as you can. If you talk too fast, the Call Taker may have trouble understanding what's wrong and what kind of help you need. Speak slowly and clearly and don't hang up.

911 is an easy way to get emergency help anytime and anywhere in the Province.

NOTE: Children should be advised to listen carefully to what happens after they dial. Due to the number of calls received from wireless telephones, 911 calls sometimes get a busy signal or a recorded message before the call is answered by a live Call Taker. Children should understand what to do if this occurs.

For younger children, you may want to demonstrate the sound of a busy signal and give examples of the recorded message they might hear. One example of a recorded message is: "You have reached 911 emergency services. All Call Takers are busy handling other emergency calls. **DO Not Hang Up!** Please stay on the line and your call will be answered by the first available Call Taker."

It is critical that children understand that if they hang up when they hear the recording and then redial, their call will go to the end of the waiting queue.

Activities to help teach children about 911 service

Make Up Your own 9-1-1 Quiz Show

A "911 Quiz" show is a fun, interactive way for children to learn when to call and when not to call 911.

Below are several emergency and non-emergency situations you can use to help children decide when it's the right time to call 911.

Situation	Call 911:	
Yes	No	
1) Your friend falls out of a tree and is hurt badly	Y	N
2) You see a stranger lurking around your house	Y	N
3) You are home alone and you are bored and lonely	Y	N
4) Your neighbor's house is on fire	Y	N
5) You see a car accident where someone is hurt	Y	N
6) You have an argument with your best friend	Y	N
7) Your dog is limping	Y	N
8) You see someone breaking into a neighbor's house.	Y	N
9) There is a fire in your fireplace	Y	N

Answers: 1) Y, 2) Y, 3) N, 4) Y, 5) Y, 6) N, 7) N, 8) Y, 9) N

Mural Making

Make a mural about 9-1-1 with emergency response vehicles, i.e., fire trucks, ambulances, and police cars. Hang it up for all to see and learn from.

Kids Dispatch

Set up "a pretend" 911 Call Taking center. Allow the kids to take turns playing the 911 Call Taker and the 911 caller.

Number Recognition

Help children distinguish between "9" and "6" on the telephone pad. To help them remember the difference they can recite "Six Sits Down and Nine Stands Up!")

Address Flash Cards

Encourage children to learn their address and phone number. Make flash cards with the child's name on one side and their address and phone number on the other. Hold up the card with the child's name facing the classroom and see who can recite their address correctly.

Emergency Vehicle Cut-Outs

Have students construct emergency vehicles out of large cardboard boxes and encourage them to act out an emergency situation where the children in the boxes "respond" to the "callers" who use play phones to make the call.

For additional activities and videos for educating children, please visit our Kids Corner page.

<http://nl911.ca/fag/general>