



ESL Podcast 505 – Teaching Children About Safety

GLOSSARY

substitute – substitute teacher; a teacher who teaches a class temporarily, usually when the regular teacher is sick or traveling
* Misty's class had a substitute last week when their regular teacher was sick.

field trip – an experience where students go somewhere on a trip organized by a school so that they can learn about something
* Can our biology class go on a field trip to the zoo?

ground rules – basic rules; things that everyone must agree to do
* We have three ground rules at camp: respect yourself, respect others, and respect the environment.

to go over – to review; to talk about something together and make sure everyone understands it
* This is a difficult book. Let's go over the first chapter together.

partner – one half of a pair; one person in a group of two people who are working on something together
* Please find a partner and work on problem #14 together.

to hold hands – to put one's hand in another person's hand and continue to touch each other while seated or walking, either to show affection and romance or to not get lost
* We're teaching our children to hold hands when we go to places with a lot of people or cars.

to get through – to finish all of something; to complete
* If I can just get through this next week, then everything should be a lot easier at work.

stranger – an unknown person; someone whom one does not know or has not met before
* The stranger came toward us and asked to borrow our cell phone.

predator – a person who chases or tries hurt another person
* In this game, one of us is the predator and tries to capture the others.



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to lure – to get someone to do something, especially if it is bad or wrong, by making it seem fun or exciting

* In a well-known book by Mark Twain, Tom Sawyer lures his friends into painting a fence for him by making it seem like fun.

to abduct – to kidnap; to take someone away when he or she does not want to be taken away

* Do you believe that people on Earth have been abducted by aliens?

to let (one's) guard down – to stop being careful or cautious for a short period of time

* Keri was winning the game, so she let her guard down, and that's when the other player was able to beat her.

to step away from – to leave an area or a group of people and begin to go in another direction

* She stepped away from the group to answer her cell phone quietly, without disturbing everyone else.

permission – officially or formally being allowed to do something; having one's approval to do something

* I asked my boss for permission to take a one-week vacation in August.

to accost – to attack; to threaten; to say something mean to another person and/or try to hurt that person

* The man was accosted by teenagers on the street late at night.

to waylay – to stop someone from going where he or she had planned to go, usually to talk to that person or attack that person

* As Justine was leaving the office, she was waylaid by her boss, who asked her to stay late and help him with a project.

graders – a group of students in a particular grade or level at school

* Most second graders are seven or eight years old.



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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Who would be most likely to abduct a child?
 - a) A partner.
 - b) A stranger.
 - c) A predator.
2. What does Ms. Sanchez mean by saying, “Don’t let your guard down”?
 - a) Don’t walk far away from the security guards.
 - b) Don’t forget to pay attention to what’s around you.
 - c) Don’t sit down, even if you’re tired.

WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

to go over

The phrase “to go over,” in this podcast, means to review or to talk about something together and make sure everyone understands it: “Can we go over how to set the alarm one more time?” The phrase “to go under” means to be destroyed, ruined, or overwhelmed: “We were very sad when our family business went under last year.” The phrase “to go undercover” means for a policeman to do secret work and dress like a different type of person to learn more about what criminals are doing: “The cop went undercover and tried to join the gang.” Finally, the phrase “to go above (someone)” means to not talk to one’s boss, but instead talk directly to one’s boss’s boss: “I wish you hadn’t gone above me. In the future, please talk to me first before you involve the vice-president.”

partner

In this podcast, the word “partner” means one half of a pair, or one person in a group of two people who are working on something together: “Who is your partner for the next chemistry lab session?” A “partner” can also be a boyfriend, girlfriend, husband, or wife, and is often used when one doesn’t know whether someone is married: “Please bring your partner to the office party.” In business, a “partner” is someone who shares the ownership of a business: “Noah didn’t have enough money to start a software company on his own, so he had to look for a partner.” A “silent partner” is someone who owns part of a business and has put money into it, but isn’t actively involved in running the business: “This business is owned by the CEO and two silent partners.”



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CULTURE NOTE

When Americans send their children to school each day, they are understandably “concerned” (worried) about their children’s safety. Schools and communities do many things to try to keep students safe.

In front of American schools, roads are painted with thick white “stripes” (lines). These are “school crossings” or “crosswalks” (areas where it is safe to walk across a street, where cars should stop for people). “Crossing guards” are people who have “flags” (a piece of colored fabric on a stick) and move their arms to ask the cars to stop when children are trying to cross the street. Sometimes older students in a school serve as crossing guards. In “school zones” (the areas around schools), cars are supposed to follow a special “speed limit” (maximum speed) when children are present, usually 20 miles per hour.

Some schools and universities have “student-run” (organized and managed by students) “police patrols,” or groups of students who walk around the school or “campus” (an area with many university buildings) looking for problems and calling the police if they see anything “suspicious” (possibly connected with trouble).

With “school shootings” (instances where someone shoots other people at schools) at some American schools, people are “reacting” (doing something as a result of something else) by trying to make sure that guns do not come into the schools. Some schools have “metal detectors” (large machines that make a noise if metal passes through them) at school entrances.

Schools also limit “access” (the ability to come into a building) to the “school grounds” (the land owned by the school) to only students and teachers. Anyone else who wants to come to the school must “check in” (put one’s name on a list) at the front office and ask for permission to walk through the school.

Comprehension Questions Correct Answers: 1 – c; 2 – b



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 505: Teaching Children About Safety.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 505. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

Our website is eslpod.com. Go there to download a Learning Guide for this episode to help improve your English even faster.

This episode is called "Teaching Children About Safety." It's about a teacher, Ms. Sanchez, who goes to class thinking that she needs to tell her students all about safety, but she gets a surprise at the end. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

Ms. Sanchez: Okay, kids. I'm Ms. Sanchez, your substitute for this week. I'm taking all of you on the field trip tomorrow. Listen up. There are some ground rules we need to go over. First, each of you will have a partner and you will hold hands while we cross the streets.

Student: Ms. Sanchez...?

Ms. Sanchez: I'll take questions later. Let me get through all of my instructions first. Remember, don't talk to strangers. There are predators out there who are looking to lure children away from their family and friends and to abduct them, so don't let your guard down.

Student: Ms. Sanchez...

Ms. Sanchez: As I said, I'll take questions later. If you need to step away from the group, ask permission first. If a stranger tries to accost or waylay you, run away as fast as you can.

Student: Uh, Ms. Sanchez?

Ms. Sanchez: Yes?

Student: I think you've got the wrong classroom. We're the eighth graders. The first graders are on the second floor.



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Ms. Sanchez: Where are my glasses? Oh, here they are. Oh! You're not my first-graders! Why didn't anyone say anything earlier?!

[end of dialogue]

Our dialogue begins with the teacher, Ms. Sanchez, saying to her students, "Okay, kids. I'm Ms. Sanchez, your substitute for this week." "Substitute," here, stands for a substitute teacher, who is a teacher who teaches a class temporarily when the regular teacher is sick or for some reason cannot be in class. Here in the United States most school districts – most schools have a list of teachers they can call in the morning and say, "Well, we need someone to teach this class," and the substitute teacher comes in and takes over the class for that day, not necessarily teaching the class. Often you get substitute teachers who don't know anything about the topic, but at least there is an adult standing in front of the children so they don't – uh, I don't know – jump out the window!

In this case, Ms. Sanchez is the substitute teacher for the week. She says, "I'm taking all of you on the field trip tomorrow." A "field trip" is an experience where students go somewhere outside of the school; they go on a little trip organized by the school so they can learn something. They may go to a museum; they may go to a park; they may go to see some performance, a play for example; all of these would be field trips. Students always love field trips because they don't have to stay in their regular boring class anymore.

Ms. Sanchez says to the students, "Listen up," meaning everyone listen. "There are some ground rules we need to go over." "Ground rules" are basic rules, things that everyone must do. She says we need to go over these ground rules. "To go over" is a phrasal verb meaning to review, to talk about something together, and make sure that everyone understands it. "Go," as you know, has many meanings depending on the preposition you put after it; take a look at our Learning Guide for some more phrasal verbs with "to go."

Ms. Sanchez says, "First, each of you will have a partner and you will hold hands while we cross the streets." A "partner" is one half of a pair. One person with another person, those two people are together; we could call them partners. You can be married and call your wife or husband your partner. But in school, many times children work in pairs, two children work together or are together – sit together. In this case, the children are going to have partners and they will need to hold hands while they cross the streets. "To hold hands" means to put your hand into someone else's hand, and, in this case, you're going to hold the other person's hand while you walk across a street. This is especially true for young



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children so that the children don't run off in a number of different directions when they're crossing the street; that would be dangerous.

So, one of the students in Ms. Sanchez's class says, "Ms. Sanchez...?" trying to ask a question. But Ms. Sanchez says, "I'll take questions later." She continues, "Let me get through all of my instructions first." "To get through (something)" is a phrasal verb meaning to finish something, to complete something. Ms. Sanchez wants to get through all of her instructions – all of her rules first. She then says, "Remember, don't talk to strangers." A "stranger" is someone that you don't know, someone who you have never met before. It's very common, again, for young children to tell them not to talk to strangers. Parents are afraid of what other adults might do with their children. She says, "There are predators out there who are looking to lure children away." A "predator" (predator) is a person who tries to chase or tries to hurt another person. Usually here, when we're talking about children, we're talking about someone who may be a sexual predator, so obviously this would be very dangerous, so Ms. Sanchez is telling them that they need to be careful. Of course, you wouldn't use the word "predator" with a young child; a good teacher would not use that word since the children wouldn't know what it meant. Moreover, you probably wouldn't want to go into the reasons for children not talking to strangers, at least not too much.

But Ms. Sanchez is not a great teacher, she says, "There are predators out there who are looking to lure children away." "To lure" (lure) means to get to someone to do something, especially if it's bad or wrong, by making it seem fun and exciting. Well, she's warning against predators who try to lure children – who get the children to leave their family and friends in order to abduct them. "To abduct (someone)" means to kidnap them, to take someone away when he or she does not want to be taken away. Ms. Sanchez says, "don't let your guard down." The expression "to let your guard down" means to stop being careful or cautious for a period of time. She's telling children do not let your guard down, always be careful, don't relax.

Ms. Sanchez, once again, gets a question from a student, but she says that she'll take questions later and she continues talking. She says to the children, "If you need to step away from the group, ask permission first." "To step away from" means to leave an area or a group of people and go in another direction. She tells the children to ask permission. "Permission" is approval that someone gives you to do something; your boss, or your parent, or your teacher may give you permission to do something; that is, they are saying it's okay for you to do that. Ms. Sanchez says, "If a stranger tries to accost you or waylay you, run away as fast as you can." "To accost" (accost) means to walk up to someone in a threatening way or an aggressive way, often to walk up to someone because you



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want to hurt that person. The person may try to accost or waylay you. “To waylay” (waylay) means to stop someone from going where he or she had planned to go, usually by talking to that person or perhaps even attacking and hurting that person. The instructions Ms. Sanchez gives is that the children should run away as fast as they can.

Finally, the student is able to ask Ms. Sanchez a question – or tell her something. The student says to Ms. Sanchez, “I think you’ve got the wrong classroom (you’re in the wrong classroom). We’re the eighth graders. The first graders are on the second floor.” An “eighth grader” is a group of students who are at a particular level in school; in this case at the eighth level, so they would be about 14-15 years old. The “first graders” would be five or six years old. It’s obvious that the instructions that Ms. Sanchez is giving are for young children, not for a 14- or 15-year-old, so the student is telling Ms. Sanchez that she’s in the wrong class.

Ms. Sanchez asks, “Where are my glasses?” She says, “Oh, here they are. Oh! You’re not my first-graders!” realizing now she’s in the wrong place, “Why didn’t anyone say anything earlier?!” Of course, someone did try to say something but she wouldn’t let the student talk!

Now let’s listen to the dialogue, this time at a normal speed.

[start of dialogue]

Ms. Sanchez: Okay, kids. I’m Ms. Sanchez, your substitute for this week. I’m taking all of you on the field trip tomorrow. Listen up. There are some ground rules we need to go over. First, each of you will have a partner and you will hold hands while we cross the streets.

Student: Ms. Sanchez...?

Ms. Sanchez: I’ll take questions later. Let me get through all of my instructions first. Remember, don’t talk to strangers. There are predators out there who are looking to lure children away from their family and friends and to abduct them, so don’t let your guard down.

Student: Ms. Sanchez...

Ms. Sanchez: As I said, I’ll take questions later. If you need to step away from the group, ask permission first. If a stranger tries to accost or waylay you, run away as fast as you can.



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Ms. Sanchez: Yes?

Student: I think you've got the wrong classroom. We're the eighth graders. The first graders are on the second floor.

Ms. Sanchez: Where are my glasses? Oh, here they are. Oh! You're not my first-graders! Why didn't anyone say anything earlier?!

[end of dialogue]

We did not have a substitute scriptwriter for this episode; it was our regular wonderful writer, Dr. Lucy Tse. Thank you, Lucy.

From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thank you for listening. Come back and listen to us next time on ESL Podcast.

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