

Youth Peddling Safety Awareness Q&A

Federal law prohibits children under 16 years to be employed in door-to-door sales.

#1. What is youth peddling?

Youth peddling is the hiring of children and young adults to go door-to-door:

- To sell products, often candy or magazine subscriptions.
- To raise funds in support of a charity or business.

#2. Are these door-to-door companies legitimate?

- Several are legitimate (i.e. Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, school-sponsored groups).
- Many are commercial enterprises which support bogus charities.

#3. How do these door-to-door companies operate?

Door-to-door companies:

- Recruit youth as young as eight years old.
- Transport kids to unfamiliar neighborhoods, distant cities, and even across state lines.
- Force kids to go door-to-door asking residents to buy products which support a fictitious charity.

#4. What attracts kids to these door-to-door companies?

- Adventure.
- Chance to earn money without parental supervision.

- Opportunity to apply themselves and get ahead.
- Positive atmosphere to keep kids off the street.
- Valuable job skills.

#5. Where is the work performed?

Kids are placed in potential risk if they are:

- Transported by van to distant cities or even across state lines.
- Required to knock on strangers' doors in unfamiliar or high-crime neighborhoods without adult supervision.

#6. What dangers do kids face with door-to-door sales?

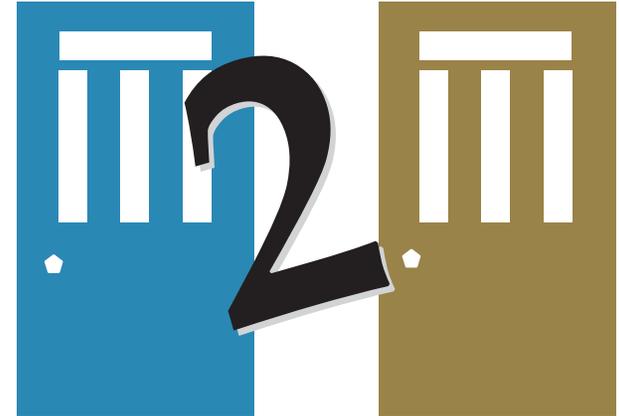
Cases have been reported where minors have been:

- Sexually assaulted or abused.
- Deserted for not meeting sales quota.
- Crammed into vans without seats or seat belts.
- Maimed, killed, or forced to be servants.
- Victims of, or participants in, criminal activity.

#7. What safety precautions should you take before engaging in door-to-door sales?

- Determine whether you are dealing with a legitimate door-to-door company making sales for a legitimate charity or business.
- Check with local police to see if the door-to-door company has a license or permit to operate.
- Make sure your parents have the employer's name, address, phone number, schedule and the location where you work.
- Make sure you are paired with other kids rather than operating alone.
- Make sure you have adult supervision in the immediate area at all times.
- Do not ever enter a stranger's home.
- Be sure you know your rights under the law.

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What you should know about the possible dangers of door-to-door sales.

Safety
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#8. If you are at home and a young person is at your door attempting to sell candy or any other item to finance a supposed anti-drug and/or pro-youth campaign, what should you do?

If a parent or guardian is home:

- Get the name and age of the young person.
- Get the group's name and address.
- Get the name and phone number of the young person's supervisor.
- Ask where the young person's supervisor is.
- Ask what the money supports.
- Ask which schools have worked with the campaign.
- Ask to see the seller's permit.
- Ask how much the young person personally makes for each sale.

#9. If your parent or guardian is not home, what precautions should you take when approached at your door by a young person selling candy or any other item?

- Consider door-to-door company suspicious if not heard of before.
- Save any literature given to you.
- Do not buy items if there is not an adult present.
- Have your parent or guardian report the door-to-door activity to the local police department and provide the name of the company, what is being sold, approximate age of the child and location where the sales activity was last seen.

#10. How many children currently work as youth peddlers?

According to the Child Labor Coalition, approximately 50,000 children are working as youth peddlers on any given day of the year in very dangerous conditions.

For more information:

Oklahoma Department of Labor

Child Labor Unit

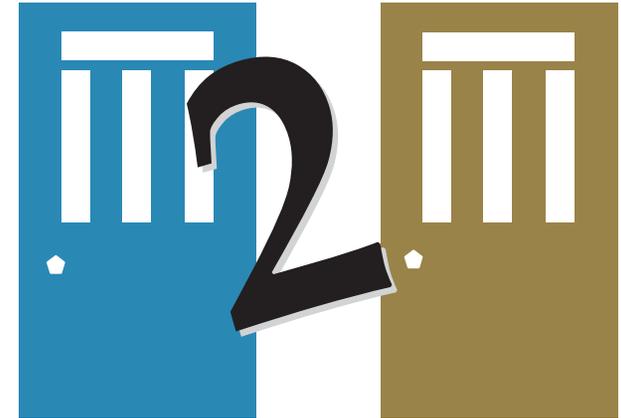
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Sources

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- MagCrew.com
- Missouri Department of Labor & Industrial Relations Information Alert, Children Involved in Youth Peddling/Door To Door Sales (2002)
- Missouri Department of Labor & Industrial Relations Information Alert, Guidelines for Children Involved in Door To Door Sales or Youth Peddling
- Oklahoma Department of Labor Archives
- USDOL Child Labor Bulletin 101, WH 1330 (2010)