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NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACT: CYNTHIA SCOTT, PIO
PHONE: 732-431-6400 ext. 1113

SHERIFF SHAUN GOLDEN PROMOTES CHILD SAFETY THROUGH BILINGUAL DANGERS OF STRANGERS PROGRAM

Monmouth County Sheriff Shaun Golden continues to make the safety of children a priority. The agency's bilingual Dangers of Strangers program, which makes students aware of the Dangers of Strangers in their communities and elsewhere, was presented to students at the Midtown Community Elementary School in Neptune on Oct. 3. The program which was presented in conjunction with Hispanic Heritage Month, helps maintain the safety of children and keep them out of harm's way.

"The safety and security of our children remains a principle concern for my agency," said Sheriff Shaun Golden. "That's why it is vital that children are made aware, and often reminded, about the dangers of strangers. Strangers have a way of luring children into harmful, or possibly fatal, situations through bribes and false claims such as a family emergency, a fake injury or a lost pet."

The 45 minute program, which was presented in English and Spanish versions to students from kindergarten through second grade, teaches them what to do if a stranger tries to engage them in conversation, whether on the street, on the telephone, when home alone or on the internet.

In addition, students learn how to report suspicious activities to local law enforcement by using 9-1-1.

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According to the Center for Missing and Exploited Children, 797,500 children under the age of 18 were reported missing in a one year period of time, which resulted in an average of 2,185 children being reported missing each day.

“As with all districts, the safety of students is a priority throughout the Neptune Township Schools. Having this program is of great value to all of our elementary school students and their parents, particularly those from our ESL program (English as a second language), who could be perceived as more vulnerable, because of a language barrier,” said David Mooij, Superintendent of Neptune Schools.

The program makes students aware of important information about the Dangers of Strangers including:

- What is a stranger and how to deal with strangers
- What to do if home alone and a stranger telephones or comes to the door
- Tricks strangers employ to lure children into dangerous situations and how to recognize those tricks
- What to do if grabbed by a stranger
- Safe places to go
- Safety tips for inside and outside the home
- The importance of never giving personal information about yourself and family to anyone over the phone or Internet.

Along with the Dangers of Strangers, other bilingual programs being offered through the Monmouth County Sheriff’s Office are Identity Theft, Youth Identification and Safe Cargo.

“Our agency is a leader when it comes to supporting issues and implementing bilingual programs in the Hispanic community,” said Sheriff Shaun Golden. “I’m proud to have the opportunity to mentor our Hispanic youths in an effort to ensure safety and opportunity for them in the future.”