



### **Crime Prevention Tip of the Day: Holiday Shopping (# 5 in a Series)**

If you take your most prized possessions along with you while you shop, take a look at these tips. We want the entire family to be safe this Holiday season!

#### Children and Shopping Safety

- NEVER leave children (or pets) alone in the car! Even if you “just went inside for a minute”...which is the #1 excuse heard by Police.
- If you have a cell phone, ensure your kids have the phone number handy to reach you. Make sure they know where they can go to access a phone (stores, information desk, security and payphones) and how to call 911 for emergencies.
- If dropping teenagers off to shop on their own, set a meeting place and time inside the establishment for pick-up (not in the parking lot or at doorways).
- Teach children to ask Police Officers, store clerks or mall security for help if they become separated from you. Remind children to remain in the area where they become separated. An alternative would be to have a designated spot to meet if separated (i.e. the information desk).
- Teach children their full name, address and telephone number to give to Police Officers or mall security if they become separated from you.
- Keep children with you at ALL times and ALWAYS accompany children to public rest rooms.
- Teach children to immediately inform you if a stranger is bothering them.
- Take a picture before going inside to shop. If you get separated, being able to show an Officer or security personnel a photo of what they look like and what they are currently wearing will save valuable time so everyone can start looking.

These are just a few tips to think about. Shopping is meant to be a fun experience for everyone, but be on the safe side and have a plan! Call us if you need us, 911 for emergencies and (205) 822-5300 for non-emergencies.

More Crime Prevention tips on our website: <http://www.hooverpd.com/crime-prevention.php>