

Park Place

Block Captain Community Watch Program

Granny Scam Prevention Tips & Action Plan

The **Grandparent Scam** has begun surfacing in the area again. Officer Steve Marcinik of the Sebastian Police Department said there have been several incidents reported in Sebastian and one in Park Place.

Officer Marcinik warns residents, especially senior citizens, to be on high alert for phone calls from a suspect who says they are young relative. Usually they pose as a grandson/ granddaughter, cleverly disguising their voice, who has been in an accident or been arrested in another state or out of the country. They talk so fast, and you're shocked, thinking how bad is the situation and not really listening to the voice. But the situation they describe sounds so believable! Then they tell you they NEED MONEY FAST! The caller pleads with you, "**Grandma/Grandpa, Please go right now and wire the money. I need it.**" You are asked to send the money by Western Union, Money Gram or something new called a green dot card at Walgreens or Wall-mart to a specific location.

You want to help; you think it's all real.... but it could be a scam!!!

STOP! Follow these steps to verify if this is a real call or a scam.

1. Ask the caller for a phone number where you can call them back. *Write down the number.* (If they won't give it to you it's probably a scam.)
2. Ask for the Grandson/Granddaughter's middle name. *Write down the answer.*
3. Ask for the child's mother's first and last name. *Write down the answer.*
4. Ask in what grade in school are you? *Write down the answer.*
5. If they have a pet (or not), ask for the pets name. If no pet and they give you a name anyway, or if they have a pet and provide the wrong name, it's definitely a scam. *Write down the answer.*
6. *If you still aren't sure....Ask 'where are you so I can send the money to you.'* *Write it down*
7. Tell them you'll need some time to get the money from the bank (you're just buying time at this point to verify the situation)
8. Then, hang up and call other family members and relatives to check on where the grandson/granddaughter really is who supposedly called you that needs money.
9. Find out from your relatives where the grandson or granddaughter is at the present time. Keep calling all the relatives you can think of that would know where the child is or should be. Call until you can verify that he/she is safe.

If you can't verify the whereabouts of your grandson/granddaughter and there is the possibility that the call and situation is real, call the Sebastian Police Department immediately so they can assist you with handling the situation. Call 911 and tell the dispatch officer you live in Sebastian and want to talk to a Sebastian Police officer. If not an emergency call the administrative number 589-5233.

NEVER PROVIDE ANY PERSONAL INFO, LIKE CREDIT CARD OR SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS, TO A CALLER.

When you have confirmed that your grandson/granddaughter is ok, and you suspect that a call you received was a scammer, report it to the Sebastian Police Department. Call their non emergency number 772-589-5233 to discuss this confidentially. Please inform your Block Captain too so we can alert others