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HEADLINE: Teen's fast thinking thwarts break–in at Voorhees home

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By George Mast Courier–Post Staff September 24, 2009

Teen's fast thinking thwarts break–in at Voorhees home

VOORHEES A 14–year–old boy was alone in his Voorhees home doing homework Wednesday afternoon when he spotted a man with a knife trying to break in to the residence, authorities said.

The quick–thinking teen grabbed a phone, ran upstairs, locked himself in a bedroom with the family dog and called police.

"He did everything by the book," Voorhees police Sgt. Carmen DelPalazzo said of the boy.

When the would–be burglar saw the teen, he fled into a nearby wooded area, DelPalazzo said.

Police set up a perimeter around the Acorn Hill Development following the 3:41 p.m. incident but did not locate the man, who was believed to be wearing a blond wig.

DelPalazzo said it is important that parents teach their children common sense precautions like locking doors and having access to a landline or cell phone before leaving them alone at home.

New Jersey law does not set a minimum age for when children can be left unsupervised at home.

A tip sheet provided by *Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey* says there is no exact age for when children are ready to be left alone at home.

The organization suggests children around the age of 10 or 11 will likely begin asking for more independence.

But before parents scoot off carefree for a quick shopping trip, the organization says parents need to consider the safety of their neighborhood and the child's decision making ability.

Parents should also make sure children have access to, and know, the contacts for all local emergency departments.

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Highlights: NJ, NEW JERSEY, New Jersey, Prevent Child Abuse