

Seven Kidpower Strategies for Keeping Your Child Safe

1

Put safety first

Kidpower's Founding Principle is: "The safety and well-being of a child are more important than anyone's embarrassment, inconvenience, or offense." Child protection requires putting safety first – ahead of uncomfortable feeling or fear of upsetting others.

2

Keep your radar on

Stay in charge of what is happening with your kids. Insist on all caregivers and professionals providing powerful, respectful adult leadership. Don't let your kids be in places where you are not welcome. Drop in unexpectedly. Pay attention to your intuition. If you feel uncomfortable or your gut makes you worry that something might be wrong, insist on answers. Notice and take action if someone seems to be singling your child out for special gifts or favors or time alone.

3

LISTEN to your children and teach them not to keep unsafe secrets

Problems, touch, gifts, favors, and activities should NOT be a secret. Ask occasionally in an interested, calm way, "Is there anything you've been wondering or worrying about that you haven't told me?" Stay calm and caring when kids talk with you about problems so that they feel safe coming to you.

4

Make SURE Kids know you CARE

Don't assume that a child knows. No matter how busy you are, share the Kidpower Protection Promise with every young person in your care – and with important adults in your life: "YOU are VERY important to me. If you have a safety problem, I want to know – even if I seem too busy, might get upset, or don't understand at first – even if someone we care about will be upset- even if you promised not to tell, feel embarrassed, or made a mistake. Please tell me, and I will do everything in my power to help you!"

5

Don't let kids throw stones

The Kidpower Motto is: We EACH have the right to be treated with safety and respect – and the responsibility to act safely and respectfully towards ourselves and others.” Intervene immediately so that you stop a child being unkind to another with the same determination that you would stop that child from throwing a rock through a window. Model being firm, kind, and persistent when you intervene.

6

Assess your child and make Safety Plans

Assess realistically the capabilities and vulnerabilities of your child. Make a list of everywhere your child goes, what kinds of problems then might encounter, and how they would avoid the problem and get help if necessary. Before you let your child go anywhere without adult protection, make sure that your child is prepared with sufficient knowledge, skills, and life experience.

7

Prepare your child to take charge of their safety by practicing skills

One quick action can stop most abuse and bullying. Core Kidpower and Teenpower Safety Skills include how to:

- Stay aware
- Be confident
- Think and check first
- Move away from trouble
- Set boundaries
- Protect your feelings
- Use your voice and body to escape danger, and
- Be persistent in getting help.

Kids and adults will be more prepared to take action quickly if they have rehearsed using these skills in a fun, age-appropriate way, adapted for their abilities and relevant for their lives.