



Global Children's Fund

General Abduction Prevention

Please enjoy this parent safety brochure, compliments of your child's school or child care facility. Keep in mind that this is but one small part of child safety, not intended to be complete safety education. Please visit us online at WWW.KEEPYOURCHILDSAFE.org, for a variety of free book downloads covering all aspects of child safety.

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Around 800,000 children are reported missing each year in the United States. Fortunately, most of those will have a happy ending, and the kids are quickly reunited with their parents. However, many will not. Nearly every form of child abduction is preventable by teaching children basic techniques and skills to defeat the lures that an abductor will try to use.

Stranger Danger

I'm sure every informed parent has warned their child about strangers. But often, they don't go into enough detail. Make sure your children understand that strangers are nice looking, normal people. They are simply anyone they do not know well. Children often times assume that after they have said "hello" to someone, they aren't a stranger anymore. So be sure to clearly explain to your kids that anyone who they do not know well, and you (mom and dad) do not know well, is a stranger. A person is still a stranger even if you've met them a couple of times.

Stranger Tricks

Go over some of the lures an abductor might use to trick them into coming with them.....

- ✓ Would you like to come see my puppy?
- ✓ I found this backpack along the road and I don't know who it belongs to. Can you come take a look and see if you recognize it?
- ✓ Can you tell me directions to the police station?
- ✓ I've got a gun. Get in the car with me right now or I'll shoot you.
- ✓ Hey Jessi, your mom asked me to come pick you up and bring you over there. I'm a friend of hers, she came over to my house for a visit.
- ✓ Would you like a ride to school?

It is also important you counter these lures with logic. Some of these could be quite scary. Explain to your kids that if someone says they have a gun, they are only saying that so you will go with them. They aren't going to shoot you on the side of the road. It is important you counter these threats with realities, so that your kids are able to stand up to them in a real event.

Basic Rules

Teach children these basic rules:

- ✓ Never go anywhere with a stranger, no matter what they say.
- ✓ Never go anywhere with someone you know unless your parents have OK'd it before hand.
- ✓ Never do anything you aren't sure about, or go anywhere with anyone, without asking another adult first. Someone at your school, a teacher, a policeman. Nobody will ever be mad at you for being safe.
- ✓ Always walk the same routes to school, and stay out in the open.
- ✓ There is strength in numbers. Stay around lots of people whenever possible.

Code Words

Developing code words with your child has been a system pushed in the past to prevent abduction. While they have worked on occasion, other means work just as well, and are less dangerous, and here is why: First, it's possible for an abductor to successfully guess a code word. Children often times create ones that are common likes among kids, or common pet names. Second, the only time code words are necessary is if you make a habit out of having anyone pick up your child, without letting your child know about it first. If this is the case, your code word is likely to get around and be useless anyhow. But most importantly, if a child is ever approached by a stranger, they should not be waiting around, giving the stranger added time or opportunity by asking for a code word and a conducting conversation. Just run. Plain and simple.

Getting Away

Teach children that if a stranger ever approaches them, they need to leave the area immediately. They need to stay away from the car, or stay at least an arms length away if the person is on foot, and get to the most immediate populated area they can find and ask for help. If a stranger approaches them from a car, they need to run as fast as they can in the opposite direction of the car.

Additional resources

We have a variety of additional resources, including children's books and parent tips on our web-site. Please visit us online for more information.