

Child Abduction Prevention

Child Abduction Prevention For Parents and Teachers

Children of every age are vulnerable to the risk of child predators. Teens in particular are frequent targets of child predators using some very sophisticated lures.

Parents often visualize a predator as a seedy individual lurking in the shadows. Case studies of hundreds of predators remind us that a child predator can be anyone, from any walk of life or economic status.

Children and teens are most often solicited with "lures" which distract them or give the child a perception that the predator is "known" or "safe" (a utility worker, an ambulance driver or policeman). This sets the child up for the abuse or abduction. Common lures are the emergency lure, mail lure, toy or pet lures, reward and door knock lures and internet lures.

Talk to children and teens directly about the kinds of dangers that exist. Don't be shy or beat around the bush. Teach your children and teens, above all, to trust their internal alarm. If this internal alarm goes off, get to a safer place and find a trusted adult immediately. Teach your child awareness and distance are always their best self-defense. Teach your children to find "Safe Zones" in any situation. Remind your children they can always come to you when scared.

Follow this basic checklist to reduce the risk to your child or teen.

- Create rules to be followed when your child is left home alone. Write them out and post them. Go over situations that might come up and what the child should do. Your child should "NEVER" be allowed to open the door to someone without you. This same rule is applied to the phone when you are away. Predators are experts at talking their way into your home.
- Teach your children that adults do not have to ask children questions in the street, they should approach other adults. Adults do not have to seek out kids help for directions, to post mail, to assist with groceries. Go over lure scenarios – mail lure, directions lure, help me lure.
- Role-play various situations. Make sure your rules are black and white. Your child should not have to make a judgment call in a dangerous situation, but instead should follow the clear, well thought out guidelines that you have established and discussed beforehand.
- Teach your child about a personal fence – verbal and physical. Your child's greatest weapon in any abduction situation is maintaining distance and making confident "Stay Away" statements. Teach your child which adults they should seek out in any emergency (policeman, store counter clerk, Mom/Dads with kids, teacher). Teach your child to run for help if the situation is dangerous.
- Teach your child how to "Go Crazy" in an extreme situation. Make noise, yell out – Help Me! You are not my parent! This person is trying to hurt me! Teach them to run like the wind if they are in danger.

Important Child Protection websites for information and safety tools:

- www.amberwatchfoundation.com
- www.familywatchdogs.org

This Checklist Courtesy of Warrior Personal Safety, Inc.

