

# Family Personal Protection

By Jeff Sgarlata  
KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

## PERSONAL PROTECTION IN PUBLIC VENUES

“SAFE PEOPLE, SAFE PLACES” is a primary self escape strategy when we find ourselves in a dangerous or potentially dangerous situation. In almost any situation, we have some option to self-escape to the safety of others or the security of cover or concealment. Teach children to identify a safe place in any situation and how to self escape if you must act to defend them.

- Teach children and adults to walk with purpose and communicate confidence. Learn to raise awareness when passing through doorways. Teach children they always have the option to say NO and adults do not need to ask them for help.
- Always keep an eye on cars when in or near the street. If tires screech, stop, step away and assess the danger. Know the difference between concealment and cover. The closest and safest cover in the streets is usually a car engine or concrete wall.
- Panic stricken crowds. People in crowds can become aggressive, especially if spooked or scared. If this happens, find a close stable object (pillar, railing, bench or light pole and wrap your arms around it. Teach children to use “STICKY HANDS and hug the object and YELL “HELP, HELP – CHILD HERE!”
- Practice a “Safety Drill” in four primary assault scenarios with children and loved ones – approaching the car, in an aggressive panhandling scenario, if lost or separated from you and on the playground or at a friends’ home.
- Learn a “Safety Stance” and how to present a “Personal Fence.” Others nearby can readily see there is a problem; video cameras will likely catch the event in your defense. Prepare in advance for an “Escalating Response” to the four primary assault scenarios you may face. Give yourself permission to respond aggressively!
- Teach every child basic gun safety for school, in a neighbors’ home or out in public –  
**STOP, DON’T TOUCH, LEAVE THE AREA AND TELL AN ADULT!**

For more information, contact Jeff Sgarlata: LaVallee’s USA Black Belt Champions, 315-214-0249

Information sources – FBI Uniform Crime Reports, U.S. Department of Justice, National Center For Lost and Exploited Children, John Hopkins University, NRA Eddie Eagle Program, Warrior Personal Safety Training Systems and the U.S. Department of Health.