

Teach Your Children to Act, not Merely React to Help Them Avoid Being Abducted



In a one-year period, there were approximately:

*114,000 attempted non-family abductions
3,200 non-family abductions and
354,000 family abductions*

The average victim of abduction and murder is an approximately 11-year-old girl who is described as a "low-risk," "average" child with a stable family relationship and has initial contact with the abductor within a quarter mile of her home.

You are raising your child to be honest, polite and respectful of adults. But sometimes these aren't the best choices your child can make. Children should know that there are times when they should 'misbehave' for their own protection and safety.

For instance:

- A child should never say he or she is alone when answering the phone, even if it's true. It is safer to say that *the adult can't come to the phone and will return the call.*
- A child should never answer the door when alone, or invite someone into the house without their parent's permission.
- In the unlikely event that someone should try to take your child against his/her will, tell your child *to make a scene, to scream and carry on, and to leave a trail of scattered books and belongings.*
- Sometimes an adult will try to lure a child by asking for help of some kind - directions, the time. Explain to your children that adults rarely ask kids for help. They are not obliged to say 'yes' just because an adult asked. If children are asked to do something that doesn't seem right, they can say 'no' nicely, as in "*No, I have to ask my mom first*" or just say '*no*' and leave. Knowing this will help your children to trust their instincts and encourage them to think for themselves.
- Make your children aware that if a stranger or adult asks them to get in his/her car because (for example) their parents have been in an accident and they need to take them to the hospital, they should **never** get in the car. Tell the adult no and go directly home, or to school or to a neighbor they trust. Have the teacher or neighbor check on the story. This trick has not only caused trouble for many a child but adults as well.

By preparing your children to understand that they have choices, even in difficult situations, you prepare them to act, not merely react.

Information provided by Child Find.



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