

Pointers For Parents

Protecting Children From Abductions

(NAPSA)—While most parents teach their children not to talk to strangers, safety experts say that's less than half the battle—parents should also be focused on teaching children what to do if a stranger approaches and/or actually grabs them. Studies show once an abduction moves from verbal to physical, the vast majority of children simply don't know what to do. The news may seem particularly unnerving considering each year, the Department of Justice reports about 69,000 children are abducted—1,000 of them every month by people who are not family members.

According to child psychologist Arthur H. Brand, empowering children to rescue themselves from abduction scenarios will not only help keep them safe, it could have a positive, anxiety-reducing effect as well. He says, parents should not be concerned that discussing abduction and teaching escape techniques will unduly frighten children.

Dr. Brand works as a consultant for a group that produces a new video and DVD called *Give Your Kids A Fighting Chance*. The program teaches children age 5 to 18 how to avoid and, if need be, escape from an attacker.

"Somewhere between 'don't talk to strangers' and placing a child's photo on a missing poster, there exists a painful gap," says Paul Stanley, a father who helped create the video after his son was nearly abducted by a stranger. "As a society, we're focused on collecting finger prints and DNA samples, but we've never prepared our children to rescue themselves should they be grabbed by an abductor. And that's what's missing! Parents need to teach their children how to fight back and get away when an abductor approaches and grabs them so we don't have to hang posters and submit prints anymore."



Play It Safe—Experts say parents should teach their kids what to do in case of an abduction.

The Fighting Chance method was created by the Israeli military for their citizens and is taught by specialists, Rick Seid and Guy Dar on the video. The instructional video enlists several youngsters, to teach techniques that empower children to recognize and avoid dangers and for the first time, how to disable an abductor and rescue themselves if need be. It's actually easy and fun to learn. *The New York Times* reported that the tactics covered in the video make it possible for a 5-year-old to get away from a full-grown man.

The video also demonstrates how to avoid being forced into a vehicle and escape or, once in the vehicle, how to disable it and the driver, bring attention to the scene and escape.

"Our kids are unprepared for what could be the most terrifying experience of their lives," says instructor Rick Seid. "It's time to say, 'Should the unthinkable occur, we can instruct the child on how to escape a dangerous situation!'"

Parents can download 50 safety tips by visiting the video's Web site at www.kidsfightingchance.com. DVD/VHS copies of *Give Your Kids A Fighting Chance* can also be purchased on the site or by calling toll-free at 800-572-7308.