Kidpower: Child Advocacy in Action

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The mission of Kidpower of Colorado is to teach young people personal safety and confidence-building skills to reduce their risk of abduction, assault and emotional, physical and sexual abuse.
Safety First.

Kidpower’s core principle is:

The safety and healthy self-esteem of a child is more important than anyone’s embarrassment, inconvenience or offense.
“Every child deserves a champion; an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection and insists that they become the best they can be.”

~ Rita Pierson
Signs to Watch For – Appearance

- Unexplained bruises
- Lack of care of appearance or hygiene
- Tired or listless
Signs to Watch For – Behavior

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Defiance
- Mood swings
- Unexplained emotional outbursts
- Problems with attention
- High-risk behaviors, including substance abuse
- Social changes
- Physical Complaints
- Suicidal thoughts/actions
The “Check-In”

- I’ve noticed…
- Is something bothering you?
- What’s up?
Responding to Disclosure

Do:

- Remain calm, keep an open mind, and suspend judgment.
- Listen with compassion and without interruption.
- Find a quiet, private place to talk to the child.
- Reassure the child that he/she has done the right thing by telling someone. “Thank you for telling me.”
- Record concrete information. Ask general questions to figure out the nature of the problem.
- Tell the child that there is help available.
- Let the child know you must report the abuse to someone who has helped other children and families in similar situations.
Responding to Disclosure

Do:

- Report the incident to the proper authorities (Law enforcement, US Center for SafeSport).
- Let the child know what will happen when the report is made (if you have the appropriate information).
- Seek out your own support to help you with feelings about the disclosure (if needed).
- Be aware of your own personal issues and how they affect your perception.
- If more than one child was involved, keep the children separated to preserve the accuracy of their statements for law enforcement.
- Protect the child from further harm, including retaliation.
Responding to Disclosure

Don’t:

- Promise confidentiality.
- Express panic or shock.
- Convey impatience if the child is not ready to discuss abuse.
- Give advice.
- Make negative comments about the perpetrator.
- Disclose the information indiscriminately. Tell only those adults who need the information to protect and support the child.
Kidpower Protection Promise

You are VERY important to me!
If you have a safety problem, I want to know—
even if I seem too busy,
even if someone we care about will be upset,
even if it is embarrassing, even if you promised
not to tell, and
even if you made a mistake.
Please tell me, and I will do everything in my
power to help you.
What are Boundaries?

An interpersonal boundary is the ability to know where you end and the other person begins.
Dual Relationships / Multiple Hats

Coach / Parent
Parent / Official
Teacher / Coach
Coach / Friend
Team B.O.D / Parent / Coach
Parent / Volunteer / Decision-Maker
The Boundary Dance

Step in, step out
Continuum of Boundaries

Professional and Balanced Relationship

UNDER-INVOLVEMENT
Disinterest, lack of compassion and empathy, over-response to policy

OVER-INVOLVEMENT
Boundary crossings, violations, sexual misconduct

Concept adapted from NCSBN
https://www.ncsbn.org/professional-boundaries.htm
Time to Practice
Stickies and Trickies

Skills Building

“Rear View Mirror” – Peer consultation
Additional Resources

- Being Worthy of Trust to Keep Kids Safe from Abuse, Bullying, and Other Harm

- Touch and Consent in Healthy Relationships
  [https://www.kidpower.org/library/article/consent/](https://www.kidpower.org/library/article/consent/)

- How Can I Avoid Being Accused of Abuse?
  [https://www.kidpower.org/library/article/avoid-being-accused/](https://www.kidpower.org/library/article/avoid-being-accused/)

- What Does a Child Abuser Look Like?

- Assertive Advocacy Communication Skills
  [https://www.kidpower.org/library/article/assertive-advocacy/](https://www.kidpower.org/library/article/assertive-advocacy/)

- Integrity in Communication
  [https://www.kidpower.org/library/article/integrity-communication/](https://www.kidpower.org/library/article/integrity-communication/)

- Seven Steps to Take When a Child Reports Possible Abuse, Hazing, Bullying or Anything that Bothers Them

- Doing Right by Our Kids: Protecting Child Safety at All Levels by Amy Tiemann PhD and Irene van der Zande, Founder of Kidpower International
  [https://www.amazon.com/Doing-Right-Our-Kids-Protecting/dp/0976498049/ref=sr_1_sc_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1548545613&sr=8-1-spell&keywords=Doint+right+by+our+kids](https://www.amazon.com/Doing-Right-Our-Kids-Protecting/dp/0976498049/ref=sr_1_sc_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1548545613&sr=8-1-spell&keywords=Doint+right+by+our+kids)
Thank you for your time, dedication and commitment to keeping kids healthy, happy and safe.

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