Safety for Kids

Equipping Children to Discern Danger



Evangelical Council for Abuse Prevention

Julie Lowe

Safety for Kids

Equipping Children to Discern Danger

Julie Lowe

New Growth Press
newgrowthpress.com

New Growth Press, Greensboro, NC 27401
newgrowthpress.com
Copyright © 2025 by Julie Lowe

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher, except as provided by USA copyright law.

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are taken from The ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®). ESV® Text Edition: 2016. Copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. The ESV® text has been reproduced in cooperation with and by permission of Good News Publishers. Unauthorized reproduction of this publication is prohibited. All rights reserved.

Scripture verses marked NASB are taken from the New American Standard Bible®, Copyright © 1960, 1971, 1977, 1995, 2020 by The Lockman Foundation. All rights reserved.

Scripture verses marked NIV are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV® Copyright ©1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Cover Design: Dan Stelzer
Interior Typesetting and Ebook: Lisa Parnell,
lparnellbookservices.com

ISBN: 978-1-64507-534-9 (print)
ISBN: 978-1-64507-535-6 (ebook)

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data on file

Printed in India

29 28 27 26 25 1 2 3 4 5

It can take less than an hour of watching the local news to notice the dangers that our children confront every day in our world. Here are just some of the common risks that our children might encounter:

- Rising rates of youth depression, suicide, and anxiety[1]
- Marijuana and drug use becoming more common place
- Bullying and cyberbullying increasing with technology[2]
- Young children being exposed to pornography, sexting, and solicitation[3]
- Compounding issues related to sexual activity, orientation, and identity
- Internet addiction
- A growing culture of violence, objectification, and desensitization to the mistreatment of others
- Physical abuse, sexual abuse, date rape, and trafficking of young people
- School shootings, teens encouraging other teens to commit self-harm, and dangerous viral social media challenges
- Sextortion—a rising problem that targets young people

The Danger Also Lies Within

When we consider all the dangers our children might face, it can be tempting to think that the best way to

protect our children is to never let them out of our sight. But even if this was practical (and it's not), would they be safe then? The Bible teaches us that there are not only dangers outside of us, there is danger within.

You can and should maintain a close watch on your children. You can and should monitor their activities and try to shelter them from harm. But you will find that the danger your children face cannot always be kept at bay. We must equip them to function wisely in the world and to know good from evil. Good parenting is not simply about putting up boundaries and high walls—protecting our children from the external dangers of this world. Wise parenting also helps children understand that there is danger from within. Sin resides in the heart and is not easily visible. Every person—loved ones, trusted friends and acquaintances, respectable individuals with whom we live and work—is capable of being led astray into destructive choices. This includes your own children.

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, in *The Gulag Archipelago*, says it like this: "The line separating good and evil passes not through states, nor between classes, nor between political parties either—but right through every human heart—and through all human hearts."[4]

Jesus tells us,

> "For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness." (Mark 7:21–22)

Yes, each of us is vulnerable to evil happening *to* us, but we are also each capable of allowing it to take root *in* us. Our children need to be taught to guard their hearts, for it is the wellspring of life (Proverbs 4:23). James reminds us about the slippery slope of giving in to sinful desires: "Desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death" (James 1:15). We will fail our children if we only shelter them from the external perils of this world and do not foster in them a conviction that they must guard themselves from evil.

We can try to keep evil far from us, but we will fail because of the pervasive nature of sin and evil. Your children will be tempted by their own wrong desires. Just like you, they will sometimes fall. They will sometimes go in the wrong direction. But this is the very issue that the gospel of Jesus Christ addresses. Jesus died on a cruel cross because we are all sinners. On that cross, all our sins were forgiven—the sins of parents and children alike. Isaiah 53:6 says: "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all." We have been rescued from ourselves—and continue to be. We and our families have been given the Spirit as a Helper and Comforter who transforms hearts and minds—places that no one else can go.

Our ultimate safety and our children's ultimate safety will be found in trusting a faithful Father, who has rescued us and continues to rescue us. Remember the good news you have to share with your children

that Jesus Christ came to save sinners (1 Timothy 1:15). Then together you can remember that "he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world" (1 John 4:4).

Our children's greatest defense against the evil of this world is to know God and his ways. Then they will know the straight path to take and will be able to recognize the crooked path and avoid it. We should have no greater joy than that our children walk in truth (3 John 1:4). As a parent, do not grow weary in discipling your children. The Lord and his Spirit will be your help. Take encouragement for your journey from 2 Corinthians 9:8: "God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work."

Worry and Denial Are *Not* Safety Skills

> "And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life?" (Matthew 6:27)

When it comes to addressing safety issues regarding our children, there are many common struggles parents face. Instead of facing reality head-on with an appropriate dose of both realism and faith, it is easy to veer off course in the diverging directions of either fear or denial. Neither response will enable you to make healthy decisions or appropriately equip your children for the challenges they will face. Neither response will enable you to grow in love and dependence on the Lord or help your child to do so. Let's dig into each struggle and see the better way Christ offers us.