



Protecting the Gift: Keeping Children and Teenagers Safe (and Parents Sane)

By Gavin de Becker

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Safety skills for children outside the home

Warning signs of sexual abuse

How to screen baby-sitters and choose schools

Strategies for keeping teenagers safe from violence

All parents face the same challenges when it comes to their children's safety: whom to trust, whom to distrust, what to believe, what to doubt, what to fear, and what not to fear. In this empowering book, Gavin de Becker, the nation's leading expert on predicting violent behavior and author of the monumental bestseller **The Gift of Fear**, offers practical new steps to enhance children's safety at every age level, giving you the tools you need to allow your kids freedom without losing sleep yourself. With daring and compassion, he shatters the widely held myths about danger and safety and helps parents find some certainty about life's highest-stakes questions:

How can I know a baby-sitter won't turn out to be someone who harms my child? (see page 103)

What should I ask child-care professionals when I interview them? (see page 137)

What's the best way to prepare my child for walking to school alone? (see page 91)

How can my child be safer at school? (see page 175)

How can I spot sexual predators? (see page 148)

What should I do if my child is lost in public? (see page 86)

How can I teach my child about risk without causing too much fear? (see page 98)

What must my teenage daughter know in order to be safe? (see page 191)

What must my teenage son know in order to be safe? (see page 218)

And finally, in the face of all these questions, how can I reduce the worrying? (see page 56)

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Be warned: In many ways this is a terrifying book. It deals with a subject--violence against children--that most of us never want to consider. But, as Gavin de Becker stresses, such situations, though rare, can occur, so all parents must deal with the facts in order to protect their children properly. De Becker's aim is to create awareness of potential dangers and provide parents with the knowledge necessary for prevention and control. As he emphatically states in *Protecting the Gift*, much of this knowledge is already hard-wired in the form of intuition: "This natural ability is deep, brilliant, powerful. Nature's greatest accomplishment, the human brain, is stunningly efficient when its host is at risk, but when one's child is at risk, it moves to a whole new level, one we can justifiably call miraculous." The trick, he stresses, is trusting and acting on intuition.

In this valuable, even necessary, book, he shatters many myths about the typical profiles of regular offenders and the prevalence of such problems as sexual abuse and kidnapping. He also deconstructs the wisdom of traditional maxims such as "Never talk to strangers" and "If you are ever lost, go to a policeman." Without offering a compendium of every conceivable danger, he identifies warning signals and real risks that are often easy to spot once you know what to look for. He offers practical advice on recognizing signs of sexual abuse, choosing a baby sitter or nanny, how to prepare kids for walking to school alone, and how to teach children about potential risks without making them afraid to venture out of the house. And he continually stresses that denial and ignoring intuition are the biggest mistakes that parents make in protecting their kids from those that mean them harm. Well written and infinitely informative, *Protecting the Gift* affords parents more confidence and less reason for unnecessary worry. --Shawn Carkonen

From Publishers Weekly

Dostoyevski said that child abuse is evil because it destroys a child's faith in the goodness of God. In this painstakingly practical yet impassioned guide, de Becker, author of last year's bestselling *The Gift of Fear*, demonstrates that a child who was himself abused can grow up to be a vigilant protector of the gift of children's innate faith in the goodness of life. Writing with a precision honed from his long experience as a security expert predicting violence in order to protect high-profile clients, and with a depth born of his own childhood understanding of how it feels to be hurt by the adult you love, de Becker describes how we can keep our children safe. Although he devotes separate chapters to the special threats facing children and teens, females and males (the murderous romance of boys and guns is covered), his basic message is encapsulated in 12 steps. Echoing his previous book, the first step involves teaching children to honor their feelings--specifically, the intuition that makes them fear certain people. Children also need a parent's permission to be assertive, to defy adults, to yell and fully resist. Throughout, de Becker stresses a child's need to trust that a parent will be open to listen about any experience, no matter how unpleasant. He opens and concludes with tales of ordinary mothers who overcame their doubts and inhibitions to experience a brilliantly intuitive wild brain as they fought off attackers to protect their children. De Becker offers a guide to fostering this fierce intelligence in our kids, ourselves and our society. Everyone in contact with children should read this important book. It can help save lives. BOMC, QPB and Childrens BOMC featured alternates; first serial to USA Weekend; second serial to Good Housekeeping; author tour.

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From [Booklist](#)

In De Becker's well-received first book on anticipating, avoiding, and preventing personal violence, he wrote about *The Gift of Fear* (1997) and encouraged regarding fearful feelings as warnings to be heeded rather than

rationalized away. In this book, he still encourages that practice and still valorizes intuition as the reliable matrix out of which fear arises. The gift of this book's title is not, however, an intangible emotion, but one's very tangible children. After opening chapters on intuition, worry--which he thinks is more distracting than useful--and the ingratiating tactics of child abductors and molesters, De Becker turns to specific aspects of protecting children. When children should talk to strangers, how to let children cooperate in their own protection as they grow, hiring baby-sitters, choosing safe day-care, guarding against pedophiles, ensuring safety at school, helping teenage girls deal with boys, dealing with boys and guns, spotting violence-prone boys' friendships, and intervening in intrafamilial violence--each gets a very cogent, accessible chapter's attention. Certain truths, borne out by statistics, are stated repeatedly: almost 100 percent of child molesters are heterosexual men; the preponderance of molestation is committed by family members and close friends; and boys and men are exponentially more likely to be violent than girls and women. Although he uses plenty of sobering and sometimes tragic true stories as springboards for teaching, De Becker avoids fearmongering and paranoia, pointing out that humans are the most successful species we know at raising offspring safely to maturity. This is top-drawer child-rearing stuff. *Ray Olson*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Agnes Figueroa:

This book untitled Protecting the Gift: Keeping Children and Teenagers Safe (and Parents Sane) to be one of several books in which best seller in this year, that is because when you read this reserve you can get a lot of benefit upon it. You will easily to buy that book in the book retail store or you can order it through online. The publisher with this book sells the e-book too. It makes you more easily to read this book, since you can read this book in your Touch screen phone. So there is no reason for you to past this guide from your list.

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