GOOD SENSE DEFENCE for the young
The Kidscape ‘Good Sense Defence’ Programme has been developed to help children become better able to recognise and deal with a variety of potentially dangerous situations from bullying to coping with strangers or even known adults who might try to harm them.

The Kidscape Programme is based upon a two-year project involving parents, teachers and children in selected schools across Britain. Following the success of this pilot scheme, over 2 million children in schools throughout the country are using the programme. The Kidscape Code has been adopted nationwide.

The programme teaches children to trust their own feelings in sensing dangerous situations; to differentiate between ‘safe’ and ‘unsafe’ forms of touching; to break rules when necessary in order to protect themselves; and always to seek adult help.

By emphasising the positive, and teaching in a low-key, non-frightening way, the Kidscape Programme helps children to stay safe: to understand that no-one — bullies, strangers or people they know — has the right to harm or mistreat them.

Although child-centred, Good Sense Defence necessarily depends upon and involves parents, teachers, social workers, education welfare officers, youth workers, police — and all other concerned adults — for its successful integration into everyday life.

**The Kidscape Keepsafe Code**

The concept of ‘Good Sense Defence’ provides practical and positive ways to help children recognise and deal with potentially dangerous situations.

It does not make children fearful or mistrustful.

It begins with a number of general rules about what to do if a child should get lost; how to make an emergency phone call; and the importance of children always telling parents where they are going.

It progresses into more specific areas, teaching children how:

- **To be safe** — that no-one should ever try to take away this basic right
- **To say no** — if anyone, even someone they know, tries to touch them in a way which frightens or confuses them
- **To cope with bullies** — to ignore them if possible, to get help and always tell an adult
- **To tell** — that adults need to know about problems to be able to help
- **Not to keep secrets** — that some secrets should never be kept and that no-one, even someone they know, should ever ask them to keep a kiss, hug or touch of any kind a secret
- **To yell** — that it is OK to yell, even in ‘quiet’ places, if they think they are in danger from someone who might harm them. Also they are taught how to yell really loudly, in case of emergency
- **To run and get away** — whenever they think they are in danger: where to run to and how to keep their distance from strangers. If they are unable to run, they are taught to get away as quickly as possible or to try to attract attention
- **Not to talk to strangers** when they are alone — what is a stranger; how to recognise and deal with approaches from strangers, including tricks and bribes
- **To have a code** — a word or sign agreed with parents which will always be a signal, in an emergency; meaning they can trust what they are being told — and the person telling them

**Available from Kidscape**

For Children:

- “The Willow Street Kids, It’s Your Right to be Safe” by Michele Elliott. Written for junior age children, it answers children’s questions and will help them to learn to keep safe in a variety of situations.
- “Bullies Meet the Willow Street Kids” by Michele Elliott. The Willow Street Kids stick together and deal with bullies, with the help of parents and teachers.
- “Feeling Happy, Feeling Safe” by Michele Elliott. Written for young children, this colour picture book gives parents a fun way of teaching children what to do in case they get lost, or are confronted by bullies, strangers or known adults who may try to harm them.
- “The Willow Street Kids: On the Trail” video shows the Willow Street Kids coping with bullies, attempted abduction and burglars. (15 mins)

For Parents, Teachers, Social Workers, Trainers and Professionals

- “Keeping Safe, a practical guide to talking with children” by Michele Elliott. Gives ways of talking to children about keeping safe.
- The Kidscape Manuals — Primary, Under Fives and Teenscape, all for use in schools.
- “Protecting Children, A Training Guide for Front-Line Carers” by Michele Elliott. Sponsored by the Department of Health, this manual gives practical advice and exercises for helping children who have been abused.
- “Bullying, A Practical Guide to Coping for Schools” by Michele Elliott (ed). Collection of practical ideas for dealing with bullies, victims, setting up whole school policies, etc.
- Kidscape Training Courses — Provide in-depth training in prevention of child sexual abuse and bullying.
Free Leaflets

Send a large SAE to Kidscape for a copy of:

- “Keep Them Safe” for parents of 5 to 11 year olds
- “Stop Bullying!” for children and parents
- “You Can Beat Bullying!” for teenagers
- “Why My Child?” for parents of children who have been abused

What children say …

I learned that you should tell your mum and dad if anyone asked you to keep kisses a secret and don’t go into people’s cars that you don’t know.  
Stephen, age 8

About three weeks after the lesson someone tried to get me into his car. I stayed far away and ran into a shop. I even told the police the kind of car it was.  
Sharon, age 10

“‘Good Sense Defence’ is a slogan that could soon be on the lips of most children in this country”

Sunday Times

Comments About the Kidscape Approach

What parents say …

I was most impressed and found it very reassuring. It gave me a language to talk with my children about keeping safe.  
Mr Mitchell

My children enjoyed it because it was fun to do. They heard what was said and took it in. They didn’t associate it with fear, but rather with taking care of themselves. Thank you for such a positive programme.  
Mrs Harris

What teachers say …

The workshops with the children are fantastic. The programme has made it easy to teach personal safety without making children uncomfortable or frightened.  
Fiona Crampton, Class Teacher

The most comprehensive programme I have ever seen. It created a real bond of trust and empathy between teachers and pupils. Parents said how pleased they were at how the lessons were handled.  
Linda Frost, Head Teacher

The approach makes teaching about personal safety just another part of child safety, in the same way that we take children to see fires engines for fire safety.  
Jim Norwood, Headmaster

Childhood Should Be …

A time of joy and discovery in which children are nurtured and loved, so that they may grow into caring adults. Part of the process of discovery and growth must also help children to learn how to cope with potential dangers.

We teach children road and water safety so that they can cross the road, and go near and into the water without being harmed. We do not find this particularly difficult because these are accepted as risks. Children are also at risk from bullies, strangers, getting lost and adults who might try to harm them. The Kidscape Programme addresses these concerns and helps make children less vulnerable and more self-confident.

For copies of our free leaflets or information about other materials, send a large SAE to:

Kidscape  
152 Buckingham Palace Road  
London SW1W 9TR

Telephone: 071-730 3300

Kidscape is a registered charity founded in 1984 with the aim of teaching children, their parents and other adults ways to keep children safe.

Kidscape, registered charity number 326864