

# kidpower colorado

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## AGENCY INFORMATION

### *Mission*

The mission of Kidpower of Colorado is to teach young people ages 3-18 personal safety and confidence-building skills to reduce their risk of abduction, assault, and emotional, physical and sexual abuse.

Kidpower of Colorado is a local center of Kidpower International, a private, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization established in California in 1989 and directed by Irene van der Zande. Kidpower's safety and confidence-building training has reached more than 2 million children, teens, and adults worldwide in Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, Sweden, Germany, Switzerland, Pakistan, Peru, Vietnam, India, The Netherlands and Belgium and in the United States in California, Colorado, Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland, New York, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Nebraska, and Vermont and Wisconsin.



*Students learn to use their voices and set boundaries.*

### *History*

The Colorado Center, located in Colorado Springs, was established in 1994. Since inception the program has steadily grown in terms of programs offered, certified staff on board and volunteer involvement. To date, more than 33,000 individuals have received Kidpower training in our community. Currently there is more demand than the program can meet and we are growing steadily to maintain quality of services.

### *Current Programs, Activities, and Accomplishments*

Kidpower offers comprehensive safety education programs in several formats: school and agency classes, Weekend Family workshops (ages 7-12), Starting Strong workshops (ages 4-6),

Teenpower violence prevention workshops, counselor/teacher training, and customized workshops designed to accommodate special needs of participants. Community education presentations teach people about the importance and effectiveness of safety education in a variety of settings. Kidpower values collaboration and is proud to have partnered with 200 other agencies, organizations and schools in our community.

What happens in these programs? Young people learn simple, effective “People Safety” skills. “People Safety” refers to people being emotionally and physically safe, both with themselves and others. Instead of using fear to teach children about safety, Kidpower makes it fun to learn how



*Students practice protecting themselves from hurtful words.*

to be safe. Successful practice in age-appropriate role-plays can prepare young people to build stronger relationships, increase confidence, advocate for themselves and others, manage difficult situations and reduce their risk of bullying, abuse and abduction. Kidpower also helps open the lines of communication between kids and their trusted adults so they can get the help they need and adults are given tools to respond to their children. Kidpower programs are effective both as a risk-reduction model and as a complement to therapy for young people who have already faced a traumatic experience.

A successful graduate has enhanced self-confidence and specific self-protection skills to establish boundaries and keep him or herself safe. Families know how to talk with their children about these issues and support implementation of the skills they have learned. Specific outcomes for children and teens are that they have learned:

- To recognize and avoid potential danger
- To walk, stand and move with awareness and confidence
- To deal with emotional coercion, intimidation, and bribery
- To set clear, strong boundaries when needed, with both people they know and strangers
- To use their voices and their bodies to stay safe
- To deal with bullies and peer pressure and to avoid bullying others
- To be safe on the Internet and with other technology
- To tell an adult if someone talks about having a weapon or threatens to harm someone
- To tell a trusted adult and to keep telling until they get the help they need.



*Up-to-date curriculum includes topics like internet and technology safety. Kate practices what to do if someone wants personal information online.*

Kidpower of Colorado anticipates serving more than 2,700 young people and their caregivers this year. The target population of Kidpower of Colorado is all children/youth in the Pikes Peak and Denver Metro regions, including surrounding areas, ages 3 to 18. **Since Kidpower focuses on risk reduction, every child and teen in this area can benefit from Kidpower and Teenpower programs.**

Kidpower programs are developmentally and culturally appropriate. The curricula and program delivery methodologies have been designed based upon the age of the participant child. All Kidpower instructors attend diversity training as part of their overall preparation. Ongoing supervision and continuing education are provided to all instructors and address any individual needs that may arise. Kidpower classes locally have been delivered in English and Spanish. Written materials have been provided in English, Spanish and Vietnamese.

Kidpower is recommended in four books on personal safety, *Protecting the Gift*, by Gavin de Becker, *Beauty Bites Beast*, by Ellen Snortland, *The Courage to Heal*, by Ellen Bass and Laura Davis, and *Real World Safety for Women* by Christine Schlattner and Michael Linehan. Kidpower International Director and Co-founder, Irene van der Zande has recently published *The Kidpower book for Caring Adults: Personal Safety, Self-Protection, Confidence and Advocacy for Young People* and *Bullying-What Adults Need to Know and Do to Keep Kids Safe*.



*Skills are practiced successfully to build confidence and self-esteem.*