

7 Common Things Every Father Must Protect His Daughter From

A father's urge to protect his daughter is cross-cultural. Truth be told, no matter what our parenting style, our daughters look to us for security. It's not an old-fashioned sentiment. Our girls are hard-wired to look to us fathers as protectors. This article discusses just some of the dangers. Don't be discouraged, because the key to this challenge is awareness and family communication. Be a strong, loving presence in your daughter's life, stay well connected and make sure, beyond a doubt, that she knows how much you love her.

Raising teens is not easy, and raising teenage daughters can make a strong man quake. It helps to know what we're dealing with. Here are seven things you must protect your daughter from.

1. A Lack of Identity

It's difficult to use our best judgment without being grounded. It's dangerous to not know who you are. Let there be no doubt that your daughter knows both who she is and whose she is.

2. Herself

Certainly related to #1—we can be our own worst enemy when we don't have a moral filter. It's a mistake to assume kids will make the right decisions without coaching. That's what families are for. That's why you are her dad.

3. Ignorance

"To be forewarned," the saying goes, "is to be forearmed." Never assume they know anything. Teens will not have the

information you want them to have unless you give it to them. There is no one better to give them that information than you and her mother.

4. Lies

Ignorance is one thing—willful deceit is something more. Your daughter will be lied to, but deception works more effectively on teens who:

- Are not loved by their fathers
- Lack the courage of their convictions
- Are not confident
- Have a poorly developed sense of self
- Do not have a strong relationship of trust with their parents

5. Predators

Girls look for strong men in their lives, and if their father is unavailable or unwilling, they will look elsewhere. This is a dangerous world. Children—and this includes teens—need to understand and practice the “buddy principle.” Talk to your daughter about not going to unfamiliar places alone. A cell phone is not enough. Equip her with necessary survival skills. Educate her about protecting herself from date rape and other drugs can be slipped into open containers. Yes, it can happen to your child. She should never accept an open drink from someone, even a person she knows.

6. Users

Yes, we should be teaching our children generosity, charity and grace, but it’s critical they learn how to sniff out the disingenuous “user” from the legitimate need. Teach your daughter to know when someone is taking advantage of her.

7. Driving

Driving distracted is a huge danger for teens. Establish firm

rules and enforce them without exception. Seat belts, cell phone use, number of friends in the car, driving after curfew, music volume—these all need to be addressed and agreed on. Car use is a privilege, not a right. The car can and often should be taken away. Try our Teen Driving Contract to help explain the risks and responsibilities.

Life outside the family home is risky. Home is not a place to hide; it's the place where children are given the right tools, trained and equipped. Education is an ongoing process. It's our responsibility as dads to make sure our daughters have everything they need to navigate the world safely.

What do you think our kids need to be protected from the most?
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