



HUMBLE BEGINNINGS



“We need to make sure that in every situation kids are protected!”

Debbie Fox, LCSW, Director – Aleinu Family Resource Center, Los Angeles

Five years ago, Los Angeles Orthodox Jewish Day Schools and Day Camps were confronted with several disturbing incidents involving child molestation and abuse. As a result, Aleinu Family Resource Center Director, Debbie Fox, LCSW, school-based therapist, Wendy Finn, LCSW and Aleinu Executive Committee president, Sherry Schlesinger met to brainstorm a way to educate, protect and Keep Our Children Safe.

The first stage was the development of the Aleinu School Policy Standards and Behavioral Standards and Mandated Reporting Guidelines for all school personnel under the guidance of Aleinu’s Halachic Advisory Board of Rabbis. The Standards and Guidelines set strict boundaries for school staff and administration on how to interact with children in an appropriate manner. These Standards and Guidelines have been adopted by Jewish Orthodox Schools across the country.



But it wasn’t enough. Children were still potentially at risk in a variety of situations. Aleinu went back to the drawing board and Safety Kid™ was born. “We needed to make sure that **in every situation**, kids are protected!” said Debbie Fox.

Aleinu executed a national search for programs that educate children about personal safety. They searched for the best model that was proven effective and could be modified to become culturally sensitive for use in the Jewish Orthodox Community. Fox, Finn and Schlesinger did not need to reinvent the wheel. These core Safety Kid™ developers found Mothers Advocating Prevention (M.A.P. Moms), a local Palos Verdes, California group whose personal safety program for children was guided by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. After being educated and trained in that program, Fox and Finn then modified, enhanced and designed Safety Kid™, a special personal safety program based on the ABC’s of Safety and sensitive to the needs of our Orthodox schools. Teaching cards were created so that the children could identify with images with the concepts. Language was modified to address sensitive topics in a suitable manner. Said Fox, “We needed to honor and respect the school(s) we were in.”



The next challenge was funding this important program. Mitch and Joleen Julis stepped forward, resulting in the Julis Family contributing generously towards the development of materials and implementation of Safety Kid™ with its vital information. They pledged support on an ongoing basis.

Using the new, cutting-edge materials, presenters who are aptly called ‘Safety Kid Moms,’ were trained to go into classrooms to educate the children. Dr. Eliezer Jones was brought in to create the first Safety Kid™ video to enhance the new 1st – 4th grade elementary school program with visual learning. Conceptualizing the image of Safety Kid™, Dr. Jones produced a visual embodiment of safety education that is entertaining, highly informative

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and immensely successful. Nettie Lerner, M.A.ED, was hired as the Director of the Aleinu Child Safety Institute with the goal of bringing Safety Kid™ into the local Los Angeles Orthodox Jewish elementary schools and to broaden its base to include all Jewish Day Schools and Early Education facilities. The Aleinu Halachic Advisory Board of Rabbis was consulted during every step of the way to ensure proper development.

With trained Safety Kid Moms as educators, engaging bright and developmentally appropriate materials, useful and fun souvenirs and an awesome video, Safety Kid™ and Aleinu were ready to Keep Our Children Safe. In 2006, Safety Kid™ was launched, becoming an immediate success in the greater Los Angeles area and across the country.

It takes a community to raise a child and to keep a child safe. Through the ABC's of Safety, the Safety Kid™ program educates children, parents and schools to ensure that our children know how to prevent harm, what to do in an emergency, and who to go to for help.

Through Safety Kid™, Aleinu continues to educate children in local and national Jewish schools while growing to include additional schools regardless of their religious observance or affiliation. The program has expanded with the development of Aleinu Safe Camp and Safety Kid on the Net to Keep Our Children Safe. **Safety Kid™** has helped to establish a safer environment for many Jewish children, and with Hashem's



2003

2009

In 2003
300 students received Safety Education

By 2009
7,500 students received Safety Education

SAFETY KID™

CHILDREN
ALWAYS REMEMBER THE
ABC'S
OF SAFETY

ASK FOR HELP
BRING A FRIEND
CHECK FIRST
DO TELL

My Trust Tree

STOP

aleinu presents Safety Kid™
The **ABC's** of Safety
Coloring Book
an Interactive Guide for Parents and Children