ADULTS SAVING KIDS
Founded by Alvin Erickson

Skill 4

Intuition

Teach children to trust discomfort.

Teaching Children to Trust Their Inner Warning System

Why Intuition Matters

Every child is born with an internal warning system that shows up as discomfort, hesitation, fear, or a sense that something is "off."

> *Intuition is often the body and mind recognizing subtle cues before we can consciously explain them.*

Children who are taught to ignore this inner signal become easier to pressure, easier to confuse, and less likely to leave unsafe situations. Conversely, children who are taught to trust intuition are more likely to pause, resist, or seek help—even when they cannot explain why. Intuition is **one of the most important protective tools** a child has.

What Often Goes Wrong

Many well-meaning adults unintentionally train children to override intuition when they say things like "Don't be rude," "You're overreacting," "That's nothing to be afraid of," or "Just be polite." When children are repeatedly told to dismiss discomfort, they learn that other people's comfort matters more than their own safety.

> *Over time, intuition grows quieter—not because it is wrong, but because it is not trusted.*

What Intuition Actually Is

Intuition is the body's early-warning system. It draws on tone of voice, facial expressions, inconsistencies, pressure, past experiences, and subtle shifts in behavior. Intuition does not

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always come with words; it often comes as a feeling first, such as unease, tension, reluctance, or confusion. Crucially, **intuition does not require proof**.

The Parent's Role

Parents play a critical role in protecting a child's intuition by taking discomfort seriously, resisting the urge to explain it away, supporting children even when the concern seems minor, and teaching them that they can **leave first and explain later**. When parents back intuition, children learn they are not alone.

Real-Life Examples

EXAMPLE 1

Young Children

If a child does not want to go into a room or stay with a certain person, say: "You don't have to. Let's stay together." Avoid interrogation or demanding an explanation. This teaches the child that their feelings matter, safety comes before convenience, and adults will protect them.

EXAMPLE 2

Elementary-Age Children

When a child comes home withdrawn or upset after being somewhere, ask: "Did anything feel weird or uncomfortable?" or "Did your body tell you something wasn't right?" The goal is not to interrogate, but to help children notice patterns.

EXAMPLE 3

Teens

If a teen feels uneasy at a party or gathering but worries about being dramatic, teach them this clear script: "I'm leaving. I don't feel right." No justification is required.

Intuition vs. Fear

Parents sometimes worry that teaching intuition will make children anxious, but teaching children to recognize and understand their feelings can help build confidence rather than fear."

FEAR SAYS	INTUITION SAYS
"Everything is dangerous."	*"Something specific doesn't feel right."*

Intuition may appear as quiet uneasiness or a stronger feeling of alarm. The important skill is learning to notice those signals, seek understanding, and respond wisely.

Teaching Children to Listen to Their Bodies

Children experience intuition physically through stomach tightness, sudden fatigue, a desire to leave, nervousness, or confusion. Help children name these sensations by asking: "What did your body feel like?", "Did you feel tense or relaxed?", and "Did you want to stay or go?" Naming sensations strengthens awareness.

Children do not always have words for what they are experiencing. Part of growing in wisdom is learning to pay attention to discomfort and gradually finding language for it. Naming a feeling, concern, or hesitation does not make it more powerful—it makes it easier to understand. Many important insights begin as a feeling before they become words. Often, naming an experience makes it easier to process and respond to wisely. The feeling itself may not disappear, but it becomes lighter and easier to carry as what was once confusing begins to make sense.

> *Naming is one of the key ways understanding grows.*

Common Mistakes Parents Make

Common parenting mistakes include dismissing feelings because nothing "bad" happened, demanding logical explanations, prioritizing politeness over safety, and assuming intuition must always be right to be valid.

> *Remember that intuition is information—not a verdict.*

Intuition at Different Ages

Young children	Elementary	Teens
Honoring discomfort.	Recognizing body signals.	Acting on intuition despite social pressure.

The skill matures as children grow.

One Guiding Principle

GUIDING PRINCIPLE

Children do not need proof of danger to pause, leave, or ask for help. Feeling unsafe is reason enough.

Biblical Wisdom

SCRIPTURE

"But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil."

Hebrews 5:14

Hebrews notes that the mature have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil—not by magic or superstition, but through awareness, knowledge, experience, and practice. The more we learn, observe, and pay attention, the better we become at recognizing healthy and unhealthy patterns. Intuition is often the mind and body recognizing something before we can fully explain it with words. Wisdom grows when knowledge and awareness work together.

SCRIPTURE

"The human spirit is the lamp of the Lord that sheds light on one's inmost being."

Proverbs 20:27

God has given us an inner awareness that can alert us when something needs attention. While intuition is not infallible, it is valuable information that deserves to be noticed rather than ignored.

Practical Wisdom / Application

Most people hear “trained themselves to distinguish good from evil” and think about moral choices or spiritual maturity. That’s certainly part of it, but imagine a parent teaching that principle to a child when they feel uncomfortable around someone but can’t explain why, when a situation feels wrong even though everyone else seems comfortable, when someone pressures them to ignore discomfort, or when their body tells them they want to leave. In each moment, the rule is the same: **Pay attention.**

Intuition is not always a warning of immediate danger, but it is valuable information. Sometimes our minds and bodies recognize subtle signals before we can put them into words. Children need to understand that they can take their discomfort seriously without assuming their feelings are always correct. They can learn to pause, ask questions, seek guidance, and consider what their instincts may be telling them. **Wisdom begins by paying attention and then seeking understanding.**

FINAL TAKEAWAY

Intuition is a quiet but powerful form of wisdom.

Children who are taught to trust their inner warning system are more likely to protect themselves—even in situations where adults are not present. Listening to intuition does not make children fearful; it makes them **aware, grounded, and far less easily exploited**.

THIS WEEK

One Thing to Try This Week

Option 1: Ask About a Feeling

Ask your child: “Has your body ever told you something didn’t feel right?”

Option 2: Name Body Signals

Talk about butterflies in your stomach, a knot in your chest, feeling tense, or wanting to leave. Help children connect feelings with physical sensations.

Option 3: Share a Story

Tell your child about a time when something felt wrong, you paid attention, and it turned out to be important. Children learn intuition best through real-life examples.

Wisdom Principle: Pay attention.

Scripture Acknowledgment

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