

MISSING PROTECTOR STRATEGY



Dan Korem

**2,000 students have received Protectors . . .
Only 5% show any high risk behavior in a year.**

In the mid-1980s, Dan Korem uncovered the *Missing Protector Strategy (MPS)* while doing research for his book *Suburban Gangs*. He first applied the *MPS* with stunning results in a high-crime, inner-city type of neighborhood in Dallas, Texas. Of 400 youth, not one joined a gang, and not one teenage girl became pregnant. Twenty years later, communities across North America—from the inner-city to suburbs to small towns—have launched the *MPS* and found that it not only stops gang recruitment, but stops almost all at-risk behavior including:

- Assaults
- Gang Recruitment
- Suicide
- Truancy
- Mass slayings
- Teen Pregnancy
- Chronic Drug Use
- Poor Classroom Performance

The idea of providing a neighborhood *Protector* for at-risk youths is a common sense idea that doesn't require a major time commitment . . . Just a one hour face-to-face visit every other week and a weekly phone call. This small time investment in a youth's life yields extraordinary results. Think about it . . . how would you be impacted if someone called *you* once a week and visited *you* in person every other week?

Virtually every North American school that has used the *MPS* for two or more years has seen the above at-risk behavior come to a halt. For every 100 at-risk youth who receive a *Protector*, only 5% in a year display any of the at-risk behavior listed above. Significantly, schools have been able to recruit all the *Protectors* that they need. Why? Because of the small time commitment. Existing mentoring programs believe the *MPS* provides a simple entry level for an adult to make a small time commitment to help a youth in their neighborhood—and convert themselves into mentors.

What is the *Missing Protector*?

The *Missing Protector* is operative when a youth:

- 1) Is faced with a crisis
- 2) Doesn't have an adult to turn to for help who lives in the neighborhood

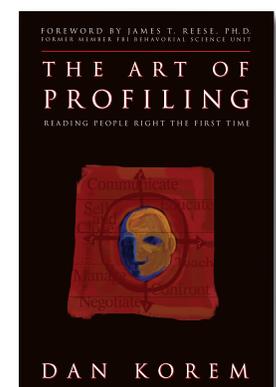
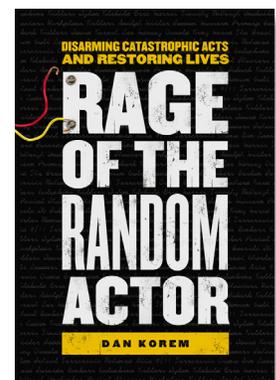
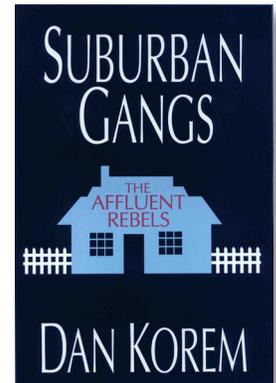
Protectors are neighborhood laypersons who are selected by school staff, counselors, parent leaders, youth pastors and others who do the following:

- 1) Visit a youth in person for about an hour every two weeks
- 2) Maintain weekly phone contact
- 3) Assist a youth as the first of contact if a youth is faced with a crisis

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PROTECTING
KIDS AND
COMMUNITIES
SINCE 1986

20 YEARS OF RESEARCH



How the Strategy Works

Dan found that the number one pitch on the street by gangs is *we will protect*. He found that when kids were provided a neighborhood **Protector** they not only didn't join gangs, but they took themselves out of other risky behaviors and situations. It was in Hungary that he found that a **Protector** was the number one deterrent to suicide (in 1992 1 of every 7 youths had attempted suicide). When *Suburban Gangs* was published in 1994, educators said that the **MPS** would probably stop most at-risk behavior. When they used it, they found that they were right.

The **Missing Protector Strategy** is a *strategy*. It is *not* a program. It is called a strategy because it can be launched as a stand-alone initiative or integrated into an existing program. It is recommended, however, that the **MPS** be initiated through school presentations to students. Faith-based organizations, youth sport leagues, service organizations, social services, juvenile probation, and so on are other places in a community where the strategy can also be applied.

- **Number of Protectors Required**—2–5 **Protectors** per 100 students is the average number.
- **Recruiting Protectors**—Selection of **Protectors** is typically facilitated by the school administrative staff, counselors, and parent/teacher leaders. **Protectors** are matched with youths by gender and with an at-risk youth who is not in serious trouble. A typical group of fifty **Protectors** receives two to three “emergency” types of calls in a year. When this occurs, they contact a designated professional.
- **Matching Youths with Protectors**—The most effective way to match at-risk youths with a **Protector** is through 45-minute presentations at school. The idea of the **Protector** is explained and youths who desire a **Protector** can request one. In a typical school, 2%–5% will request a **Protector**. Youths can also be identified by school staff, parents, and others. Under the guidance of school policy, youths are then matched with **Protectors** who live in their neighborhood (because kids want immediate access).
- **Training of Volunteers**—Provided by **MPS** Master Trainers.
- **Training Master Trainers**—Master Trainers are trained by Korem & Associates who, in turn, train your volunteers and staff.

Case Examples

Long-term data from communities that have used the **MPS** for two or more years has yielded virtually no at-risk behavior for at-risk youths who receive a **Protector**, *regardless of the type of community* . . . From the inner-city to suburbs to big-city communities to small rural towns. Over 2000 youths have received **Protectors** with the same positive impact.

- **Inner-City Community** (Dallas, TX, 1986–1992)—Over 400 youths received Protectors over a period of six years. Not one youth joined a gang—even though 1/3 of the students had actually seen someone shot, stabbed or murdered. And, not one teenage girl became pregnant.
- **Affluent Suburb** (Plano, TX, 1998–2006)—This affluent suburb has experienced many catastrophic at-risk youth trends since the 1980s, including teen suicide and over 18 heroin deaths (in one period of eighteen months). One school cluster applied the **MPS** with fifty at-risk youths. After three years, only two of the youths had a severe at-risk incident. Today, over 1000 youths have **Protectors** with the same results.
- **Culturally Diverse Community** (Odessa, TX, 1999–2003)—Here, many students are not fluent in English. The **MPS** was incorporated into an existing school program to reduce truancy. A dramatic drop in truancy followed.
- **Small Rural Town** (Blum, TX, 1999–2002)—The local school district had 300 students. Five youths received **Protectors**. After two years, none of the youths had an at-risk episode.
- **First Major Canadian Community** (Chatham, Ontario, Canada 2001–2004)—Following the tragic death of a ten-year-old elementary school youth, this community of 100,000, 60 miles northeast of Detroit, launched the strategy. Within 90 days, 30 youths were match with **Protectors**.

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Major Study in Canada

At the urgings of the Canadian Chiefs of Police, Dan helped the first Canadian community, noted above, launch the *MPS*. The first major preliminary study commissioned and facilitated by three child behavioral experts reveals the same successes as other communities. Here are three abstracts from that report:

- “None of the children demonstrated any at-risk behavior while they were with their *Protectors*.”
- “One interesting finding was the fact that none of the *Protectors* had to respond to a crisis call from their assigned [at-risk] child. This is especially important as the *MPS* is centered on the premise that *Protectors* be available in times of crisis.”
- “*Protectors* saw positive changes in the child’s academics (i.e., improved grades, better attendance), peer relationships (i.e., positive connections with peers), overall behaviour (i.e., happier, better understanding of right from wrong, increased self confidence, a decrease in fighting, better problem solving skills) and their involvement within the community (i.e., structured community activities).”

MPS Master Trainer 2-Day Academy — What You Will Learn

- Time-proven mechanics of how to launch the strategy and meet the unique needs of your community
- How the *MPS* is facilitated in many different kinds of communities
- How to train the necessary volunteers
- Rights to provide training in the state where you reside
- Training Manuals, Training Videos, and PowerPoint Presentations
- **Who Should Attend:** Educators, Counselors, school approved lay volunteers, juvenile officers, ministers, etc.

Website & Introductory Video

- For additional information on the *Missing Protector Strategy* or Korem & Associates, please contact us, or see the following websites: www.MissingProtector.com & www.KoremAssociates.com
- *MPS* Introductory DVD (18 min.)—Powerful fifteen minute introductory video to introduce your community to the strategy. Includes: full explanation of the *MPS*; testimonials and endorsements from *Protectors* and national and international leaders. Available for \$10.00 plus S&H.

Dan Korem and the Korem & Associates Faculty

Dan Korem is an independent investigative journalist, the author of several books, and a documentary producer whose programs have been seen by over 150 million people worldwide. The K&A faculty regularly trains thousands of professionals worldwide for elite sales and negotiations, team leadership, hiring, cross-cultural interactions, and violent confrontation applications. The president of two Dallas-based communication companies and globally a much sought-after speaker for corporate, education, law enforcement, and university groups, Dan has been a keynote speaker and distinguished lecturer for many education organizations, including: Association of Community College Trustees, National Association of Secondary School Principals, Suburban Superintendents of Schools National Conference, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, and over 100 universities in North America and Europe. His most recent books are *Rage of the Random Actor* (2005) which received Amazon’s 5-star Top 100 review, *The Art of Profiling—Reading People Right the First Time* (1997), *Suburban Gangs—The Affluent Rebels* (1995), and *Streetwise Parents, Foolproof Kids (2d. ed.)* (early 2007).

**For more details on applying the MPS in your community,
additional information is provided on the pages that follow . . .**

More Details on Implementing the Strategy

It is recommended, however, that the *MPS* be initiated through schools as they have the greatest access to youths. Faith-based organizations, soccer clubs, service organizations, social services, juvenile probation, and so on are other places in a community where the strategy can also be applied. It is recommended that a community start in the schools, when possible, as this is where the largest population of youths can be immediately reached.

The following is a brief outline of how the strategy might be applied in a school district, but it does not address specific policy or implementation considerations, such as the details of *Protector* training or integration with current school district and community policies. These kinds of considerations are addressed during the training of *Master Trainers*.

Training Master Trainers, Coordinators, Presenters, & Protectors

There are four groups of persons who must receive training:

- **Master Trainers**—They train the *Coordinators* and *Presenters*
- **Coordinators**—They oversee the process in a large community
- **Team Captains**—They oversee Protectors on each campus
- **Presenters**—They present presentations to students in schools, churches, and other community groups
- **Protectors**—The adults who provide assistance to a youth in their neighborhood
- **Master Trainers**—In a two-day academy, *Master Trainers* are certified by Korem & Associates so that they can train *Coordinators* and *Presenters*. (The details of the two-day academy is provided later in this overview.)
- **Coordinators & Team Captains**—(1 day of training) They oversee the *MPS*, typically by a cluster or group of schools. A school cluster is the high school and the feeder schools, such as the junior high and elementary schools. Some large clusters will have more than one *Coordinator*. The *Coordinator* is not a full-time responsibility and can be fulfilled by a school or community professional or a suitable lay volunteer. Each school that participates will have a designated *Team Captain*. The *Coordinator's* responsibility is to respond to the needs of *Team Captains* and insure that each *Team Captain* is providing follow-up for the *Protector* process at their respective schools.
- **Presenters**— (1 day of training) They present the idea of the *MPS* to youths in their schools. They can be a school officer, coach, counselor, etc. The key quality they must possess is that they can communicate with youths in a group setting of about 75.
- **Protectors**—About 4 hours of training required.
- **Materials Required**—Appropriate manuals, video tapes, books, and follow-up assistance are provided for each of these persons.

Recruiting Protectors

The selection of *Protectors* is typically facilitated by the staff of each school, as well as counselors and parent and teacher leaders. Those selected typically have a track record of being able to communicate with youths. As already noted, most schools have been able to find all the *Protectors* needed because of the small time commitment. Once selected, they receive training on their responsibilities and are provided a list of professionals (counselor, juvenile officer, etc.) whom they can call for assistance if required. It is emphasized that they will be matched with a youth in their neighborhood of the same gender who is at-risk, but not with a youth who is in a gang, is dealing drugs, etc. *Protectors* are matched with an at-risk youth who is not in serious trouble. A typical group of fifty *Protectors* only receive two to three “emergency” calls in a year. When this occurs, they are to contact the appropriate designated professional whom they have been introduced to during orientation.

Number of Protectors Required

For a non-inner-city community, 2–5 **Protectors** per 100 students is an average number. Exceptionally high-risk communities will of course have a higher ratio, and training is provided regarding how to recruit **Protectors** for those communities based upon first-hand experience.

Matching Youths with Protectors

The most effective way to match at-risk youths with a **Protector** is through presentations at school by trained **Presenters**. In a 45 minute presentation to about 50–75 youths at a time—by grade—youths are told that if they don't have someone they can turn to for help when faced with a crisis, adults from the neighborhood will help them. Youths who desire a **Protector** are then provided several different venues to make a request. Under the guidance of school policy (or the policy of the organization where the strategy is initiated), youths are then matched with **Protectors**.

Measurable Community Objectives

It is suggested that local communities track the reduction of at-risk incidents. Assistance for evaluation can be provided as requested, as well as suggestions for independent evaluation by local universities.

Follow-up

Once youths are matched with **Protectors** the following is the suggested follow-up:

1. Protectors meet regularly for follow-up.
2. Yearly presentations to new students and periodic reemphasis as a part of any presentation on at-risk issues to students.
3. Track reduction in at-risk behaviors

Master Trainer Academy

Academies will be conducted in Dallas, Texas and other sites with a limit of 25 persons per academy, and provide all necessary instruction to lead the MPS in a community, including the items noted below. For more information, please contact Korem & Associates.

- **Screening of Candidates**—Candidates should be pre-screened for presentation skills and working knowledge of assisting at-risk youth and affected communities by local community.
- **Materials Provided**—Training manual, DVDs, and books by Dan Korem: *Suburban Gangs—The Affluent Rebels*, *Rage of the Random Actor—Disarming Catastrophic Acts and REstoring Lives*, *The Art of Profiling—Reading People Right the First Time*.
- **Certification Rights**—Once certified, a Master Trainer may train Coordinators, Presenters, and Protectors within the geographic area designated.
- **Reporting Instruments**—Surveys will be provided to track performance and outcomes.