

FREE PARENT GUIDE

and activity kit



RAFA and the WRONG LEGS

Angie Lucas
Ana Sanfelippo

After reading *Rafa and the Wrong Legs* with your children, use this guide to reinforce the lessons from the book, so they'll know exactly what to do if they ever wander off in a public place.

Recommended ages: 3-10 years old, or preschool to 5th grade.

Rafa and the Wrong Legs is a sweet, clever, and wise story that every parent and curious child will recognize as their own. Young Rafa promises Mama he will stay by her side at the market, and for a while, he does. But after a bouncing berry lures him away, Rafa finds himself hugging the wrong mom's legs. How will he find his way back to the *right* legs?

Choose one activity per night for a week, or once a week for a month, to give each lesson a greater chance of sinking in.

Note: These activities are targeted to preschool and early-elementary-age students, but the lessons are a great reminder for kids of any age. According to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, a significant percentage of attempted abductions involve girls and

children between the ages of 10 and 14.

You can learn more and find additional resources for older kids at missingkids.org/education/kidsmartz

“I always get to where I'm going by walking away from where I've been.”

—WINNIE THE POOH



The author reading her previous book with Marble Press, *My Big Embarrassing Elephant*, to a pre-kindergarten class.

Discussion Guide

After reading *Rafa and the Wrong Legs* aloud, talk about the following questions together.

1. When Rafa realized he was hugging the wrong legs, he panicked and ran away—twice. Do you think that was the best choice for Rafa to make? Why or why not?
2. What are some other choices Rafa could have made?
Answers might include:
 - Staying where he was until his mom found him
 - Asking for help from another mom who has kids with her
 - Walking to the counter where you pay for things to ask for help
 - Asking for help from someone who works at the store
3. Rafa knew the Cookie Man would be able to help because he worked at the store. What are some of the ways you can tell whether someone works at the store? Answers might include:
 - They're wearing a special vest, t-shirt, or uniform
 - They're wearing a name tag
 - They're standing behind the counter where you pay for things
 - You recognize them from past visits
4. Once you find a store worker or another mom with kids to help you, what should you say?
Answers might include:
 - Say: "I can't find my mom/dad/grandma. Can you help me?"
 - Tell the person your name and your mom or dad's name
 - Ask if they have a phone and if they can call your mom or dad (see phone memorization tips on next page)
 - Tell the person where you were when you last saw your grown-up

Tip: Help children memorize mom's or dad's phone number as early as possible.

Sources: Karla Feindt, M.D., a Utah-based pediatrician
"How to talk to your child about interacting with strangers,"
babycenter.com



Mini Lessons & Activities

Choose from the following mini-lessons and activities to do with your child after you've read *Rafa and the Wrong Legs* together.

Lesson #1: Look for a Mom with Kids

If a child gets lost in a public place, like a store or an amusement park, teach them to approach the nearest mom who has kids to ask for help. Dr. Karla M. Feindt, M.D., a Utah-based pediatrician, says that moms with kids are the best option because: they're easy to identify, they're not as intimidating to children as other adults may be, they're highly motivated to help, and they're less likely than any other group to pose a threat to a child.

Activity

Pretend to be a shopper who is very focused on the task at hand. Have your child practice approaching you, getting your attention, and confidently asking for help. "Excuse me, can you help me find my mom?"

Optional further discussion: If there isn't a mom with kids around, the next best options are a store employee or a security guard/police officer. Explain that children can tell whether someone works at the store based on **what** they're wearing, **what** they're doing, or **where** they're standing (e.g., by the registers). Teach them how to identify a police officer (by their uniform), and show them what their community's police uniforms and/or vehicles look like.



Why aren't these options listed first? Because store employees can sometimes be hard for young children to identify. (Can they tell the difference between a grocery store employee and a fast food worker picking up groceries on their way home from work?) And while it is rare, offenders have been known to wear uniforms to give children a false sense of safety. (Don't share this last tidbit with children, since you don't want to discourage them from approaching a police officer if that's the nearest/most available option.)

Lesson 2: Stay an Arm's Length Away

Teach children to always stay at least an arm's length away from strangers. Instruct them to **never, ever** leave the store or get in a car with someone they don't know. Reassure them that if they get lost, you will **always** come find them; you will **never** leave without them. If a stranger tells them that mom or dad left and offers to drive them to find mom or dad, that person is lying. The child should run away and find a safe person to help. (Reminder: a mom with kids is the safest option.)

Activity

Show children what an "arm's length away" means. Teach them that they should always stay an "arm's length away" from adults they don't know. Play a game where you pretend to be a stranger (maybe even put on a disguise to make it more fun). Have them practice staying out of your reach while you try to reach out and gently grab them by the arm. If you catch your child, they should yell out: "Help! This is not my mom!" or "Help, this is not my dad!" Have them practice yelling these words as loud as they can as they try to free themselves from your grasp.

Tip: only play this game at home and emphasize that your child should **never** yell those words in public as a joke or to get out of going somewhere with you.

Bonus Tip: Choose a Consistent Place to Meet

Choose an easily identifiable place in advance that could apply to almost anywhere you go and tell your child to meet you there if ever get separated. For example: "always by the door where we came in," "always by the place where we pay," or "always by the drinking fountain or bathroom." When you're somewhere new and different, such as an amusement park, select a specific meeting spot unique to that location at the beginning of your visit. Involve your child in making the decision, and they'll be more likely to remember it.

"Not all those who wander are lost."

—J.R.R. TOLKIEN



Lesson 3: Learn Mom or Dad’s Phone Number

Teach your child your phone number as early as possible. The author, Angie Lucas, used the following method when her children were little, which she learned from another mom. Sing your phone number to the tune of *Frere Jacques* (“Are you sleeping?”), with you singing each line first, and your child singing it back like an echo.

Are You Sleeping Song Lyrics	Example with a Fake Phone Number
Are you sleeping? (Are you sleeping?)	two-oh-one (two-oh-one)
Brother John? (Brother John?)	five-five-five (five-five-five)
Morning bells are ringing. (Morning bells are ringing.)	seven-seven-three-four (seven-seven-three-four)
Ding-dang-dong. (Ding-dang-dong.)	That’s mom’s number. (That’s mom’s number.)

Credit: Elizabeth Dillow, mom extraordinaire

For very young children, focus on teaching just one parent’s phone number first, rather than confusing them by trying to teach them two phone numbers that they could get mixed up.

Lesson 4: Plant Your Feet and Squawk Like a Bird

Make sure you also teach your children what to do if they get lost in nature. Explain what you mean by “nature”—the forest, the mountains, or the desert, where there are no other people around. If a child gets lost when they’re out in nature, they should STOP and stay exactly where they are until you find them. Even if it takes a long time.

Activity

Have the children repeat the following together, while role playing the actions:

I’ll plant my feet [stomp, stomp]

and squawk like a bird [open and close hand near mouth like a beak]

“Help, I’m lost!” [hands around mouth, shouting together]

Have a contest to see if they can shout louder than you. Tip: use an app, like the Noise app on the Apple Watch, to measure who’s the loudest.

Lesson #5: Have a Code Word

Choose a secret code word that only you and the child know. Teach your child never to get in someone's car, even if they know them, unless that person has the code word or you've directly given them permission.

Talk about the different types of people this rule applies to (e.g., even a neighbor or a classmate's parent). Also make sure they know who's allowed to pick them up anytime, even without a code word (e.g., an aunt, grandparent, or a specific neighbor or friend).

Activity

Pretend to be a stranger offering to give your child a ride. Try to get the child to reveal the code word by saying things like: "Oh, I just forgot it—what letter does it start with again? Could you give me a hint?" or "Your mom said to just ask you, and you would tell me" or "I promise, your mom said I should come get you. She's been in an accident, and she forgot to give me the code word."

This would be a good time to remind your child that an adult never needs help from a child. Tell them that "Help me find my puppy," or "Your mom needs help, I'll take you to her" are the kinds of things someone would say to trick a child into getting in their car with them.

Bake Cookies Together

Try author Angie Lucas's favorite cookie recipe: her mom's snickerdoodles! Not only are they delicious, it's also really fun to say the word "snickerdoodle."

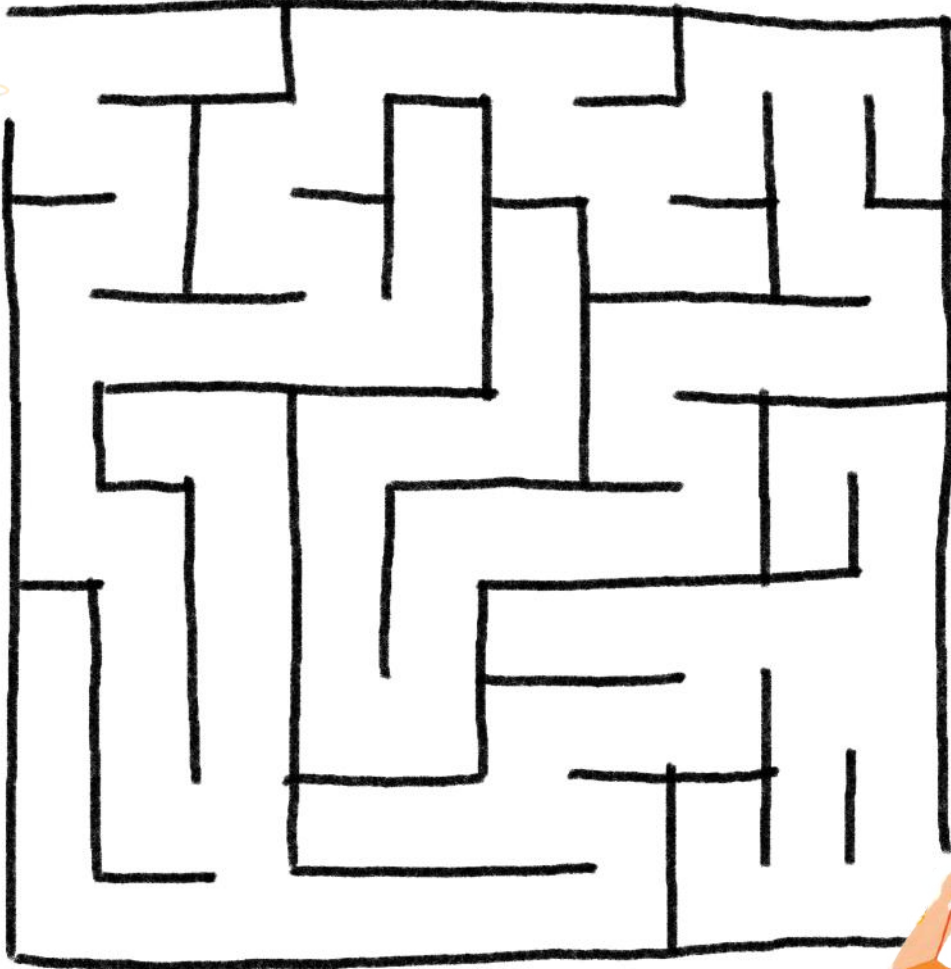
Mama's Snickerdoodles

1 c. butter	2 tsp. cream of tartar
1½ c. sugar	½ tsp. salt
2 eggs	1 tsp. baking soda
2 ¾ c. flour	2 tsp. cinnamon mixed with 2 Tbsp. sugar

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Cream butter, sugar, and eggs. Sift dry ingredients and stir into creamed mixture. Roll into balls, then roll in cinnamon-sugar mixture until entirely coated. Place 2 inches apart on cookie sheet. Bake for 8 to 10 minutes. Cool on a wire rack or paper towels and enjoy!

Help Rafa find Mama

Rafa is visiting the market with Mama. After a bouncing berry lures him away, Rafa finds himself hugging the wrong mom's legs. Oh no! Can you help Rafa find his way back to the RIGHT legs?



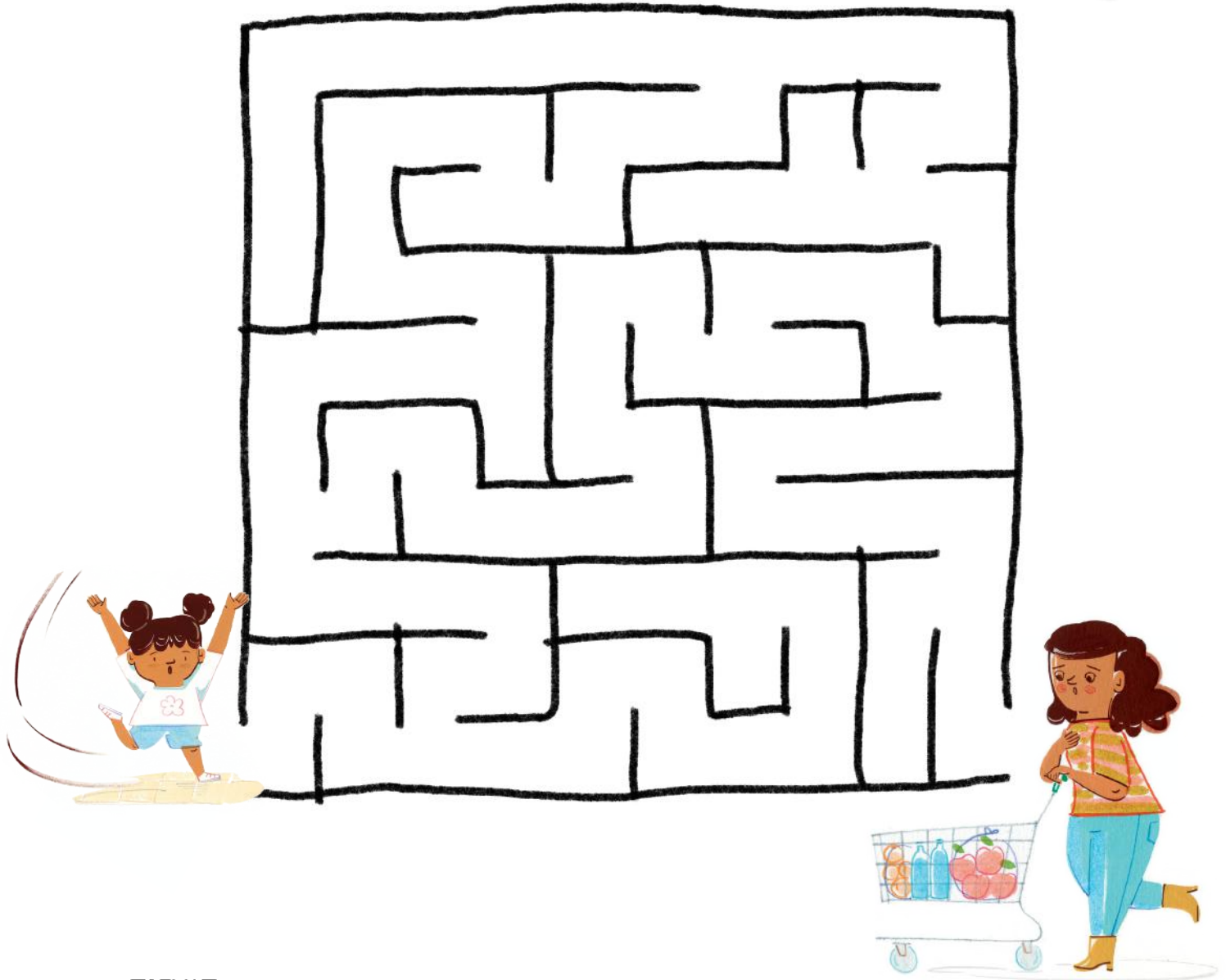
Rafa and the Wrong Legs can be purchased wherever books are sold.

For more books and free activity kits, visit: marblepress.com/free-resources

For more from the author, visit: angielucas.com

Help Roxie find her mom

Rafa isn't the only one in the story who gets lost. Roxie is so busy watching Rafa that she loses sight of her mom too. Oh no! Can you help Roxie find her way back to her mom?



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Color Rafa



Illustration by Ana Sanfelippo for *Rafa and the Wrong Legs*, written by Angie Lucas. Full activity kit at marblepress.com/free-resources

Color the Cookie Man



Illustration by Ana Sanfelippo for *Rafa and the Wrong Legs*, written by Angie Lucas. Full activity kit at marblepress.com/free-resource