



## Personal Safety (grades 9-12)

In most cases you are in control of the circumstances in which you place yourself. Just by being AWARE that you are a potential victim of a personal crime is the first step toward prevention.

The least expensive and most effective measure you can take to protect yourself against crime is to incorporate certain habits into your daily routine that make you less vulnerable - to adopt a “*security conscious*” lifestyle. A basic rule is to stay alert to your surroundings, trust your instincts, and if you feel uncomfortable in a place or situation, *TakeAction*, and leave immediately.

**The best prevention is awareness.**

### ***PEDESTRIAN SAFETY***

- One of the most successful deterrents to street crime is the “BUDDY SYSTEM”. A lone person is the best target for a criminal. Travel in pairs or with a group whenever you can.
- Be aware of your surroundings and don’t use unfamiliar shortcuts to save time.
- Plan a safe route and stick to it.
- Do not wear restrictive clothing or flashy jewelry.
- Stay on busy well-lighted streets.
- Walk in the middle of the sidewalk.
- Set boundaries and keep a safe distance from strangers on the street.
- Walk facing traffic so you can see approaching cars.
- If you are being followed, change directions and head for a populated area.
- Always carry emergency money and keys separate from your purse, or wallet.
- Never accept rides from strangers or people you do not know well.
- When you jog, or cycle, vary your route and use populated paths.
- If you are faced with a robbery actually happening to you, cooperate as best you can and give up your money. In most cases the criminal just wants your money. Remember – your personal safety is the number one priority!



### ***PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION***

- Try to use convenient, well-lighted and frequently utilized bus stops.
- Make sure that you aren’t alone at an isolated bus stop for a long period of time. If you must walk home late at night from a bus stop, try to arrange for someone to meet you.

## ***PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION (continued)***

- Know where you are going, where you have to transfer and how to get back home. Take into account that your transfer point may be in an area of town you are unfamiliar with.
- When boarding the bus, try and choose a seat close to the driver. All buses in Winnipeg are equipped with two-way radios and can summon police rapidly if they are required.
- If you are verbally or physically harassed while you are riding the bus, attract the attention of the driver and other passengers by talking loudly and screaming. Report the incident to the bus driver immediately.
- Be alert to who gets on and off the bus with you. Trust your instincts. If you feel uncomfortable, walk immediately to a public place where there are people present.

## ***VEHICLE SAFETY***

Vehicles are a very popular mode of transportation in today's society, however, it is important that you *TakeAction* and incorporate certain habits into your daily routine that make you, your family and your vehicle less vulnerable to crime.



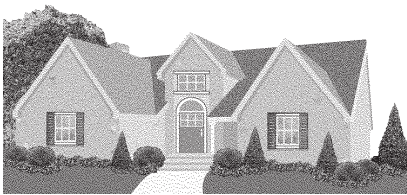
### ***When Your Vehicle Is Occupied***

- Assure your vehicle is in good running order and mechanically sound before leaving for your destination. Keep gas tank at least 1/2 full.
- Keep the doors of your vehicle locked at all times.
- Ensure you know the proper route to your destination to avoid the necessity of having to stop to ask strangers for directions.
- If you feel you are being followed, drive onto the lot of a well-lighted open business. If the vehicle follows you, remain inside your locked car and honk the horn until someone comes to assist you.
- If you observe a vehicle driving carelessly or erratically, do not try to pass it to get away from it. Slow down to let it get ahead of you, and if possible record the license plate number and report this vehicle to the police as soon as possible.
- If your vehicle breaks down, try to pull over to the side of the road, turn on your four way flashers, and display a "CALL POLICE" sign in your window. Only open your window an inch to allow someone to talk to you and ask them to call Police for you. If you have a cellular phone you can help yourself.
- If you see a motorist who needs assistance, call Police for them from the nearest telephone, do not get out of your car to try and help.
- When involved in a minor motor vehicle accident, quickly assess the damage, then remove the damaged vehicles from the roadway and exchange particulars in a safe place.
- When parking your car, look for a busy, well-lighted parking lot and park as close to the entrance as possible.

### ***When Your Vehicle Is Unoccupied***

- Always try to park in well-lighted and busy areas. This is important for both your personal safety and the protection of your vehicle and its contents.
- When your vehicle is left unoccupied, all doors should be locked and windows closed. NEVER leave the motor running or the key in the ignition when your vehicle is unoccupied. This is an open invitation to a car thief.
- Keep any papers with personal information, such as names, addresses and phone numbers out of the vehicle. This includes your vehicle's registration, which should be carried with your driver's license. Other drivers of the vehicle should carry a photocopy of your vehicle's registration.
- Never use your name on a license plate or key fob, this identifies you to strangers.
- When approaching your parked vehicle, have the key ready. Take a quick look at the vehicle to ensure it has not been damaged or broken into and no one is waiting inside, then quickly open door, get in, and lock the door immediately.

## ***SAFETY IN THE HOME***



***BEFORE ENTERING YOUR HOME, DO A VISUAL CHECK, IF SOMETHING LOOKS WRONG DO NOT GO IN***

***HAVE YOUR KEY READY TO UNLOCK THE DOOR***

Keep doors and windows secure at all times

## ***STRANGERS AT THE DOOR***

- ***NEVER OPEN THE DOOR TO A STRANGER EVEN IF IT IS AN EMERGENCY***
- Do not let anyone who comes to your door know that you are home alone.
- If a stranger comes to your door and refuses to leave, call the police.
- Another option if a stranger comes to your door is to ignore the person and pretend no one is home.
- Consider a **Safe Room** in your house. In the unlikely event that you are home when a break-in occurs, make all attempts to get out of the home and go to a place of safety where you can immediately call 911. However, if you cannot get out of the home - have a designated safe room inside your residence (ex: master bedroom). A safe room should have a strong door, a good lock and a telephone from which you can immediately call 911 for emergency police response.

## ***TELEPHONE SAFETY***

- Do not provide personal information to someone you do not know.
- Remember, no matter whom they say they are, you cannot visually identify a telephone caller. They could be anyone!
- Do not hesitate to use telephone security screening codes such as Call Trace (\*57); Call Block (\*67) and Call Return (\*69).
- If a caller refuses to identify him or herself to you – HANG UP the telephone.
- If a caller asks what number they have called, ask them what number they dialed.
- Do not divulge to anyone that you are home alone.



## ***DATING***

***BEFORE THE DATE TELL A PARENT OR FRIEND WHO YOU ARE GOING WITH, AND YOUR PLANS***

***JUST BECAUSE SOMEONE TAKES YOU OUT ON A DATE DOES NOT MEAN YOU OWE ANYTHING “NO” MEANS NO***

***BE ASSERTIVE. IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO GO OUT WITH SOMEONE, SAY SO***

***DO NOT GO ANYWHERE YOU DO NOT FEEL COMFORTABLE***

*If you wish more information or have any questions about Personal Safety, please contact the Winnipeg Police Service Community Relations Unit at 986-6322.*