

# Crime Prevention and Safety tips; courtesy of Officer Holly Tafoya, Community Relations Officer, Northern Division, August 2016

## PERSONAL PROTECTION

### WALKING

1. Walking alone – Be aware of surroundings and observe everything around you. Be aware of bushes and alleys.
  - a. **Don't text while walking!** This gives thieves the opportunity to take items from you such as cell phones and iPods when you are not paying attention.
  - b. **Don't have jewelry showing.** Someone can walk up to you and grab a necklace. Tuck a necklace inside of your shirt.
  - c. **Hang on to your backpacks.** Thieves know people usually carry computers in them.
  - d. **Don't give a thief an opportunity to take anything from you.**
2. Don't let anyone enter your *personal space*.
  - **Personal Space:**

Intimate space	=1 to 1.5 feet
Personal space	=1.5 to 4 feet
Social space	=4 to 12 feet
Public space	=12 or more feet
3. Trust your thoughts.
4. If someone asks for the time, keep walking.
5. Stay away from the curb so someone cannot grab you from a passing car.
6. Vary your route.
7. Carry a flashlight at night.
8. Know your location.
9. If you are attacked, DO SOMETHING!
10. AVOID walking alone. If there is security available have them walk you to your car.
11. AVOID walking near bushes, fences and doors.
12. AVOID alleys.
13. AVOID stairwells.
14. Don't overload yourself with packages. Do not allow your attention to be distracted from your purse or packages.
15. If you carry a purse keep it close to your body, flap towards your body. If there is a strap, carry the purse across your body. If you are wearing a coat/jacket, put coat over the purse strap.
16. If possible, carry keys and wallet on your person, in your pockets (pants or inside jacket pocket).
17. If you are dropped off by a taxi, ask the driver to wait until you are inside.
18. If you are waiting for a ride, wait in a busy well-lit place.
19. If you suspect someone is following you, cross the street or walk into an open business.

## VEHICLES

### CARS

1. Park in well lit areas.
2. Park by a camera.
3. Lock your car!
4. Lock garage doors.
5. Walk at an angle back to you car so you can see 3 sides.
6. Use your peripheral vision. Most people are 180 degrees – USE IT!

7. Look in front, behind and underneath your car as you approach it.
8. Look inside!
9. Don't leave items visible in your car. This invites thieves. Place packages in trunk.
10. Don't leave your purse or wallet inside of your vehicle. If it is broken into or stolen the thief will have all of your information including your credit cards.
11. Have your keys ready to open the door.
12. Report anyone looking into vehicles or checking doors.
13. Try not to park by large vehicles (SUV's, vans or trucks) where people can surprise you.
14. If you live in a building with underground parking, watch for pedestrians who enter via the garage vehicle entrance gates.

## **REPORTING AN INCIDENT**

1. Identify yourself. Give your name and phone number.
2. Give your exact location and cross street.
3. Is a crime in progress?
4. What happened?
5. What time did it happen?
6. Weapons seen? Knife, gun etc.
7. How many suspects?
8. Description – head to toe description.
  - a. Color of skin
  - b. Height
  - c. Weight
  - d. Length of hair
  - e. Facial hair
  - f. Color of hair
  - g. Color of clothing from top to bottom
  - h. Any distinct lettering, designs, patterns
9. Direction of travel?
10. Is suspect carrying objects: TV, VCR, video games, etc?
11. Injuries:
  - a. What is the injury
  - b. Is person conscious, breathing
  - c. Approximate age
  - d. Male/Female

## **LAST THOUGHTS**

1. Press charges. Don't let the suspect get away with a crime.
2. Never let strangers use your telephone.
3. Don't give rides to strangers.
4. If you suspect someone is in your house, DON'T GO IN – CALL POLICE!
5. If you get a person calling you with a wrong number, DON'T GIVE YOUR NAME OR NUMBER – HANG UP!
6. If you are out with friends and meet someone new, exchange phone numbers, not addresses.
7. If you are separated from friends when you go out, find our own ride home. Don't take rides from strangers.
8. Don't become physically involved. Better to observe and report.
9. Don't hesitate to call police – use the non-emergency line to keep the lines free for EMERGENCIES.
10. Take a self defense classes and stay informed of crime trends

For a crime in progress or a life-threatening emergency, call Police and Fire-Rescue emergency at 9-1-1.

For a non-emergency or to report a crime not in progress, call the police non-emergency phone at 619-531-2000.