



PRESS RELEASE

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Date: 10 April 2008

Embargo: Immediate Release

YOUTH & VIOLENCE SURVEY REPORT

Youth Survey suggests those who do not take personal safety precautions are over 50% more likely to be the victim of physical violence than those who do.

Suzy Lamplugh Trust undertook an online survey to look at young people's experience of violence and aggression and the personal safety measures they take. The survey was completed by young people (11 – 18 year olds) over three months by visiting the Crime Stoppers youth website (Shadow CS) and Suzy Lamplugh Trust website.

Chief Executive of the Trust, Steven Gauge, said:

“We wanted to discover if taking personal safety precautions did have any effect on a young person's experience of physical violence.”

“Of the respondents who did not take personal safety precautions, 31% had experienced physical violence – while only 20% of those respondents who did take personal safety precautions had experienced violence. This indicates that those who do not take personal safety measures are over 50% more likely to be the victim of violence than those who do take personal safety measures.”

The type of violence that was experienced by respondents varied greatly. The majority of those who answered the question said that they had been “*punched and kicked*” or more generally “*beaten up*”. However some more serious offences were also given: including a stabbing and sexual assault as well as some that involved being hit with an object or weapon.

PERCEIVED RISK

When asked about young people’s fear of violence and aggression, 75% of respondents believed that the risk of being a victim violence and aggression had increased in the past 5 years for both males and females. This belief was consistent across both genders with 74% of male respondents and 76% of female respondents believing that the risk had increased for males and 69% of male respondents and 77% of female respondents believing the risk had increased for females.

Interestingly, when asked who they believed was most at risk from violence or aggression, both boys and girls believed that their own gender faced a greater risk as opposed to the other gender.

WHAT PRECAUTIONS

A high proportion of respondents (75% male and 71% female) said that they took personal safety precautions. These precautions are not necessarily what the Suzy Lamplugh Trust would recommend people do, but are what these young people believe will keep them safe.

There were some extreme responses: an 18 year old male said that carrying a knife was his safety precaution. When asked why, he said that it was “*easy to carry and usually scares casual scumbags away*”. Sadly, at the other end of the spectrum, a 13-year-old boy said that his safety precaution was to “*hide*” because he was “*scared*”. Both boys had been victims of violence and aggression, the 13 year old had been “*stabbed*”. These responses are extreme cases and this was also the only incidence where a respondent said carrying a weapon makes them safer.

More common answers included a combination of personal safety precautions. Carrying a mobile phone was often combined with the respondent saying that they

made sure someone knew where they were. While some people said that they would not go out at night or after a certain time, most said that they would not go out at night on their own. There was also a heavy emphasis on the night as a time to take personal safety more seriously; young people said that they tended to avoid places more at night than in the day (e.g. “*if it is quite dark I stick to the main roads*”).

The full copy of the survey report can be obtained from the Trust by calling 020 7091 0014 or emailing jo.walker@suzylamplugh.org

ENDS

*Press/Media enquiries to: Jo Walker on 07747 611308
email – jo.walker@suzylamplugh.org*

Notes to Editors:

For a copy of the full report or to arrange an interview with Steven Gauge, contact Jo Walker (details above)

Suzy Lamplugh Trust, works to raise awareness of the importance of personal safety in order to help people to avoid violence and aggression and live safer, more confident lives.

The Trust works alongside government, the police, the educational establishment, public bodies and the business sector to encourage safety wherever people may be at risk - in the home, at work, in public and in schools and colleges, on public transport and when travelling at home or abroad.



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