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## STAYING SAFE ON THE STREETS

Don't allow the threat of violence to frighten you into never going anywhere alone. There is a lot you can do to improve your safety. The following precautions can reduce the risks and increase your confidence.

Take time to think about your personal safety and P.L.A.N to help reduce the risks.

### **P**repare.

Take a few moments to think about what you are doing and where you are going before you set off.

### **L**ook Confident

Look purposeful, be alert, hold your head up and be aware of your surroundings, even in areas that you know very well.

### **A**ct to avoid risk

Stay alert in order to become aware of any risks as early as possible and if you sense possible danger, take action immediately to avoid it. For example, if you hear a lot of aggressive noise from a group of lads around the next corner, double back and take another route.

### **N**ever assume

...that people are what they seem.

# GUIDANCE SHEET

- Think about the places in your neighbourhood where you could find people you could ask for help. Depending on the time of day, these might be friends' or neighbours' houses, local shops, a police station or a petrol station.
- Think about where the danger spots may be along your route, and how you could avoid them (e.g. waste land, dark alleyways, deserted or poorly lit areas etc)
- Avoid wearing hoods, listening to music through earphones or talking on your mobile phone when out and about on you own, as these will seriously limit your ability to see or hear trouble approaching
- Don't make yourself an easy target for criminals. Keep any valuables out of sight and try to make sure that at least one hand is free and that you can move easily.
- Always try to make sure someone knows where you're going and when you expect to be back.
- Always phone or text from a safe place and not from the middle of the street.
- Try to walk in the middle of the pavement, especially when you are going round corners. Walking against the direction of oncoming traffic will help you avoid kerb crawlers.
- Have your keys ready when you approach your home so that you can enter quickly and not spend time on your doorstep fumbling in bags or pockets. Stay alert until you are safely inside
- If you feel at all threatened by someone, act immediately - move away, cross the road etc. and towards somewhere where there are other people. If they follow you, make as much noise as possible. Yell a specific instruction, e.g. "Help, call the Police!"
- Consider carrying a personal shriek alarm. Carrying an alarm can give you extra confidence and you can use it to shock and disorientate attackers giving you time to get away.

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