



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**Embargo: Immediate release**

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### **Personal Safety Charity Warns of Summer Complacency**

Police recorded crime statistics show that last year over 8% more violent crimes took place in England and Wales during the summer months than during the winter months. In July/Aug/Sept 2008 there were 236,800 violent against the person offences recorded as opposed to 217,000 in Oct, Nov, Dec.

Ann Elledge from the personal safety charity, Suzy Lamplugh Trust, says:

“We are naturally more wary when it is dark and tend to be more careful about our personal safety when we are out and about on winter nights. We tend to feel safer during daylight hours or on light summer evenings and therefore tend to be more complacent about our safety.

“These statistics highlight the fact that even though we *feel* safer in the summer, we still need to remain alert. We should all take sensible precautions to improve our safety no matter what time of the day or year it is.”

This may be particularly relevant at the moment as a study by the Police Federation warns that muggings and thefts could rocket over the next two years as recession bites; with crime figures already showing a rise in knifepoint muggings.

For a crime to happen it needs three things – a victim, a perpetrator and an opportunity; if you reduce the opportunities by taking some common sense precautions, then you reduce the risk of becoming a victim.

Suzy Lamplugh Trust offers the following tips on how you can improve your safety by reducing the risks:

- Stay aware of your surroundings – the sooner you see trouble approaching, the easier it will be to avoid it.
- Avoid wearing an mp3 player or chatting on your mobile phone when walking down the street alone, as this will prevent you from hearing danger approaching.
- Try to stick to busy streets and avoid danger spots like quiet or badly lit alleyways, subways or isolated car parks, even if it means taking a longer route.
- Walk confidently and purposefully. Try to keep at least one hand free and don't walk with your hands in your pockets.

- Walk facing on coming traffic to avoid curb crawlers.
- If you think you are being followed head for the nearest public place such as a shop, garage, library or pub. If they follow you in there or hang about outside tell a member of staff and if necessary call the police.
- Consider carrying a personal alarm, which can be used to shock or disorientate an attacker giving you vital time to get away.

Elledge adds:

“We all want to enjoy a safe summer and by taking a few minutes to think about our personal safety, we can go out and enjoy the longer days ahead.”

For further personal safety advice, visit [www.suzylamplugh.org](http://www.suzylamplugh.org)

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

### **Notes to Editors:**

**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.