

Women have long been thought of as the weaker sex, the helpless sex, the submissive sex.

In today's world these perceptions are being erased and replaced by the stronger, self-confident, self-aware images of women. This brochure is designed to give you some constructive and positive ideas for protecting yourself and your family when you are traveling, shopping or out-and-about, and while at home.

Always strive to portray a positive image; stand tall, be aware of your surroundings, make mental notes of things that are going on around you. Act as though you have a mission - to protect yourself.

Remember, most rules of personal safety are simple to follow, easy to use, and cost little or nothing.

If you would like more information on other crime prevention programs such as: Neighborhood Watch, Residential Security, and other safety related pamphlets, please contact the KBI Anti-Crime Unit.

*Personal Safety is 80% common sense and 20% intuition*

**Presented to the citizens of Kansas by:**

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*"Working Together to Prevent Crime"*

TAKE THE CHALLENGE

# PERSONAL SAFETY FOR WOMEN



## **WHEN SHOPPING:**

- Be aware of your surroundings when parking - stay in well lighted areas - close to the entrances.
- Be leary of people in vehicles who are simply watching the parking lots - they could be watching for a victim.
- If uncomfortable move to another location.
- While walking to and from parking lots into stores, be conscious of your surroundings and what is going on. Make it a point to speak to people you see - they'll remember you. Criminals are less likely to bother someone who is observant - they don't want to be remembered.
- Portray a confident and self-reliant person, walk like you have a mission.
- Carry only enough money to purchase what you need.
- Carry money in several different locations on your person. When you make purchases, and get back only small amounts of change, it appears that you have spent all of your money.
- Carry only those credit cards that you will be needing that day. Photocopy credit cards, front and back, and keep them in a safe place at home - not in your purse.
- Never put the straps of purses around your neck to protect it from theft. The sudden impact on your neck from a potential purse snatcher could cause serious injury.
- "Fanny Packs" are great to carry valuables in while shopping - close to the body and hard to get off - leaves hands free to shop.
- When making lots of purchases, make several trips to the car. Put packages in the trunk and move the car to another location. By loading packages into your vehicle and returning into the store, you have just made yourself a possible target.

- Do your window-shopping first and make purchases just before leaving stores - allowing you to carry packages without having to stop and put them down.
- If shopping carts are available use them! They not only can be used as a barrier between you and an aggressor, but will also allow you to keep your hands free.
- When leaving the store to go back to your vehicle, if you notice suspicious activity in the area of your vehicle, go back inside and notify a store employee. Ask if they will accompany you to your vehicle. Better yet, shop with a friend, it's safer and a lot more fun.
- After opening the trunk of your vehicle to load packages, pocket the keys. Stand to the side and load the packages, allowing you to see what is going on around you.

## **WHEN TRAVELING:**

- Know something about your vehicle; how to change tires, add coolant and oil, etc.
- Stay far enough away from the car ahead of you so that you can see where their back tires touch the ground. This distance allows ample room for you to maneuver away if need be.
- When you are driving in town, keep a window cracked slightly. This is not only refreshing but also allows you to hear what is going on around you. Ever notice police officers do this? It's an added safety precaution.
- If you get stranded along the roadway, open the hood and trunk of your vehicle just far enough to indicate assistance is needed. If open too far, a vehicle could stop directly behind or in front of you, out of your range of view, and approach without being noticed.
- Display a SEND HELP sign in your back and front window. Lock all doors and wait for help. Do not open your doors to people who

stop, unless you know them well. Roll down the window just far enough to ask them to contact help. Always position yourself in the center area of the seat, the furthest distance from either window.

- When traveling alone and staying at motels or hotels, ask for all keys to the room when you check in. Let attendant know that no one will be joining you later.
- Make sure all doors and windows are locked when you are in your motel/hotel room.
- Use the peephole to view visitors, if you don't know who it is ask for verbal identification. If still uncertain call hotel security and have them check it out.
- Make sure someone has your itinerary when you travel and check in with them at a scheduled time.

## **WHEN AT HOME:**

- Keep doors and windows closed and locked.
- Keep shrubs and trees trimmed so they don't obscure entrances and windows. These are prime hiding places for criminals.
- Have neighbors watch house when you are gone for extended periods of time.
- Don't let strangers in to use the phone, make the call for them while they wait outside.
- Don't let service people or solicitors into your home, get a phone number where you can call to verify their identity and tell them you are doing so.
- If you have been away and upon arriving home notice anything different about your residence: lights on, doors open, gates open, etc. Go to a neighbor's home and call police. **DO NOT GO INSIDE.**
- If someone follows you while you are coming home from shopping or an outing, don't go home; drive to the nearest open business, fire department, police station, etc. and go inside.