

PLAN OF ACTION

In the event you are a victim of an attack, have a plan of action. A plan of action will increase your chances of survival. Think about what you would do in a situation. Are you going to fight? Escape? Cooperate? No one plan will work for every situation. The following are possible courses of action you may choose to take if you are attacked.

- Escape immediately if possible. Your best chance for escape may be at the onset of the attack, and may decrease as the incident escalates.
- Remain calm and get a good description of the attacker and any car(s) involved, if possible.
- Cooperate until you can escape. If the attacker is armed, submissive behavior may be your only choice.
- Give the attacker what they want, depending on the intent. If the attacker is trying to rob you, hand over property.
- Avoid being taken away, tied up or put in a vehicle if at all possible.
- Outsmart the attacker. Remember, your wits can be your best weapon.
- Scream Fire! If people are around yell fire repeatedly, it will alert passerby's that you are in danger.
- Disable the attacker; use your keys or other safety devises, if possible.



AFTER AN ATTACK

RETREAT:

Find a safe area away from your attacker.

IMMEDIATELY CALL THE POLICE - 911

REQUEST EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES:

If you are injured, request medical assistance when calling 911.

PRESERVE ANY EVIDENCE:

Do not disturb anything until the police have responded. Do not bathe, clean the house or area of the crime, and do not change clothes.

CONTACT A SUPPORT GROUP:

To help you deal with the trauma and fear after the attack.



FOR ADDITIONAL SAFETY INFORMATION:

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY
POLICE DEPARTMENT

CRIME PREVENTION UNIT
703-792-7270
crimeprevention@pwcgov.org



**PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY
POLICE DEPARTMENT**

The most decisive factor in staying safe is taking personal responsibility for your own security and well-being. Statistics show that people who stay aware of danger and take proactive steps are far less likely to become the victim of a crime. Make a commitment to actively manage your personal safety by regularly practicing these measures.

Criminals select their potential victims because the victim:

- was not aware of his/her surroundings.
- was distracted, had small children, was looking for keys, etc.
- was preoccupied with tasks.
- was alone.



STEPS TO KEEP YOU SAFE

PREPLAN: Think through possible scenarios. Be alert and vigilant. Preplanning can help you avoid becoming a victim or prepare you for an attack.

AVOID: Avoid potential or known problem areas, if possible. Always follow your instincts.

SURVIVE: If you are become a victim, you must have a goal to survive.

REPORT: Call police and report the incident immediately and seek medical aid and support.

SITUATIONAL AWARENESS:

A KEY TO SAFETY

INCORPORATE A STRONG SENSE OF AWARENESS IN YOUR DAILY ROUTINE

PERIPHERAL VISION. While maintaining your focus point observe what is happening around you to detect something suspicious.

SCAN. Constantly scan your surroundings for potential barriers, exits, suspicious people or objects.

BECOME A HARD TARGET. If you are aware of your surroundings, you become much less prone to being taken by surprise.

OUR INVISIBLE CIRCLES. We all have a sense of our personal boundaries of space. If someone invades your personal space, you should be aware of several things. For example, look at their hands, do they have a weapon? Does their body language display aggressiveness? How do I create distance?

VISUALIZATION. Practice safety by imagining a threatening situation and determining how you would respond. By visualizing yourself in threatening situations, you can develop ways to react, assess and protect yourself from danger and improve upon your awareness skills.

INTUITION. Pay attention to your feelings and your instinct. These responses will alert you, and if you trust your intuition, it can help to protect you.

MINIMIZE YOUR RISK

- Be alert! Know your surroundings and be aware of who is in front of and behind you.
- Keep your head up and know where you are going. Stay off your phone but keep it handy.
- There is safety in numbers. If you are alone leaving a store, walk near a group of people to make it appear to others that you are not alone.
- Ask for a friend, coworker or someone you trust to escort you if you feel uncomfortable.
- Walk on sidewalks that are well-lit or near businesses that are open. If you have to escape, you can run into an open restaurant or store.
- Don't take shortcuts through parks, alleys, parking lots, etc.
- Keep your wallet and money in a pocket or jacket pocket rather than your purse. Never carry large amounts of cash.
- Do not distract yourself by fumbling with packages or other items while walking.
- Carry keys in your hands to enable a quick entry to your car or home.
- When driving in your vehicle, remember to keep the doors locked.
- Park in areas well lit and close to the business.

