

CRIME PREVENTION

Crime Prevention for Senior Virginians

Crime prevention for Senior Virginians consists of a partnership that involves a Sheriff, the Police Chief in the locality, and older citizens or senior service providers who agree to work together. The primary goals are to reduce criminal victimization of older citizens and enhance the delivery of law enforcement services by providing an opportunity for the exchange of information between law enforcement and senior Virginians.

Activities and programs available to seniors may include: (1) How to avoid becoming a victim; (2) Neighborhood watch programs; (3) Elder abuse prevention, recognition, and reporting; (4) File of Life card with medical information; (5) The Smoke Detector Program; and (6) Senior walks at malls and parks.

Request this brochure from your local law enforcement department for important tips to prevent consumer abuse and fraud, as well as important hotline phone numbers.

Bristol Area Senior Adult Services

The Bristol Area Senior Council was organized in 1999 with a vision to develop Bristol as an ideal community of Senior Citizen involvement, activities and services. Its mission is to provide Senior Citizens the information and opportunities to develop the quality of life they desire. Its goals are; (1) To promote Bristol as one ideal community for seniors and encourage communications between agencies; (2) Coordinate with local governments, media, and the community-at-large on behalf of the Bristol senior citizens; (3) Be the focal point for seniors by disseminating information of existing and future programs; (4) Serve as an advocate for growth and development of both Bristol's Senior Centers; and (5) Coordinate the ideas of the Bristol Area Senior Council to provide opportunities for all seniors in the Greater Bristol area.

Included in this brochure is a list of the Senior Adult Services programs, a list of City Services, a list of Retirement Living, and a list of the Senior Centers, along with phone numbers.

Discover How To Protect Your Child

The statistics on the number of children who are reported missing are staggering.

Not all missing children are runaways: some children just seem to disappear without a trace.

We cannot always be with our children, and we must trust their intelligence and good judgment.

We can teach our children to be alert to the world by giving them the tangible knowledge they need to cope with the few times they may find themselves in danger. Perhaps through education, we can prevent a child's disappearance.

This brochure describes ten preventive tips you can take to help protect your child from being a victim of abduction.

Protect your child. It's a jungle out there.....Children should be made AWARE of the dangers not AFRAID.

Power Tripping

Bullies don't go away when elementary school ends; bullying actually peaks in junior high. It continues through high school and even into the workplace. It can lead to serious problems and dangerous situations for both the victim and the bully.

Bullying is repeated and uncalled-for aggressive behavior, or quite simply, unprovoked meanness. It's a form of intimidation, which means behavior designed to threaten, frighten, or get someone to do something they wouldn't necessarily do. Bullies have learned that bullying works. They do it to feel powerful and in control.

The facts: (1) Bullies keep bullying as long as it works; (2) Many children and teens are bullies, but the largest number of children and teens are bystanders-witness to bullying; (3) Eight percent of urban junior and senior high students miss one day of school each month because of fear; (4) Bullying can be physical, verbal, mild, or severe; (5) One in four children who bullies will have a criminal record before the age of 30; (6) Girls can be bullies too; (7) Much bullying happens where adults can't see or hear it, but it also happens when adults are present and the adult's don't do anything to stop the bullying.

Learn more about this everyday problem and help stop bullying. There are things you can do to deal with the situation without making things worse.

Personal Protection Tips

Statistics show that most people aren't aware of the threat of crime until they or someone close to them have been victimized. Therefore, we all need to be aware of the prevalence of crime and how to protect ourselves by taking the necessary steps to reduce the risk of becoming a victim.

This pamphlet provides you with sensible guidelines on how to reduce your risk of becoming a victim by explaining: (1) How to prevent an attack; (2) What to do if you are attacked; (3) Passive resistance techniques; (4) Active resistance; (5) Personal protection devices; (6) How to fortify your home; and (7) How to protect your vehicle.

Senior Citizens Against Crime

Although surveys consistently show that persons over 65 are victims of crime far less frequently than young people, many senior citizens are so worried about crime that they shut themselves up in their homes and rarely go out. But isolating ourselves behind locked doors, not getting together with our neighbors, actually makes it easier for criminals to work in the neighborhood.

Seniors are more vulnerable to certain crimes – purse snatching, mugging, and fraud. But you can reduce opportunities for criminals to strike by being careful, alert, and a good neighbor.

Often, these crimes can be reduced by simple measures like remembering to lock a door, knowing about common con games, and watching out for your neighborhood.

Learn what to do when you're out and when you are at home. Also, learn how to protect your money and what to do if you are assaulted. Remember, crime prevention is everyone's responsibility, not just a job for the police.

Take action today. Get this brochure explaining what you can do to help protect yourself.

Targeting – Con Artists, Mail Fraud and Sams

Each year in the United States, many people lose money to con artists, mail fraud, and other scams. Not only will these individuals take your money, they can steal your self-esteem as well. Although you may feel you are too intelligent to be “taken,” anyone can be a victim.

Get this pamphlet full of solutions to educate yourself so that you will be able to spot scams before they can hurt you. In the meantime, here are a few things to be on the lookout for: (1) Getting something for nothing; (2) Cash only; (3) Hurry now – don't delay; (4) Charity (*Make sure you know the Charity to which you give*); (5) Home improvements (*Asks for payment before job is complete*); (6) Get rich quick; and (7) Limited time offer.

Teen Dating Violence

Dating violence or abuse affects one in four teens. Abuse isn't just hitting. It's yelling, threatening, name calling, saying “I'll kill myself if you leave me,” obsessive phone calling or paging, and extreme possessiveness.

Are you going out with someone who...(1) Is jealous and possessive; (2) Tries to control you by being bossy; (3) Puts you down in front of friends; (4) Scares you; (5) Is violent; (6) Pressures you for sex; (7) Abuses alcohol or other drugs and pressures you to use them; (8) Believe he or she should be in control of the relationship; or (9) Makes your family and friends uneasy. If you answered yes to any of these questions, you could be a victim of dating abuse.

Get the facts in this informational leaflet about Teen Dating Violence and what to do if your partner is abusing you and you want out.

Identity Theft

Identity theft is the fastest-growing crime in America, affecting half a million new victims each year. Identity theft or identity fraud is the taking of a victim's identity to obtain credit, credit cards from banks and retailers, steal money from a victim's existing accounts, apply for loans, establish accounts with utility companies, rent an apartment, file bankruptcy, or obtain a job using the victim's name. Thousands of dollars can be stolen without the victim knowing about it for months or even years.

Protect yourself from identity theft with the useful suggestions in this handy brochure.

Virginia's Favorite Drug, Her Most Popular Killer

Alcohol is Virginia's favorite drug. A depressant you can buy without a prescription, it's easy to get, legal and socially acceptable. It's also Virginia's biggest killer.

People use alcohol because, "It helps me relax," "It's good for what ails you," "It warms me up," "It helps me meet girls," and "It helps me escape."

Aside from the homicides and suicides committed by people under the influence, almost half of Virginia's highway fatalities last year involved alcohol. That's about 400 people.

Learn about (1) The effect's of alcohol on the body; (2) Consequences if convicted of driving under the influence of alcohol; (3) Prevention – Protect yourself and others when consuming alcohol; (4) Lifesaving tips; and (5) Statistics.

Be smart and be safe.

Working Together To Create Safer Schools

When crime, drugs, and violence spill over from the streets into the schools, providing a safe learning environment becomes increasingly difficult. More students carry weapons for protection. Gunfights replace fistfights. Many students must travel through gag turf or drug dealers. Violence becomes an acceptable way to settle conflicts.

When this happens, children cannot learn and teachers cannot teach.

Creating a safe place where children can learn and grow depends on a partnership among students, parents, teachers, and other community institutions to prevent school violence.

Find out how crime threatens schools in your community and take action to protect the children as well as promote nonviolent ways to manage conflict.

Safe Surfing

Cyberspace is a gigantic community of millions, where people research information for school, learn about movies, shop, listen to music, watch video clips, even develop sites of their own. As in any community, there are people and places you should avoid to reduce your crime risk.

Be alert. Learn about (1) The rules of the road on the internet; (2) The sites you see and visit; (3) Assessing a website; (4) Chat rooms; and (5) Harassment.

Raising Streetwise Kids – A Parent’s Guide

A great thing about kids is their natural trust in people, especially in adults. It’s sometimes hard for parents to teach children to balance this trust with caution. But kids today need to know common-sense rules that can help keep them safe – and build the self-confidence they need to handle emergencies.

Take a stand. Teach your child how to be streetwise by starting with the basics and then educate them on how to be safe while at school, at play, and at home alone.

Graffiti – Often the First Sign of Trouble

Many youth gangs use graffiti to mark territory, send messages, and intimidate rival gangs and community residents. But graffiti is not just the work of gang members. “Taggers” are young people who are not necessarily gang affiliated but still engage in graffiti vandalism. They are seeking recognition from their peers for their daring. Only 10 percent of graffiti is thought to be gang-related; the remaining 90 percent is done by taggers. Most graffiti vandals are between the ages of 14 and 17, but some are younger. They often tote backpacks in which they carry the tools of their trade – spray paint, paint sticks, etching equipment, and the like.

Whether done by gang members or taggers, the presence of graffiti in a neighborhood can increase residents’ fears about safety and even reduce property values. Its presence can also signify to criminals that residents don’t care about their neighborhood. It costs communities thousands of dollars in removal and clean-up.

Find out what you and your community can do to help fight vandalism.

Holiday Safety

This holiday season, don't let the spirit of giving lull you into giving burglars, muggers, and pickpockets a better chance to do their dirty work. Crooks love the holidays as much as everyone else, but chiefly because it's an opportunity for crime.

If you are traveling, out for the evening, shopping, or if a stranger comes to the door posing as a courier delivering gifts, be aware...get some tips on how to celebrate safely this holiday season.

Crime Prevention for People with Disabilities

A physical disability – impaired vision, hearing, or mobility – doesn't prevent you from being a victim of crime.

Common sense actions can reduce your risk: (1) Always stay alert and tuned in to your surrounding; (2) Send a message that you're calm, confident, and know where you're going; (3) Avoid places or situations that put you at risk; (4) Know the neighborhood where you live; and (5) Avoid establishing predictable activity patterns.

Additional information included in this pamphlet suggests ways to be safe at home, out and about, and on public transportation.

Community Policing

Community policing brings officers and citizens together to prevent crime – and solve neighborhood problems - by putting cops back “on the beat”.

Join forces with your community police officer: (1) Get to know each other as partners; (2) Discuss community concerns; and (3) Create a safer neighborhood.

It is important to learn how to work with your community police officer, so that as a team you commit to controlling the quality of life in your community.

How Senior Citizens Can Prevent Crime

Crime is a frightening problem, especially for senior citizens. You may be worried about burglary, fraud, muggings, and purse snatchings. But, as a senior citizen you don't have to feel helpless. You can learn how to reduce your chances of becoming a crime victim by learning some basic crime prevention information.

You don't necessarily need physical strength, agility, speed, and expensive security devices, but you do need to be alert, cautious, and self-confident. These inside tips will help give you the upper hand in crime prevention.

Handling Misbehavior – Tips for Parents

Every child misbehaves from time to time. When your child misbehaves, it's your job as a parent to (1) Respond to your child, so that he or she stops misbehaving; and (2) Teach your child to recognize and strive for appropriate behavior.

Teaching your child how to behave properly is one of your most important responsibilities and a challenge.

Learning why children act the way they do will help you respond in a helpful and loving way.

Breaking Free from Partner Abuse – Two Women Speak Out

This is an eye opening brochure about what women go through in an abusive relationship. Learn the warning signs, patterns, and what you can do to get help.

Raising a Child Today

Raising a child is a hard job. To do it well you need: (1) Time; (2) Energy; (3) Patience; and (4) Love.

It is a job with many ups and downs. And you learn more about it all the time.

Help your child grow up healthy and safe with this booklet, which contains tips on raising your child with love.

Safety Belts – Your Best Defense

Driving or riding in an automobile can be dangerous!

Each year, motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of accidental death for people between ages 1-34. They kill over 40,000 drivers and passengers. They seriously injure over 2 million drivers and passengers, and are the #1 cause of on-the-job deaths.

Fortunately, you can do something to reduce the risks! Learn the proper use of safety belts, insist that passengers use safety belts, and spread the word.

About Crime Victims

Crime victims are innocent people who suffer harm when someone else breaks the law.

Crime affects millions of lives. About 12 million people are victims of murder, assault, robbery, rape, burglary, and other crimes each year. It's estimated that one half of all crimes are never reported.

Families, friends, communities, and the nation as a whole suffer when crimes strike. Crime can turn people's worlds upside down. Crime can temporarily – or permanently- damage a person's physical and mental health. Crime can cause people to lose confidence in themselves and in others. Crime can also disrupt lives to the extent that normal relationships with family and friends are seriously strained.

Fortunately, most victims can adjust to changes caused by crime and return to a normal way of life.

When it comes to crime it's important to learn all you can about the legal procedures, about understanding the impact of crime, and how to seek help. Most of all ---- don't let crime defeat you!

You, Your Child and Violence

Violence hurts everyone! In fact, one act of violence can hurt many people. Victims often suffer physical injuries as well as emotional ones; friends and family of victims often feel grief and anger as a result of the attack; and witnesses often have trouble dealing with the violence they've seen.

Parents and other caregivers have a responsibility to help keep children safe. Children face special risk when violence enters their world. They may develop (1) Emotional problems; (2) Violent behavior; and (3) Thinking and learning problems.

Help protect your child from violence and its harmful effects by (1) Learning more about where children may encounter violence; (2) Making your home a safe, nurturing place; (3) Teaching skills for handling conflict peacefully; and (4) Building self-esteem, which can give your child the courage to walk away from trouble.

About Personal Safety

Personal safety is taking steps to protect yourself from crime.

Avoiding crime, without a doubt, is your best protection. However, knowing what to do if you're a victim can help you avoid injury and you can cooperate in the prosecution of the criminal.

Increase your personal safety: (1) Trust your instincts (don't dismiss suspicious people, cars or situations); (2) Avoid dangerous situations (don't invite trouble); and (3) Work with law enforcement officials (keep emergency numbers handy, stay alert by writing down times,

person's appearance, a car's make, color, and license number, etc., notify the police or sheriff's office of suspicious activity, and press charges if you are the victim).

Don't take chances with your personal safety! Learn now how to protect yourself at home, on the street, and while traveling.

What Everyone Should Know About Elder Abuse

Elder abuse is the mistreatment or neglect of an older person, usually by a relative or caregiver. Elder abuse includes physical violence, threats, verbal abuse, financial exploitation, emotional abuse, neglect, and violation of an older person's privacy or other basic rights.

Elder abuse is an extremely serious problem! Incidents occur with alarming frequency. They occur in families from all backgrounds and in every part of the U.S. Most cases go unreported, because many victims are ashamed or unable to report abuse – or are fearful of what may happen if they do.

Victims often live with family members and depend on them for daily care. Victims are most likely to be age 75 or over, women, dependent on the abuser for basic needs, and suffering from a mental or physical illness. However, situations vary. Some victims are financially independent and in good health.

Abusers are usually family members who are acting as the caregivers and often suffer from stress and alcohol or other drug related problems. They may also suffer from dependency problems, in that while a victim may rely on the abuser for basic needs, the reverse may also be true for the abuser who depends on the older person for basic needs such as money or housing. But, there's no excuse for elder abuse.

It's everyone's responsibility to stop elder abuse. People can help by supporting: (1) Research into the causes, treatments, and prevention of abuse; (2) Education to fight negative attitudes toward older people and people who have disabilities; (3) Resources for older people and their caregivers, including home health aids, meal deliveries, day care, transportation, counseling, and help with daily living tasks; (4) Greater public awareness of the problem; and (5) Legislation to help older people use the courts, find treatment, and gain protection from further abuse. Learn the facts, seek help for victims and abusers, and support efforts to end elder abuse.

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Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is your self-image or how you feel about yourself. These feeling may be positive or negative. The more positive feelings you have about yourself the higher your self-esteem. The more negative feelings you have about yourself the lower your self-esteem.

Think about your self-esteem for a minute. Why? Because self-esteem affects the way you live. It affects how you think, act and feel about yourself and others. It also affects how successful you are in achieving your goals in life.

High self-esteem can make you feel effective, productive, capable, and loving, while low self-esteem can make you feel ineffective, worthless, incompetent, and unloved.

Your level of self-esteem is based on the unique experiences and personal relationships that have made up your life involving: (1) Family members at home; (2) Classmates, teachers, administrators, and counselors; (3) Supervisors and co-workers; (4) Childhood and adult friends, neighbors, boyfriends and girlfriends; and (5) Members of different cultures, races and religions.

No single event or person can determine your level of self-esteem. It develops over time, constantly changing with experience. Self-esteem can be improved, so don't let past failure hold you back. You owe it to yourself to feel good about who you are. Take time and learn how to think positively about yourself.

What Everyone Should Know About Robbery

It's important to know about Robbery. The more you know, the more you can do to avoid being an easy target for robbers.

Robbery is taking a person's goods or money through force – or threats. Robbery is a serious crime that can result in physical harm, emotional trauma, and property loss. Robbery is a felony and a major crime punishable by imprisonment or death (depending on state laws).

Robbery can occur anywhere and in different forms. For example: (1) Street muggings – robberies in which property worn or carried by the victim in public is taken through force or fear; (2) “Stickups and holdups” – robberies in which a weapon or physical or emotional assault is used; (3) Roadside robberies – occur when an unsuspecting driver pulls off the road (for example, to offer help to the “wrong” person); (4) “Smash and grab” – smashing a window and grabbing property from a vehicle (for example, when stopped in traffic); (5) “Home invasion” – including “push-in” and “drive-way” robberies in which the robber follows the victim or waits for the victim to return home and attacks as the victim gets out of the car or enters the home. Sometimes they even pose as a service person, someone in need of help, etc., to gain entry.

Protect what is yours at home and in public by learning to: (1) Develop your “street smarts”; (2) Protect yourself while driving; (3) Be safe at home; (4) Take some advice to the bank; and (5) Play it smart on public transportation. Also, it's important to know what to do if you are ever robbed and to report all robberies to the police.

Do your part to put robbers out of business! Get this handy guide to help you learn more.

About Family Safety

Family safety is a combination of attitude and actions that protects your family from harm. Family safety depends on finding and fixing safety hazards, being safety conscious at all times, and knowing what to do in an emergency.

Millions of people are injured in their own homes. Thousands are killed – and many of the deaths are children. These mishaps can be prevented. Here's how: (1) Protect your home and family from fire by eliminating fire hazards, by practicing fire safety, and being prepared in the case of fire; (2) Avoid slips, trips, and falls in the hall by keeping walkways clear, have adequate lighting, wipe up spills immediately, repair loose flooring or rugs, etc.; (3) Be careful with electricity - Call a professional if you suspect a problem, inspect all appliances for cord wear, don't overload outlets, cover unused outlets, never replace a fuse with a penny, and be careful using appliances near water as this is extremely dangerous; (4) Make your home safe for your children or elderly relatives living with you; (5) Be aware of poisons in your home like lead, carbon monoxide, radon, and most importantly household products such as alcohol, cleaners, bleach, medicines, vitamins, pesticides, insecticides, etc.

Remember, it's better to be safe than sorry. Use this guide to help find your problems before they find you.

Stay safety alert at all times and make sure you prepare for emergencies.

Make safety a family affair!

Principles of Asset Building

As a nation, we are not doing enough to nurture the developmental assets of our children and youth. In fact, most young people surveyed by Search Institute experience only about 18 of the 40 assets. Thus, a commitment to asset building should become a top priority for every individual, every organization, and every community across the nation. Search Institute has identified six principles that can help shape our asset-building efforts.

All children and youth need assets. Research shows that all young people, regardless of gender, age, family, composition, race, or ethnicity, can benefit from having more assets. While we must continue to pay special attention to children and youth who are in crisis and those who are at risk, the central challenge is to generate the kind of attention that will help *all* young people.

Relationships are key. Building assets call upon every single person to build both formal and informal relationships with young people that are positive and caring.

Everyone can build assets. In an asset-building community, everyone works at developing caring relationships with young people.

Building assets is an ongoing process. Asset building begins before birth or adoption, by equipping parents-to-be with skills and knowledge to care for a baby or child. And asset building continues throughout childhood and adolescence and into adulthood. Young people need their assets nurtured every day during every year of their childhood and adolescence.

Asset building requires consistent messages. For asset building to be woven into the fabric of community life, it needs to be reinforced everywhere. That means in homes, schools, congregations, places of employment, clubs. Everywhere.

Duplication and repetition are good and important. Young people need as many asset-building experiences as possible.

Bike Smart

Today, more people than ever are riding bicycles. And why not? Riding your bicycle is fun and it doesn't need any gas. Just plain old-fashioned pedal power will take you where you want to go. But you also need to pay close attention where you're riding your bicycle, because if you're not careful, riding a bike can be dangerous.

1. Every year, an average of 1,000 Americans suffer fatal injuries while riding their bicycles. Almost half of them are children under the age of 14.
2. Fatality rates are highest among 10-13 year-old boys with boys being six times more likely to crash than girls.
3. Most fatalities happen in the warm months (May to September) and most occur between the hours of noon and 9 p.m.
4. Most bicycle accidents happen on quiet residential streets and are the fault of the bicyclist.
5. Hundreds of children under the age of 19 are hospitalized every year for bicycle-related injuries. Thousand more receive emergency room treatment.
6. The vast majority of children fatally injured in bicycle accidents die as a result of head injuries.
7. Bicycle helmets reduce the risk of head injury by 85% and reduce the risk of injury to the brain by 88%.
8. The bicycle helmet is the best and most inexpensive "insurance" a bicycle rider can own.

Be a safe rider so you can live to ride your bike for a long time to come - know the rules and laws for bicycling; know how to take care of your bike; keep your bicycle in a safe, well-maintained condition; and keep your bicycle secure.

Ultimately, it is the parent's responsibility to make sure their children know and follow the rules and laws for safe bicycling.

Enjoy biking, but be safe and responsible.