

Teen Talk – Keeping Safe



Travelling on Foot or by Wheelchair

Travelling on foot or by wheelchair is generally considered a safe means of travel, but the risks will obviously increase during hours of darkness and during winter months.

The following guidelines may help to minimise the risks.

- Think ahead, always be "alert" and aware of your surroundings.
- When possible, try to avoid walking or wheeling alone, especially during hours of darkness.
- Keep too busy and well-lit streets and roads.
- Avoid taking short cuts.
- Avoid poorly lit or little used underpasses.
- Walk or wheel facing the oncoming traffic and keep to the centre of the pavement.
- If a driver stops and you are suspicious, walk away in the opposite direction.
- Let them see that you are noting the car registration number and write it down.
- If you think you are being followed, cross and re-cross the street.
- Do not wait around unless you absolutely have to. Keep to busy well-lit areas and look positive and confident.
- Do not accept lifts unless you know and trust the driver and never hitch a lift.
- Consider carefully where and how you carry your valuables (eg if you carry a bag wear the strap across your chest) and be discreet when you use your mobile phone.
- Keep your hands free to defend yourself if necessary.
- Carry an alarm in your hand; it will be of no use in your bag or pocket.
- Try not to linger in areas where risk is increased (outside pubs, clubs, places where groups congregate).
- Do not lose your sense of awareness by wearing a personal stereo/radio or mp3 player

Travelling by Taxi

- Ensure that you have the telephone number of a reputable taxi firm. Ask your friends or student union who they would recommend.
- When booking your taxi, ask the company for the name of the driver they will be sending.
- If ordering a taxicab from a public phone or mobile try to avoid doing so where someone may overhear you giving your name and address etc. Anyone could shout "cab for Mrs Smith" so check the driver's name on arrival.
- If possible share a taxi with a friend.
- Although you may not wish to appear unfriendly always sit in the back.
- If you do chat to the driver, do not give away any personal details.
- If you feel in any way uneasy about the driver, ask to stop in a busy and familiar area and get out.

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- Try to have your money ready on arrival at your destination, leave the cab and pay the driver.
- When arriving at your home, have your keys out ready and enter quickly.
- Be aware of bogus taxis! Some people do not work for minicab firms at all but simply put an aerial on the roof, and have a fake handset. They then “cruise” for trade in busy areas and nightspots. They often get trade by shouting out ‘someone ordered a cab?’ At times when there is a shortage of transport it could be tempting. It is much safer to wait, for the correct cab.

USE YOUR COMMON SENSE - JUST THINK SAFETY FIRST!