



PERSONAL SAFETY: TEENS and YOUNG ADULTS

Being personally safe is a lifestyle choice

Your overall safety depends on reducing the opportunity for a criminal to be successful. This is done by how you live your life and the choices that you make each and every day.

Did you know?

- Nationwide, in seven out of ten acts of violence, the victim know their attacker as a friend, significant other, spouse, co-worker, or casual acquaintance. 50% of all sexual assaults occur in the home.
- One out of every three crimes happens to someone between the age of 12 and 24.
- 3 out of 10 people will be involved in an alcohol-related crash at some point in their lives, whether they drink or not.

Incidents of violence can occur anywhere at anytime. **Trust your gut feeling that something may be wrong.** Following are some guidelines that may help reduce potential vulnerability. Remember though, whether you choose to use the suggestions or not, no one has the right to harm you.

SAFETY AT HOME/IN THE DORM

- Be aware of your surroundings. Be familiar with who is coming and going—who belongs and who doesn't. Immediately report suspicious activity to your parents, dorm resident assistant, or call 911 right away.
- Always lock your doors and windows, even if you are home. If you live in an apartment or dorm, don't prop open security doors. Don't let anyone you don't know into the building, either.
- Don't hide spare keys outside. They are found too easily.
- If you call 911, try to stay on the line with the dispatcher and give them as much information as you have. If you cannot stay on the line, police will be dispatched to the location the call was made from. Calls from cell phones may not be able to be located.
- Check IDs when repair people, meter readers, solicitors, etc. come to your door. Do NOT hesitate to refuse admittance and call the company and check them out.
- Do not leave notes on your door for others saying you are gone, since it advertises your absence.
- If you suspect your home or dorm room has been broken into, don't go in. Go someplace else and call 911.

SAFETY WHEN DRIVING

- Pay attention when you drive. Car crashes are the #1 killer of young people.



- The top factors in vehicle crashes for 15-19 year olds are: speed, inexperience, and driver distraction.
- Put the phone down. It's **ILLEGAL TO TEXT** while driving, *no exceptions!*
- It is also illegal to surf the internet or change the GPS while driving!
- Slow down. In bad weather, even driving the speed limit may be dangerous.
- Seatbelts are the most effective safety devices in vehicles. Wear one every time you get in a car and make your passengers buckle up, too. It's the law!

- Keep passengers to a minimum. Teens who add 1 passenger increase the risk of dying in a car crash by 39%; adding 2 increases the risk by 86%; adding 3 increases the risk 282%.
- Keep your car maintained and keep your gas tank at least half full.
- If you have car trouble, raise the hood and stay in your vehicle. Call 911 for assistance. If someone other than law enforcement offers assistance, don't get out. Ask them to call 911 for you.
- Do not stop to help a stalled vehicle. Instead, go to a safe place and report the stalled vehicle to 911. Never pick up hitchhikers or give rides to strangers.
- If you are being followed, don't go home. Drive to the nearest 24-hour gas station, convenience store, or any place with people around and call 911.

New Driver Limitations:

- For the first 6 months: only one passenger is allowed and driving is not allowed at all between midnight and 5 a.m.
- For the second 6 months, no more than three passengers are allowed. Night restrictions are lifted.
- If you have a provisional license (age 16-18), it's **illegal** to use a cell phone while driving.

AND MORE CAR SAFETY...

- Park in well-lit, public areas.
- Don't leave valuables in your car when parked anywhere, including your home or dorm parking lot! Ipods, phones, GPS units, stereo equipment, computers, gym bags, backpacks, purses/wallets, and sunglasses are all tempting to thieves.
- Be aware of your surroundings. Have your keys ready to unlock the car door and enter without delay. Lock the car door immediately after getting in.
- If you leave keys with a parking attendant or at a service station, leave only the car key (not a house or dorm room key).
- Don't program your home address in your GPS. Use a nearby store or gas station instead, so if your GPS is stolen, criminals can't use it to find you.

SAFETY ON THE STREET

- Stay on populated, well-lit streets. Try to exercise, or walk to class, with a friend.
- Walk confidently. Let someone know where you will be or the route you will be taking.
- Be aware of your surroundings. Make it difficult for anyone to take you by surprise. Don't wear headphones. If you must wear them, keep the volume low, so you can hear your surroundings.
- Trust your instincts. Do not hesitate to remove yourself from a situation. Forget the rules of etiquette and social norms. Be willing to make a scene, if necessary.
- Most rapes are not committed by strangers, but by men who know their victims.
- If you are in a situation where you feel you are in imminent danger, *fight!* Don't hesitate! Use your self defense tactics or improvise weapons to stop the attacker and get away.
 - Remember, there is a difference between self defense (protect yourself, stop attack, get away) and assault (continuing to fight after attacker has stopped to inflict harm.)
- If you have gotten a ride from a friend, ask the driver to wait and until you are safely inside.
- Limit the amount of cash you carry.
- Be willing to give up your purse/wallet. If confronted, toss the purse/wallet away from you, giving you a chance to escape.



Hennepin County Curfew law

- Juveniles under 12 must be home by 9 p.m. on weekdays and 10 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays.
- Juveniles age 12-14 must be home by 10 p.m. on weekdays and 11 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays.
- Juveniles age 15-17 must be home by 11 p.m. on weekdays and midnight. on Fridays and Saturdays.

Curfew is lifted at 5 a.m.

SAFETY ON-LINE

- Be careful when using computer internet or on-line services. Use caution in providing personal information. Being flooded with e-mail can be annoying; having a chat room participant show up at your door uninvited can be terrifying.
- Never agree to meet face-to-face with someone you met on-line by yourself and never in a private place.



- Don't use your real name, or post your date of birth, address, home town, phone numbers, school information, class/sports schedules, etc. on internet sites.
 - Never post provocative photographs on line and be careful what information you use in blogs. Remember a good rule of thumb: Don't post anything online that you wouldn't want your mom, pastor, or boss to see! Once on the internet, it lasts FOREVER!
 - Make sure you know who people are before accepting them as "friends" on line.
- Never give out your password to anyone! Your best friend today may be your worst enemy next week.
 - Report on-line harassment or threats to parents, teachers, and police.
 - Be alert to identity theft. Do not give out personal or financial information to unsolicited emails or unsolicited phone calls. If you get an email saying there is a problem with your account, contact the company directly with numbers you have at home in your files. NEVER reply to these emails!
 - Scams are very common online. You cannot win a lottery you did not enter, most reputable people do not overpay for items, and if someone asks you to wire money...don't do it!

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

- DON'T USE ALCOHOL OR DRUGS.
- Everyone knows that "hard core" drugs are illegal. However, using prescription drugs (not prescribed to you), synthetic drugs (like synthetic marijuana), and bath salts are all illegal *and* their use can cause death.
- More teens are killed by alcohol than all other illegal drug combined.
 - It is illegal to even possess alcohol if you are under the age of 21.
 - If you are under 21 and attempt to buy alcohol, you will lose your driver's license for 90 days.
 - Having an open bottle of alcohol in your car is illegal, no matter how old you are!
- Binge drinking is associated with higher risk-taking, such as drug abuse, sexual activity with multiple partners, fighting, and doing poorly in school.
 - Fighting is considered disorderly conduct-a misdemeanor.
- ***The majority of sexual assaults and crimes on college campuses involve alcohol.***
 - If you are at a party where alcohol or drugs are involved, make sure to use the "buddy system." Never leave an impaired friend alone.
 - "No" means "No"! Being drunk does not excuse any unwanted sexual contact. A criminal sexual contact charge is a felony that can affect your entire life, especially if you are required to register as a predatory offender.
- Never drink and drive.
 - It is illegal for anyone under 21 to have any amount of alcohol in their systems. If you are arrested for "Not a Drop", your license will be suspended.
 - Just by driving, you have consented to be tested for impaired driving. Refusal to do so is a misdemeanor and your license will be suspended for one year.
 - 3,000 people under 21 are arrested for DWI each year. If you are involved in a crash, you can lose your license until you are 18! **A DWI will stay on your record for life.**

