



## **WALKING SAFETY TIPS**

### **There is safety in numbers.**

It is always better to go out in a group of trusted friends than it is to walk alone. Whenever possible have at least one other person to walk with. Consider taking your dog with you if you cannot walk with a friend. Always tell someone where you are going to be, the route you plan to take in getting there, and when you expect to be home.

### **Stay in well lit areas.**

Stay in well lit areas. Do not walk in dark parking lots, dark alleys, dark lanes, or on dark trails. A well lit path in a well populated area is your safest route to any destination, even if it takes a bit longer. Don't risk your personal safety for a shortcut. Only carry a weapon if you are trained in using it safely, effectively and in accordance with all local laws.

### **Keep your head up and look confident.**

Your posture can make all the difference in how you are perceived by a potential attacker. If you are looking down, seem distracted or look afraid you are more likely to become a target. Keep your head up, be aware of what is going on around you and keep your gaze fixed at nose level. Do not wear earphones or talk on your cell phone while walking or running in the dark or in secluded areas.

### **Trust your instincts.**

If you see someone that makes you uncomfortable, try to walk away and get help or call the police. If you are unable to run, consider walking up a nearby set of steps, and repeatedly ringing the doorbell, regardless of the time of night. The residents can call the police for you, and the person following you will likely run away.

### **Know basic self defense.**

You don't need to know how to beat an attacker, only how to buy yourself enough time to get away. A few seconds is all it takes to get a safe distance between you and an attacker. Know basic evasive moves like stomping on a foot, slamming your head back into the face or gouging at eyes (with keys if you have to) in order to buy you those precious get-away-to-safety seconds.

### **CALL 911! Know what to yell if you are under attack.**

While it is natural to want to yell "help!" when you are being attacked this is not the best thing to say. Since some people joking around may yell these words, many people are not quick to act on them when they hear them. Instead yell "Call 911". Keep yelling the same thing over and over. Yell as loud as you can. Scream. Be noisy. This alone may spook off an attacker.