

CRIME PREVENTION

ELDERS

ELDERS - HOW TO PROTECT THEM?

Though crime against elderly persons especially the violent crimes appear to be common, these crimes are in fact a rare occurrence. Offences of this nature disturb the whole society. If your relative is an elderly person, you can help him / her feel safe, both at home and outside, by sparing some of your time. You must install confidence in the elderly. On the other hand, if you yourself are an elderly person, the following precautions taken could avoid danger:

- **Make your home a secured place by using security gadgets**
- **Be friendly with your neighbours. If you enquire about their welfare, they will enquire about your welfare and security. Try to be friendly with your beat constable**
- **Do not allow strangers or fresh acquaintances into the house, who may come on the pretext of enquiring about your welfare, or who may claim to be friends of your family members. Ask them to come back when your family members are at home**
- **Do not keep valuables or large amounts of cash in the house and do not let anyone know that the valuables are in the house. It is safe to keep the valuables and cash in Bank**
- **While employing servants in the house, ensure that the servants have proper references and after informing the jurisdictional police station, employ them**
- **Whenever you go out for a walk or for other work, take somebody with you. Avoid going out alone**

HOW TO PROTECT YOUR CHILDREN

Children also are susceptible to being harmed, both physically and sexually, offences of kidnapping for ransom, for the purpose of begging or for sexual abuse, though not common, have drawn the attention of Public. Like adults, even children have become victims of theft, assault, rape and cruelty. The following are some precautions that the parents and teachers should teach their respective children. The children themselves need to take preventive steps to protect themselves.

- **Children should be taught about their rights to self protection and their position in the society**
- **Children should be taught to know their surroundings thoroughly both in the school and home**
- **Children should be taught to differentiate between a friend and a foe**
- **Children should be told NOT to talk to strangers, NOT to accept any presents including eatables from stranger, NOT to go with the strangers,**

- however serious the issue may be, and NOT to go anywhere alone
- Children should be taught to remember the name, address and telephone number of their parents
 - Parents should not permit children to wear costly jewelry
 - Children should be taught how to seek help from policemen. Parents should make children understand that the policemen are their friends and guides and not enemies
 - Children should be convinced not to keep any secrets by speaking to them freely and with open mind, even if somebody asks them to keep certain things secret
 - Children should be taught to keep a lookout for suspicious persons
 - Simple ways of self defence taught to children would be of great help in emergencies
 - Children should be taught to develop confidence in themselves and parents should also build confidence in their children
 - Do not allow children to open the door when somebody rings or knocks on the door
 - Children should be taught NOT to befriend any strangers either near school or near houses

YOUR COMMUNITY

Apart from protecting your family, yourself and your possessions, you can do a lot outside your home and family to prevent crime. By associating with other people and Police in your locality, you can bring in crime prevention awareness during your leisure. Residents of a community have very good knowledge of their surroundings, for instance, the Local Police Officer of the jurisdiction may not recognise a person in your locality/community to be a stranger, but the community people will be able to recognise him/her immediately, be aware of him/her, and ask him/her to explain his business in your locality

The following are some of the ways in which you, as a community member, involve yourself and help the community bring down crime:

- Neighbourhood Watch Committee is a new concept in which the members watch their neighbourhood turn by turn. You, by becoming a member of this committee of your locality, can keep watch on your neighbours houses whenever the neighbours leave the house for work, holiday, etc.
- In localities which are susceptible to dacoities, robberies, burglaries, you along with the beat Constables can perform night beats and keep a lookout for strangers and offenders
- If any person in your locality is spending lavishly without any authenticated livelihood, you can inform about such person to your jurisdictional Police
- If any body newly takes up a house in your locality, you can collect sufficient information about him. If you find anything suspicious, you can inform your local Police, who would verify your suspicions and take

necessary action if need be

- As a member of Community Policing you can find out whether the children and youth are cultivating healthy habits. If you find any child or youth going astray, you can inform the Parents of the child/youth or the Police or other Organisations who could take preventive steps towards the same
- If there are a lot of youths without any proper means of spending time, you can encourage such youths to start Youth Clubs taking the assistance of Youth Services Department and Police
- If the parents of the youth are not aware of extra-curricular activities available to encourage their youth, you can educate them about such organisations, which promote extra-curricular activities. You may talk to your local Police officer or the Youth Services Department and collect sufficient information from them
- As member of Community Policing, you can encourage the members of your community/ locality to become members of Civilian Rifle Clubs and organise civilian rifle training in consultation and association with Police
- Help your neighbours and keep an eye out for anything suspicious you may see in your community. Report anything suspicious to the neighbour and to the Police immediately. For instance, strangers knocking on the front door or peeping through windows or loitering around the house in a suspicious manner. While reporting to the neighbour/ police, give a detailed description of whatever you have seen
- Get to know your neighbours well. Arrange for social and cultural get-togethers. This will help build feeling of oneness. Then everybody will come forward whole-heartedly to help any member at times of need. That is, in case some criminal does attack any house in the community, the others will immediately take steps to stop the criminal and inform the police
- If elderly citizens stay in your locality, enquire about their welfare regularly as a good samaritan. Keep a watch on persons visiting them. Assist them in getting medical, domestic and banking help.
- Finally, by doing all this to your neighbours, you would be getting the same benefits which they get from you as a reciprocation of goodwill amongst neighbours

It is this type of awareness and willingness to help that is the basis of Community Policing. By being members of a community, and informing the Police immediately of any suspicious events in the community, you help in reducing occurrences of crime. This will make the life of criminals more difficult and occurrences of crime more rare. Crime will certainly be reduced.

YOUR HOME

Houses which are isolated and lonely become easy targets for offences like Dacoity, Burglary and Theft. Houses left locked for many days are the ones which are attacked by burglars and thieves. Burglars like easy opportunities and never try to attack a house if it makes more noise or takes more time. They also

avoid places where the chances of them being seen are more.

Likewise dacoits do not attack houses which have alarms and which are located in friendly localities. Nor do they like houses where people are armed.

Simple precautions like strong doors with proper locking system, windows with iron mesh, back doors with cross-bars keep the burglars away. The following are some of the simple measures, which will make your home safe without taxing much on your purse.

TO PREVENT BURGLARIES

- **Gates and compound walls should be made sufficiently strong. Compound walls should be made safe by fixing glass pieces on top to avoid burglars climbing on top. Back door should be made strong. Get iron cross-bars fixed to the back doors**
- **Front doors should have locks at the top and bottom**
- **Windows should be fitted with strong and closely built iron grills**
- **Do not leave the spare key hidden in convenient hiding places like above the door frame, below the door-mat or in the Post-box**
- **Small windows like ventilators, skylights, bathroom windows also can be used by a thief to enter if the gap is larger than a human head. Hence, it is important to secure these windows by either putting iron bars or iron grills**
- **Never leave a garage door unlocked especially if it has a connecting door to the house. A thief can use the tools available in the garage and break the door open**
- **If you have a backyard, raise the height of the compound wall and fix thorny glass pieces to prevent thieves from climbing the wall**
- **Get your surroundings properly lit**
- **If you notice strangers loitering in residential streets, call the Police**
- **In case you are going out on a holiday for a long period of time, inform your neighbours to keep a watch on your house, and inform your jurisdictional Police Station before leaving**
- **Burglar alarms and other security gadgets could be used to make your house more secure**
- **Particulars of Facilities available to citizens for obtaining information**

TO PREVENT DACOITIES

People living in isolated houses are advised to take certain precautions to prevent dacoities:

- **Dacoits before attacking the house usually cut the telephone lines. It is better to have underground covered telephone cabling done for such isolated houses**
- **People living in such isolated houses or in the outskirts should know their neighbours and surroundings. They should get alarms or sirens fitted to their house**

- **Do not keep valuables or huge amounts of cash in the house**
- **All the points suggested regarding securing your house are applicable here also**
- **You may join the civilian Rifle Clubs and obtain a Firearm. Every one in the house may be trained to use the weapon**
- **In case Dacoits strike your house or your neighbour's house do not hesitate to open fire in Self Defence. You are protected by Law and this would dissuade the dacoits from attaching any house in the area**
- **If you cannot own a Firearm, keep Fire crackers in the house and burst them when the dacoits strike to alert the neighbours and distract the dacoits**
- **CALL THE POLICE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**

YOUR POSSESSION

Your car, two-wheeler, money, adorned jewelry, Credit Card, Brief Case, Hand Bag, etc., are your valuable possessions. Your car parked without being locked, the two-wheeler left uncared on a street corner, the briefcase left beside your chair, the wallet left exposed, the jewelry worn in excess are vulnerable to theft. Hence, you should be careful at all times:

CAR THEFTS

- **Do not leave the car parked in isolated areas. Always park the car in parking lots**
- **Lock the car properly, even if you leave it for a few minutes**
- **Do not leave valuables and luggage exposed inside the car**
- **Get your car fitted with car alarms and central locking system**
- **If you are using a Radio/Cassette player in the car, use a portable one and detach and take it with you**
- **Always remove the ignition key when you leave your car, even when it is in your own garage**
- **Get the Car Registration number etched on all windows, rear-view mirror, lights and on Radio/Cassette player. This would help the Police identify your articles in case of theft**

TWO WHEELER THEFTS

- **Always park your two wheelers in parking lots**
- **At home, park the two-wheeler in your garage, lock the vehicle and keep your garage locked too. In case you do not have a garage, keep the vehicle inside the house or in your compound and properly secure the gates. In case you do not have a compound and are forced to keep it on the road in front of your house, tie a chain to the vehicle and your window grill**
- **Lock your two wheeler and take your ignition key even if you leave it for a few minutes**
- **Get your two wheeler's Registration number etched in a few**

- **inconspicuous places of the vehicle which is only to your knowledge**
- **Do not leave valuables in your two-wheeler**

When you carry cash and credit cards in your handbags and wallets, use the following precautions.

- **Never let your handbag out of your sight**
- **On streets and public transports keep hold of your handbags**
- **Use a handbag with secure clasp or zip and keep it closed whenever not in use**
- **Do not carry your wallet in the hip pocket without proper buttons. It is vulnerable to pick pocketing**
- **If your credit card is stolen, immediately inform the concerned bank and Police**
- **Pick pockets and snatchers work in teams, when one distracts, the other clears your pocket. Avoid getting distracted**
- **If someone bumps into you especially in a crowd, even by mistake, check your wallet, handbag and other valuable belongings immediately**
- **Whenever you carry large amounts of cash either to deposit in bank or after withdrawal from the bank, take somebody with you**

THEFT OF WORN JEWELRY

Worn jewelry could be either snatched or removed without your knowledge. While snatching takes place in isolated and lonely streets, removing your jewelry without your notice occurs in crowded areas like Bus Stops, Railways Stations, Shopping Complexes, Parties, etc.

The following few precautions could prevent theft of the worn jewelry:

- **Keep your worn jewelry covered whenever possible**
- **Avoid walking on lonely and isolated streets wearing expensive jewelry**
- **Avoid rushing into the bus or train in crowds**
- **Do not get distracted, culprits can distract you and remove your jewelry**
- **Ensure that your jewelry and belongings are intact in Parties, Cinemas etc., whenever there is power failure**
- **Whenever you operate your lockers ensure that strangers are not observing you and always take somebody with you whenever you carry heavy jewelry with you**

SOCIAL EVILS

Social evils like dowry system, child abuse, drug abuse are the main bane of the society. You, as a part of the society can take steps to prevent them and make the society a better place to live in. This chapter explains about the precautions you have to take to prevent such crimes.

Dowry System

Many NGOs have started campaigns against dowry harassment and are keeping a close watch on reported offences. Though law has provided stringent measures to curb this menace, society and you as a member of the society can do a lot to prevent offences of harassment, dowry death, etc., by taking the following steps:

- **Start practising dowry prohibition in your family**
- **Educate the members of your family with the provisions of law that demanding and accepting or giving dowry is an offence**
- **A woman is an important member of family and is entitled to all the rights and privileges a man enjoys**
- **Educate the members of your family and your neighbours to respect a woman's rights and privileges**
- **If in any family there is a growing dispute between the in-laws and the lady, try to intervene to sort out the differences and educate them about the evils of dowry system. If they fail to listen to you, please inform the jurisdictional police and counselling centres**
- **Provide support and shelter to the lady in distress. If you cannot, please contact the Women organisations who can provide support in such cases**
- **Gather like-minded people who are fighting against this evil and gather public sympathy and support to ex-communicate the families where the evil persists**
- **In case you have any suspicion of ill treatment of a lady in any house, immediately inform the local Police. Ladies in distress, generally avoid showing their resentment to ill-treatment till it reaches a dangerous point leading to their being burnt to death**
- **Encourage women folk to raise their voice about their rights and to fight against dowry system**

Child Abuse

Childhood is the pearl of life, where the best qualities like honesty, truthfulness and innocence are present. What one learns in childhood shape's ones future. It is everyone's duty to see that a child is prepared properly to lead a good life. Abuse of a child is not only a crime against society, but a crime against nature. You, as a member of your society can help the child develop itself in the right direction. Childhood here refers to all children below 16 years of age.

- **Ensure that children are given proper education and not forced to labour. Basic education is free for all children. Do not prevent your children from getting this benefit**
- **If you notice any child being forced into labour, inform the voluntary organisations and the Police, to take custody of such children and to initiate necessary action**
- **If the parents of such children force them to go for work, counsel them and educate them regarding free education and regarding voluntary**

organisations who look after the welfare of such children

- **Children are forced to work in bars, tea stalls, and in some undesirable places**