

# How to Avoid Trouble

Personal safety for young people

- OVER 500 TIPS -

Jason O'Connor



Illustrations by Zach

Design by New Media Angels

KOSEN PUBLISHERS



The aim and purpose of this book is to provide the knowledge of how to prevent you from becoming a victim of crime. There are no absolute right or wrong answers. Therefore the guidelines given enable you to make the decision in which you feel is appropriate. The images and characters are all fictional and have been created to highlight the significance of that particular chapter. Any resemblance to any people is highly coincidental.

First published 2015 by Kosen Publishers PO Box 51194 London SE13 9DL

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A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-0-9931963-2-4

How to Avoid Trouble - Personal Safety for Young People

For any questions, reviews, queries or experiences, please contact via the details below. Thank you.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Since primary school, I seemed to have this innate enjoyment of fighting and getting into trouble. It wasn't until I was about 14 years old that I realised that there was a problem and I needed to divert this energy.

I started boxing for a couple of years, but was disappointed when I was unable to become a senior amateur because of my poor eyesight.

Ironically, at the sports centre where I began to work as a fitness instructor, I met a Black Belt Expert in MMA (mixed martial arts), who also happened to be an ex-Marine.

With the one-to-one training I received from him for 12 years, it put my knowledge of self defence, street fighting techniques, combined with fitness onto a different level.

I gained a black belt, competed in full-contact martial arts, won a national title and then went on to successfully fight in the Cage.

Academically, I obtained a BSc in Exercise Physiology & Nutrition at Greenwich University and also completed teacher training.

Now I devote my time to teaching others how to look after themselves if attacked alongside keeping fit. This also includes travelling the country, teaching young people in particular how to keep out of trouble.

To date, I have been practising martial arts for 30 years. I could write a whole book on the benefits it has given me. However, I will summarise by just saying that my discipline and focus have grown immensely in all aspects of my life.

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# FOREWORD

Crime is with us continuously. However, we can try to prevent it, uphold the law and let the perpetrators deal with the consequences.

Young people in particular are a vulnerable part of the community. Therefore, it is important to educate them about being safer within their environment, even though it is not part of their compulsory school curriculum.

Listening and reading about the atrocities that young people are experiencing can sometimes be very disturbing. That's why it's great that Jason has put together vital factors, which will assist them in the prevention of becoming a victim of crime.

Jason shares some of his life's experiences, which are filled with many lessons. Stories that can be memorised and the concept understood.

I met Jason 15 years ago whilst we were working at a gym. I noticed his passion for martial arts had a reflection on the way he taught clients at the gym.

His dedication to this field, I'm sure, has inspired many and will certainly continue to do so. The subjects covered in this book are extremely relevant to today's society. Therefore, it's imperative that young people have discussions with their parents, teachers or other peers regarding these safety factors.

I'm confident that the points covered in this book, will have a profound effect on the way they deal with situations that may be otherwise harmful.

**Ivan Headley**

*Police Officer - AFO (Authorised Firearms Officer)*

DIPLOMATIC PROTECTION GROUP

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This has been a great journey in which the list below represents those who have supported, encouraged or given me advice. I am truly grateful.

*Jean O'Connor, Mick & Stan, Stafford Cox, Master Aubrey Henry, Rasheed Ogunlaru, Pablo Perez-Abella & Family, Warren & Guy Cabral, Karina Robinson & Lucas Stephenson, Gary Hay, Phillip Smith, Jeanette Barrett, Natasha Henry & Family, Hayley Molloy, PC Allison Sloan, Paul & Alexander Blake, Sue Hudson, Chris Nembhard & Family, Mario Lafond & Family, PC Ivan Headley, Tim Thompson, Redwan, Paul MacGregor & Family, Stephen Wilson-Smith & Family, British Library, Tayla-Estelle, Effie Jordan & Family, Hazel Rawlings, Vipran Bij, DC Stephen Brown.*

I also wish to thank all teachers from the schools at which I have taught, for giving me the opportunity to share my knowledge and experiences, as well as to also learn from their students.

## LIST OF SCHOOLS

Throughout my campaign, I have taught at the following schools via a self-defence workshop, self-defence course or a talk on street safety.

- Abbot's Hill School
- Archbishop Tenison School
- Athelney Primary School
- Bedford Girls' School
- Bellerbys College
- Belmont Mill Hill Preparatory School
- Bishop's Stortford College
- Bishopford Community School
- Boxhill School
- Broomwood School
- Channing School
- City of London for Girl's
- Conisborough College
- Denmead School
- Elfrida Primary School
- Eltham Green School
- Falkner House School
- Francis Holland School (Sloane Square)
- George Green's School
- George Mitchell School
- Gordonbrock Primary School
- Grinling Gibbons School
- Guildford High School
- Haberdasher's Aske's Knights Academy
- Haseltine Primary School

- Heath House Preparatory School
- Highgate School
- Holbeach Primary School
- Ipswich High School
- John Fisher School
- Kender Primary School
- Kensington Avenue Primary School
- Kensington Prep School
- King Edward's (Witley)
- Kingswood House School
- Knightsbridge School
- Ladymede School
- Lancing College
- Lee Manor Primary School
- Lochinver House Preparatory School
- Lochinver School
- Marymount International School
- Newhall School
- Normanhurst School
- Norwood School
- Old Vicarage School (Richmond)
- Putney High School
- Queen Anne's School
- Queen's Gate School
- Rowan School
- Royal School Hampstead
- Saint Nicholas School (Essex)
- Seaton House School
- Servite School
- Sevenoaks School

- Sir John Cass's School
- St Albans High School for Girls
- St Christopher's School (Hampstead)
- St Gabriel's School
- St George's School (Ascot)
- St Helen's School
- St Ives (Haslemere)
- St Lawrence College
- St Margaret's School (Hampstead)
- St Margaret's School (Hertfordshire)
- St Martha's School
- St Francis' College
- St Mary Magdalen's RC School
- St Paul's Girls' School
- St Teresa's School (Surrey)
- Swaminarayan School
- Sydenham Girls School
- The Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School
- The Royal School (Surrey)
- Thomas Knyvett School
- Tormead School
- Twyford CE School
- Ursuline High Girls School
- Waldegrave School
- Walworth School
- Westminster Academy
- Westminster Cathedral Choir School
- White Hart Lane School
- Whitefield School
- Woodcote House School

# TESTIMONIALS

*Jason's session was excellent: dynamic, engaging and pitched absolutely right. The pupils really enjoyed it and also felt that they had learned a lot; thought about issues of personal safety in a new way and been given some very practical tips.*

**| Mrs Hilary Dugdale**, Deputy Head - Lancing College

*I am delighted to commend the talk on Street Safety given by Jason. He held the attention of the whole of our year 10 group for the entire hour and they immediately requested that he be added to the list of our regular speakers. His talk is lively, intelligent and totally relevant to this year group. This has filled an important hole in our PSHE programme.*

**| Mr Chris Woodhouse**, Deputy Head - Bishop's Stortford College

*I thoroughly recommend one of Jason's talks. He presented an important and often overlooked topic (street awareness) with serious advice presented in a way that won't cause nightmares but could make all the difference. Our girls aged 12-16 were captivated by his interactive demonstrations, his sense of humour, and, most importantly, by his pertinent and practical advice.*

**| Mr Mark Webster**, Principal - St Margaret's School

*Jason approaches his subject with verve and enthusiasm. His dynamic presentation and humour engage his audience, who join in with delight. He has an enviable knack of adjusting his material to suit all age groups and he makes difficult subjects accessible, ensuring the greater awareness and safety of all those with whom he works. I commend him to any school unreservedly.*

**| Mrs Carole Hawkins**, Head Teacher - Ladymede School

*We were pleased to welcome a highly motivating speaker to the school this week. Jason O'Connor is a Personal Trainer and specialist in self-defence based in London. He gave a supremely engaging and enjoyable talk to the girls on the importance of personal safety. Jason offered strategies on staying safe in a variety of scenarios and encouraged the girls to always use their intuition and good*

*judgement. His message was to highlight the importance of awareness and we are certain that his techniques and strategies will be remembered by all students.*

**| Dr Felicia Kirk**, Head of Sixth Form - Ipswich High School

*We invited Jason in to run 3 workshops and 3 practical sessions with three different age groups; our sixth form, years 10 and 11 and year 9. Jason was great. He encouraged every girl to have a go, participate in a group activity, shout, punch and generally build their self-confidence! He had a great rapport with the girls and gave them plenty of useful and sensible advice to help keep themselves safe in and around London. The girls really engaged with him and his stories whilst serious, were told in an engaging and humorous manner.*

*The topics he covered allowed girls to learn how to stay safe outside of the College, how to keep their possessions safe, and what to do if they were approached by a stranger. Anecdotes were shared with the girls and different scenario's explored. The practical session looked into how to defend yourself in case you are in confronted with a dangerous situation.*

*The girls did not want the sessions to end, they enjoyed it so much. They had a great time and found the information hugely beneficial. Jason was a great speaker and practical teacher. He was very engaging, energetic and enthusiastic and the girls got a huge amount out of his sessions.*

*A great speaker and practical teacher.*

**| Mrs Katharine Woodcock**, Deputy Head - Queen's College London



# INTRODUCTION

Working with thousands of young people, has not only given me the impetus, but a whole world of knowledge. This had enabled me to write something that can certainly assist their knowledge of how to keep out of trouble, and how to deal with certain situations. The experiences and concerns that they have shared with me will be covered in this book.

There are many types of confrontational circumstances we may find ourselves in. Therefore how we respond is crucial for our own safety and well being. This book will give you an elemental foundation on how to be more street-wise.

Having worked in over 80 schools around the UK, whilst talking to groups, I always reiterate that the knowledge shared may not apply to them now, but there's a possibility that it may do in the future. The age group has been between 5 and 18 years old; therefore, areas of this book pays particular attention to this age group.

You may find some points trivial, others obviously common sense and some points may seem repetitive, as certain guidelines can be used for different circumstances. However, every day someone suffers from being a victim. Had the correct precautions been taken, their misfortune may have been prevented.

Adults can also benefit from some of the tips, as we are not exempt from being in awkward and detrimental situations. I encourage parents to spend more time going over street safety tips and not to assume that their child will know what to do. As a result, the parent will alleviate their concerns, knowing that their child is quite capable of dealing with potentially dangerous situations. Simultaneously, the child will enhance their parents' confidence in them.

Skipping chapters of this book is fine, as not everything may be relevant at present. However, the important thing to remember is to have a solid foundation of being aware, knowing what to look out for and then knowing how to respond.

I have purposely left out images and role plays that demonstrate how to physically get out of various attack scenarios. This is because there is more focus on preventative measures. Also, having trained many people in self-defence techniques on a one-to-one basis, you have to actually practise the techniques to get them right. My analogy is that I can tell you how to ride a bike or even how to swim, but unless you are consistently doing it, you will not know if it is correct or how effective you are or whether it actually works.

What is also important to bear in mind is that, even though you may know what to do, it doesn't mean you will, or can actually carry it out; i.e. kick someone in their groin, poke their eyes, or quickly respond if you have suddenly been hit.

You could be great at kicking and punching a bag, but this doesn't necessarily mean you could do it in a real situation.

Normally, whenever I run self-defence workshops or courses, I attack the students so they can use what they have just learnt. One of three things will happen: a) most students will freeze; b) some will improvise, forget what they've learnt and do their own thing; c) they will kick me in the groin or punch me in the face, etc. Luckily, in some ways, the latter doesn't happen very often. But the moral is, unless you are training on a regular basis and are self-confident, you may not know how you would respond if you are attacked, even if you know what to do. The element of a surprise attack can make you forget everything. This is normal.

Another important factor which I find myself repeating all the time to students, is to use self-defence as a last option, if you cannot run away or talk your way out of a potentially dangerous situation.

However, let's remember there are over 500 tips in this book. Once applied appropriately, I'm confident that the knowledge will certainly prevent you from getting into the physical stage.

There are some sensitive chapters within this book. Therefore, the key is to try and prevent these situations from occurring. There are also additional websites for more support which can be found on the useful site page at the back of this book.

After each chapter there are a few questions to test you. Please note, there are no absolute right answers, but in most cases you do have options. These points are meant to provoke discussion between parent/teacher and child. At the back of the book you will also find the answers to the questions given.

Once you establish a good foundation of awareness, with practice, avoiding trouble becomes a lot easier.

The aim and purpose of this book is to provide the knowledge of how to prevent you from becoming a victim of crime.

## SAFETY POINTS THIS BOOK WILL COVER

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# BEING AWARE

*"Seriously, c'mon; I'm not thick"*

*"When I do go out, I'm sometimes like ....errrr,  
hang on; just checking my messages"*



Be alert and aware of your surroundings, such as where the danger areas are, where is the nearest exit, is there anyone looking suspicious, etc?

Practise looking around and making sure you know what's going on in your environment.

Wear comfortable clothing and shoes. If you are wearing high heels, bring an extra pair of flat shoes with you. Attackers will choose who they think will be an easy target. Don't be an easy target!

Carry an old purse, wallet, phone, out of date credit card so that you can give it to an attacker immediately. Try not to keep all your valuables in the same place and keep your address separate from your keys.

Keep wallets in your front pockets. Also keep your bags zipped up and underneath your arm or in front of you. If your bag is on the floor, still keep it closed. Remember that, even though you may not have any valuables inside your bag, the thief may not know.

If you are just holding your purse, do not hold it out in front of you with your arm bent at a right angle. This gives the thief more visibility of your purse. Instead, hold it firmly at your side or the front of your thigh.

Holding an expensive bag may be interpreted that you are wealthy and there are more expensive items in the bag. Therefore, be more vigilant if you are wearing or holding expensive items.

If your rucksack is on your back and you are in a crowd, then hang it over your shoulder instead. Or carry it in your hand whilst you are in the crowded area. Remember, the bag can easily be unzipped from behind or cut with a razor blade.

Carry a personal alarm; these will create a loud noise and hopefully deter an attacker and certainly attract attention. Please note that pepper and mace sprays are illegal in the UK. There are many legal ones you can find on the internet.



Sometimes at night you may be by yourself, the street deserted and there is no traffic. It may be safer to walk in the middle of the road (however, not in front of a car) or the pavement. This helps prevent any attacks from each side of you or from anyone that may be hiding.

If you see a group of youths looking suspicious or something seems strange, cross the road at a fair distance away, look confident and know which way you intend to walk, keep your head up and do not stare at them. If they shout at you to get your attention, ignore them. If in doubt, just run to a safe area.

Don't let verbal taunts or quick movements distract you. Try not to be nervous. Take deep breaths and be as calm and relaxed as possible. Don't panic! Believe in your ability to defend yourself. If in doubt, just run!

If a stranger approaches you calmly and you don't want to talk to them, then say, "Sorry, but I really don't feel like talking; have a nice day or have a good evening". Then briskly move on and cross the road if necessary. Eventually, check to see they are not following you.

Particularly if you are a younger age, be wary of a stranger who approaches you at the swimming baths, playground, park, fairs, arcades, etc.

Never accept any gifts, sweets, offerings of money, a lift or any kind of proposal from a stranger, no matter how tempting.

**| Discussion and agreement with parents and friends**

- The day and time you are going out
- What time you will be home
- Promise you will call if you're going to be late
- Always call if you are in a troubled situation, no matter what time it is
- Memorise your number in case you lose your phone or it is stolen
- Be clear about what areas not to go to

- Avoid walking home alone, especially if it's a long distance and late at night
- Always have your phone and a little money on you

## REMEMBER:

**P** = Plan/Prepare/Prevention

**I** = Instincts/Intuition/Inner voice

**C** = Common Sense

Sometimes parents and peers may seem paranoid about you going out. However, this is partly because they may see the danger signs that you don't. Therefore, it is important that you take responsibility and carry out these various precautions.

## | Ways of practising how to be aware

- When a stranger stands next to you or approaches you and starts a conversation, observe what they look like so that you could describe them later.
- Observe what cars are parked near where you live.
- If you go somewhere and you are not comfortable with the atmosphere, there has just been an incident, or you feel tension, then leave. Do not question the reasons why and it does not matter if you are wrong.
- If you are with friends somewhere, always ask, before or during, what area you are in and the name of the place you are in.
- Whenever you are witnessing a crime or an incident, think about what you would do if you were in that situation. However, more importantly at that particular moment would be to call the police. If the situation does not appear to be that serious, make a mental note of it, but do not get involved.



- Do some physical exercise or any activity that requires you to be alert. This will help boost your confidence, give you more strength to get out of physical situations and enable you to run away without getting puffed out too quickly.
- Join a martial arts class to enhance your self-esteem as well as fitness.  
**See the last question on page 118.**

## | Situations for you to be more aware

- Coming out of the bank
- At the cash machine
- Using public toilets
- Being in an unfamiliar area
- Being alone
- Drinking/socialising
- Trying to find your door keys at your front door
- Searching for your car keys and getting in and out of your car
- Driving, especially if you have recently passed your test and it's your first car
- Hands full of shopping
- Giving beggars money
- Using your phone and listening to music in public

## | Now test yourself

### **What would you do if:**

- You are by yourself and you see a group of youths looking suspicious a fair distance away?
- You are being given verbal taunts?
- You are offered sweets, gifts or money, etc?

### **Referring to the image**

- What 5 things should this young girl be aware of?

[Answers on page 119]

# BEING FOLLOWED

*"Is he following me? Weirdo, so annoying"*

*"Oh my God, I swear this guy is literally following me"*



If you're walking at night, in particular, always check to see that you are not being followed. This may be even more important if you are by yourself. If they look familiar and you are unsure, your safety is more important, so still follow the additional safety points below.

If someone is walking behind you, they may just be going in the same direction as you. However, if you think they are following you, the best thing to do is to cross the street. Once you are across the street, check back and see if the person is still following you. If they are, then cross back. Glimpse at the person and try to memorise their appearance. Do not stare at them, as this may cause unnecessary attention.

Sometimes you may be able to see the person's reflection in a window or their shadow. Here you may be able to identify how close they are to you. However, do not wait until they are that close before you decide to do something.

Find a public area where there are lots of people.

Go into a shop and tell the security, someone in uniform or a member of staff what is happening.

Do not go into the shop just to hide and hope that they will go away. Even if you have started running and lost them, do not assume that they will not reappear, they may still be waiting patiently for you.

If you do ask a stranger to help you, ask a man or woman that has kids with them.

Knocking randomly on someone's door can be risky. Therefore, if you do, never actually go inside. If someone answers the door, pretend that you are looking for your friend and make up a story. But never go in.

Knocking on a stranger's door can also backfire. This is because no one may answer or the person that does open the door may be even more intimidating.

Always call someone to come and pick you up, just in case they reappear. If

you do see them again, then find yourself a safe place to be again and get some help.

Memorise a couple of numbers to call just in case you've lost your phone or your battery has died.

If in doubt, start running. It doesn't matter if they know that you are aware of them. Getting to safety is more important.

Call the police as soon as you can and give them as much information as possible.

If you are listening to music with your earphones, then you may not be aware enough to carry out these vital actions. **See page 35 for mobile phones, iPods and other gadgets.**

If it is raining and you are holding an umbrella, listen out for footsteps that sound very close to you.

If you are being followed by someone in their car, then turn and walk the opposite direction.

Walk in the opposite direction of the traffic so cars cannot pull up alongside you.

If they try to have a conversation with you, either ignore them or tell them to leave you alone or you will call the police. At this point there is no need to be verbally aggressive and to start shouting.

Walk somewhere where the car cannot go. This does not mean down a dark alley, park, block of flats or a cul-de-sac, but where there is a large open space with plenty of people around.

Try to memorise the make/model of the car, colour, registration and description of the person, or just as much as you can. This is to provide the police with as much information as possible. Make a note of it as soon as you can on scrap paper or your phone whilst your memory is still fresh. If you can, without putting yourself in any danger, take a picture of the car.

If you are being followed, never go directly home as you do not want them to know where you live. Also, do not go into an unlit area or dark alley. Never hide amongst some bushes or where it is deserted, or go into a block of flats where there is a dead end with too many secluded areas.

Show that you are confident through your posture. Keep your back straight and head up.

If in any doubt, just start running. If they run after you, run to the nearest crowd and get some help.

*Some time ago, a colleague of mine who lived in a notorious area for trouble was being followed home. Although he was fairly confident within himself, he began to run. When he reached a fair distance he continued walking home. As he got to his front door, the person following him suddenly appeared. Luckily, my colleague had two front doors and somehow managed to get through the second door into his home having pushed off the attacker.*

Always prepare your keys before you get to your front door. Do not to assume the person will not re-appear and still be following you. Continue being vigilant until you are safely at home inside. Then call the police.

## | Now test yourself

### What would you do if:

- You suspect you are being followed, you cross the street and they cross the street as well?
- You are being followed by someone in their car?
- They start to chase after you?

### Referring to the image

- What 3 things expose her to danger?

[Answers on page 119]



# THE STALKER

*"Oh no, not a stalker"*

*"Can't he just leave me alone? He's such a loser"*



A stalker may be someone whom you know or a total stranger. Politely tell them to leave you alone and repeat this by sending them a message via text or email, otherwise you will call the police. This will help as evidence that you did not want to keep in contact with them. If they continue, then carry out the following points below.

If you suspect you are being stalked, report it to the police. Make a note of when and where you have seen the person, along with a description of their appearance.

Continuously change your routine.

Avoid taking short cuts through alley ways, deserted areas, parks or where there are bushes or other possible hiding places.

Make your college, school friends, colleagues and family aware of what is going on.

Ask friends to meet you to go home with.

If the stalker has your number, then record all the times they call and also report it to your phone service provider.

If they call you, do not speak to them and be drawn in to having a conversation. If they call you continuously at home on your landline, then unplug your phone.

If they call you nine times and you answer on the tenth, this will make them think that as long as they are persistent, you will give in. Never have any more conversation with them once you have communicated to them to leave you alone. Let the police do that.

If the phone calls are continuously to your mobile, check the settings to see if you can divert their number or withhold calls to voicemail. If they fill up your voicemail then your phone service provider will be able to identify where the calls are coming from.

If you are using any forms of social media, be particularly careful not to

.....



mention where you are going to be or any clues so that they can find you.

**See page 65 on social media.**

Record any emails, post you may receive or any other evidence that they are stalking you.

Write down any evidence while it is fresh in your mind. Have a specific note pad ready.

Do not confront the person or be aggressive towards them. If you do this, it can encourage them to pursue you or you may end up in trouble.

Confronting them with aggression or getting someone to sort them out may not be the best option. You may also end up being the one worse off, physically and legally.

If they talk to you pleasantly but it's a little too often or you feel uncomfortable, then listen to your instincts. **See page 70 on instincts, intuition and inner voice.**

It is important to take some precautions that have been mentioned. Never assume and hope that the person will simply disappear whilst you suffer with the torment. Otherwise it may go on for a while.

Always discuss the problem with someone so that you don't isolate yourself, become frustrated and carry out inappropriate actions.

*I have been stalked before. To say the least it was extremely annoying and frustrating because I knew that resolving it by violence wouldn't work. I always had to bear in mind that whatever I did could be brought up in court; so, to support my case, collating evidence was crucial. The matter did go to court and the situation was resolved.*

## | Now test yourself

### **What would you do if:**

- The person stalking you is an old friend, ex-partner or colleague?
- They have your number and keep calling you?
- You become really frustrated by what is going on?

### **Referring to the image**

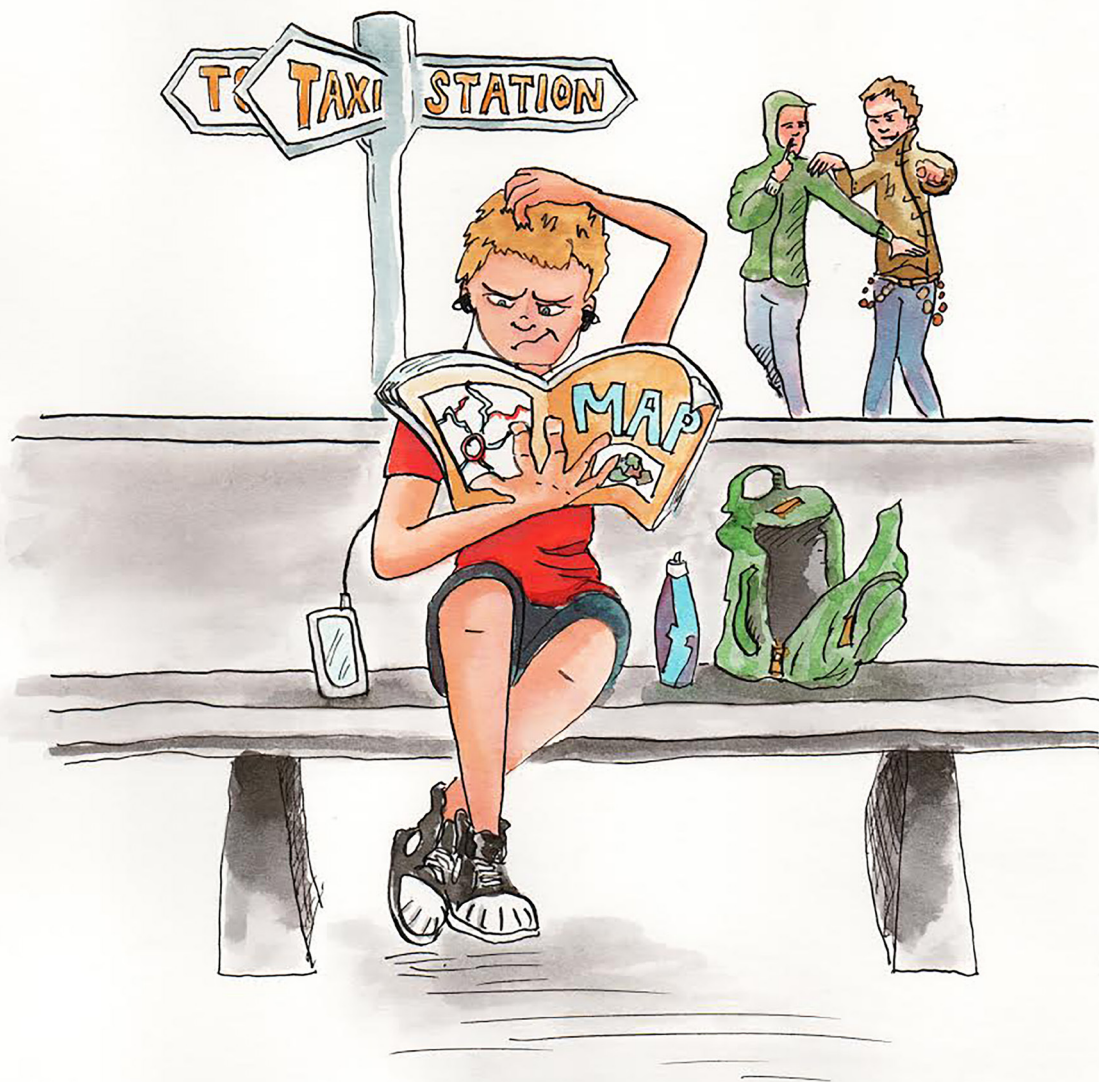
- If you saw the suspected stalker hiding in a bush, would you go into a park, an area where there are lots of houses or an area where there are lots more people?

[Answers on page 120]

# GOING TO AN UNFAMILIAR AREA

*"It's definitely here somewhere"*

*"This is so frustrating"*



At some point, you may have to go to an area you have never been to before. Or you may have to travel alone and therefore be more independent.

Ideally, travel with someone, especially if it's an area you are not too sure about.

Avoid areas that have a reputation for violence, robberies, theft or a high crime rate.

Dress appropriately. Do not show off expensive jewellery, phones, gadgets, etc.

Avoid taking short cuts.

Look like you know where you are going, plan your journey and give yourself enough time to get there.

Walking around with an A-Z book in your hand is a definite sign that you may be lost or new to the area.

Try not to make it obvious if you are using your phone to guide you; therefore, rely on the voice directions.

Even if the person you are visiting is giving you instructions on the phone, it is still important to remain vigilant.

Go into a shop and use your phone's map application for directions or ask the shop assistants.

Try to memorise your route and any sign posts and shops just in case you get lost.

If you do become lost, go to a safe place and contact whoever you are visiting.

If you are driving, try to find a parking space near to your destination. If you are unhappy with where you have parked, then move your car to somewhere else that you are comfortable with. Also make a note of the road where you have parked.

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Always listen to your instincts. **See page 70 for information on instincts.**

Arrange for a licensed taxi to take you there and pick you up at a specific time.

Ask the people or person you are visiting for the safest route there. Also, if there are any specific areas or roads to avoid.

Face oncoming traffic. If you are approached by any curb crawlers, ignore them, do not have a conversation; memorise their details and report it to the police.

If you are asked for the time, directions, a light or money and are not sure about the person, then politely decline. Sometimes this can be a ploy to distract you.

If you accidentally bounce into someone, nudge them or their belongings, quickly apologise and move on.

**| The Postcode**

This rule may simply be for young people in certain areas. Sometimes if you go into an area and you are not recognised, you may be approached by youths and asked what area you are from. If you are not local or are from an area which the person does not like, this may then trigger a physical assault on yourself and in some cases it can be fatal. However, these circumstances are normally associated with gangs.

Therefore, the best ways to avoid this situation, is to not stop and have a conversation with them. If they call you over to them, pretend you didn't hear them or just say sorry you can't stop and briskly walk on.

*When I was much younger, I remember being stopped at an event in Brixton (South West London) around the time of the riots in the mid-80's. A guy much older than me was staring at me and I couldn't understand why. He disappeared for a few minutes then re-appeared with a pit bull*

*terrier. He asked me what area I was from. At the time I was petrified because I don't get on very well with dogs, especially those ones. I replied New Cross (South East London), hoping I'd said the right thing. He then nodded his head and left me alone. Had I said the wrong area, I could have been in a bit of trouble. But acting calm and confident seemed to have worked.*

However, if someone does stop you and asks you a random question, it may be gang rivalry related. If in doubt, start running. Make sure you run into a safe area where there are lots of people. This may not guarantee your safety, but it may deter that person from chasing you.

Remember, you are not obliged to have a conversation with them.

## | Now test yourself

### What would you do if:

- You thought there was a possibility that you would get lost?
- You are asked for the time, directions, a light or money and are not sure about the person?
- You accidentally bounce into someone?

### Referring to the image

- What 3 things expose this boy to danger?

[Answers on page 121]

# MOBILE PHONE & OTHER GADGETS

*"Am I really that bothered? My new phone is awesome"*



Keep your phone out of sight and only use it when necessary when you are in public areas.

Checking your phone constantly is just a habit. Reverse that habit by checking it less frequently or only at specific times in safe areas.

If you are using your phone outside, have your back against the wall so that you can see anyone that comes towards you.

Try not to be using your phone whilst paying for something, using a cash machine, crossing the road, shopping or anything that requires your complete attention.

If you must make that call, keep it brief until you are in a safer environment.

A safer environment is indoors, a busy area with CCTV, with a group of friends, etc.

Try to avoid walking and texting. Otherwise you become an easy victim and won't even notice you are being watched.

If you have just received an important call, you will probably be focusing so much on it and therefore not be aware of your surroundings. Have these important conversations in a safe environment.

If you are running for a bus or train whilst on the phone, tell the person you will call them back.

When using your phone (especially on public transport) try not to talk too loudly and do not discuss your personal details, as you may be over heard by other passengers. This can also be annoying for other passengers, which focuses more attention on you. This also applies to listening to your music too loud when using your phone.

When leaving the train station, do not check your messages straight away. If it is very important, check it on the station platform or concourse. Outside a station is a popular place for thieves to operate.



Particularly outside at a restaurant or bar, do not leave your phone on the table or hang your bag at the side of the chair, or on the floor to your blind side. Keep your valuables at arm's length and where they are visible.

If you have a loud ringtone, you are more likely to cause a distraction. Keep the volume at a reasonable level and set your phone to vibrate.

If you have purchased a new flash phone, don't let everyone know about it. Use it only when necessary.

If your phone is lost or stolen, then call 08701 123 123. This number will assist you to block your phone once you tell the assistant what mobile network you are with.

You may also want to record your phone's IMEI (International Mobile Equipment Identity) number. This can be found in the battery compartment of your phone. Or dial on your phone \*#06# to get the IMEI number.

If you report it to the police, it would be useful to know the IMEI number.

Make a note of the IMEI number for yourself, register it with your service provider and, if your phone is stolen, they will be able to bar its use across every network, immediately. Also provide the details to your insurers.

Use your phone's security lock.

Carry an old phone with you so that if someone demands your phone, you can give them the old one.

If a stranger asks to use your phone (if you're unsure) decline, as it may be a scam and that the number they call will dramatically increase your phone bill. This request may also be a ploy to snatch it as soon as they see it.

If you are going out and you know you are going to be drinking and getting tipsy, carry your old phone with you so that, if it was lost or stolen, it would not be such a great loss.

Back up all your contacts, music and insure your phone.

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If you don't have any money or credit left and you need to make a call for someone to come and collect you, dial 100 and ask for the operator to reverse charge the call.

If someone does steal your phone, contact the service provider, the police so they can give you a crime reference number and then contact your insurers.

Always dial 999 in an emergency. You can also dial 101 to speak to the police if it is not an emergency, or 112, the international emergency number.

**I iPods**

Hide the wires as much as you can (especially if they're white, as they are more noticeable) so that they are not on the outer layer of your clothing.

Use one ear piece and keep the volume down.

Have your music/data/numbers backed up on your computer/laptop at home.

**| Other gadgets**

If you're using other gadgets such as iPads, Kindles or game consoles, make sure you are in a safe environment. Using these gadgets in public takes away your concentration and alerts any thieves.

On many occasions I have seen people wearing earphones that look like ear muffs. The sound may be great, but they also make sure you can't hear your surroundings very well.

There are various sites where you can put your possessions onto their database. This enables the police to access and compare against items that have been found or recovered from suspected criminals.

**See useful sites on page 136.**

**I Now test yourself**

**What would you do if:**

- You need to make that important call?
- You are running for a bus or train whilst on the phone?
- You want to listen to music stored on your phone?

**Referring to the image**

- What 3 things expose this boy to danger?

[Answers on page 122]

# TRAVELLING TO SCHOOL

*"Those guys really get on my nerves"*



If you can, travel with friends.

Plan your journey. Let someone know when you're going, who with, how you're getting back and what time you will be back. Also, inform that person if you change any plans.

In particular for those who maybe still at primary school, wait until you get home before you listen to your music. Only use your mobile phone if it is absolutely necessary.

If you need to make a phone call, do it before you leave the school premises.

Never show off your phone or any other valuables.

How important is it that you take your phone to school? Only take it if necessary.

If you suspect you are being followed, be extra vigilant when you cross the road.

Also be extra vigilant if you are carrying additional things like your gym kit or a musical instrument.

If a stranger starts to talk to you, calmly keep on walking. You do not have to have a conversation with them.

Never loiter in large groups, particularly in areas where there is sometimes trouble.

Joining up with large groups can sometimes make you look suspicious, even if you aren't doing anything wrong.

Dress appropriately, i.e. short skirts may get you the wrong attention. Wearing hooded tops and covering your face makes you look suspicious.

Use a route that is safe, even if it takes a little longer to get home. Therefore, avoid areas such as subways, dark alleys, areas that are not well lit, have been vandalised, or where gangs hang out.

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It is easy to become too relaxed, even if it is a routine you are familiar with. Many victims are still caught on their normal routine.

Whether you are going to school, college or university, make it a habit to be alert.

If you ever dial 999, the operator will ask you what service you require. You then tell them whether it is the police, fire or ambulance services you require.

**| Parent and child agreement**

Have a secret code that needs to be said if anyone other than your parent is picking you up. Although the school should be advised beforehand if there is a change of who is picking you up.

When going out, let your parents know what time you will be back.

Promise that you will call if you are going to be late or if there is a problem, no matter what time it is.

Tell parents who you are with and give them a contact number of the friends you are with.

Always have a phone and money with you.

Memorise a contact number. This is in case you are in trouble and you don't have your phone or the battery has died.

Never lie.

*When I just started secondary school, there were times I had to travel on a long bus journey by myself. Sometimes there was this particular bus conductor that used to talk to me whenever I got on his bus. I didn't understand why this man, who was old enough to be my Dad, was trying to befriend me; it felt weird. So much so, that I avoided him completely. Although he did not try to touch me, I didn't tell anyone, but I should have told someone.*

Always listen to your instincts. If something doesn't feel right, you are uncomfortable and can't explain it, move away and put yourself in a safer area.

If you ever feel uncomfortable with any part of your journey, always share it with someone.

If you ever need to discuss any issues, speak to your friends and family.

**See useful sites on page 136.**

**| Now test yourself**

**What would you do if:**

- You have to stay behind at school and therefore need to travel home by yourself?
- A stranger starts to talk to you?
- On your journey to and from school there is an optional alley that you can pass through. Should you use it?

**Referring to the image**

- What would you do if a group of kids try to distract your attention by calling you names as you are leaving school?

[Answers on page 122]



# PUBLIC TRANSPORT

*"Obviously this guy is well creepy"*

*"I just want to get home"*





## | Travelling by taxi

Always plan your journey, especially if you are by yourself. Store taxi numbers on your phone and make a note of the Transport for London website address. Here you will be able to find information 24 hours a day about local taxi services, buses, trains, etc.

Always use a licensed mini cab or taxi service. Their details will be displayed inside the vehicle. When you call for the service, ask what colour and make of the vehicle you should expect. Some venues will have their own official taxi service where each trip is monitored.

If you are by yourself, text a friend to let them know where you have been picked up. You may also give details about the cab you are in, i.e. the make, model and registration of the car, the cab driver's reference number, etc.

You can even ask the driver beforehand what route he will be taking you.

Be clear about how much the journey will cost and if you need to get some cash on the way.

Never accept any drinks or edible offerings from the driver. Try not to disclose personal details about yourself if you have a conversation. If you do not wish to have a conversation with the driver, tell them politely that you are not in the mood for talking. Alternatively, phone someone and be aware of where you are.

Be aware of the route you are being taken; if in doubt, question it.

Try to be awake and alert throughout the journey.

Do not allow the driver to stop off at the petrol station or go to the toilet before you reach your destination. This can sometimes be a ploy to meet with other corrupt drivers to join you.

If under any threat, always dial 999.

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About 15 years ago, before there were any major campaigns for the prohibition of unlicensed cab drivers, I had a strange experience. I was separated from my friends on a night out. I wasn't driving that night and had to make my own way back home (poor me). I met an old friend who was also on his way home and we agreed to get a cab together. However, there were long waits for the next available cab and we were becoming impatient. Consequently, a stranger on the roadside standing next to his car asked us if we wanted a cab. We obliged and happily got into his cab. The driver then asked if we minded if he stopped off at the petrol station and we agreed that was fine. After filling up his car he demanded that we pay half of the fare. We then objected by saying we were not even half way home yet!

The driver then became irate and started to drive in a hurry. He also began to drive in the wrong direction. I pointed out to him that he was going the wrong way. He then told me that he was taking us to the police station. I couldn't understand why, but just agreed with him for argument's sake. The driver then passed a police station, so I informed him that we had just passed it. He replied that he was taking us to another station.

This then set alarm bells ringing in my head, so I spoke aloud to my friend who was sitting in the front whilst I was in the back and said I was getting out. The driver began to drive even faster, taking back streets and going through red lights. I thought the best time for me to jump out would be when he took a corner and then hope I landed on my feet. I tried to open the door, but it had a child lock. Luckily, I was able to wind the window down, put my arm outside and open the door slowly. I managed to jump out of the car, land on my feet and watch the car disappear with my friend still in the car...

When I eventually spoke to my friend again, he said he had to jump out of the car himself and ripped his clothes in the process.

Reflecting on that incident, I could quite easily have done a number of self-defence techniques, pulled up the hand brake and disrupted his steering, but all of these methods may have jeopardised everyone in the car.

This is a reminder that even if you feel threatened, violence may not be the best option.

But some questions that come to mind even to this today are: where was this man taking us, what was he going to do once he reached his destination, what would he have done to someone who was vulnerable and by themselves, had he had any other victims...?

Never ever get into an unlicensed cab; never!

| Travelling by bus

If it is dark, catch your bus in a well-lit area.

Sit downstairs close to where the driver is. Sitting on the upper deck makes you more vulnerable to danger and further away from help if needed, especially at the back seat on the upper deck.

If you do sit upstairs, sit on the left hand side (ideally at the front), so that you can see who is getting on to the bus. If you see a group of youths who look like they may cause trouble, go downstairs before they get on.

If you are catching a night bus, check the timetable beforehand or make a note of the Transport for London website. **See useful sites on page 136.**

Try to keep awake. Set your phone alarm to go off and vibrate (just in case you fall asleep), but control the volume so that it is not too loud. If you miss your stop and end up being much further away, tell someone you know what has happened. Your very close family and friends probably won't mind if you do that. Also, the danger of falling asleep is that someone may try to take your belongings.

If someone is acting peculiar (such as making strange noises, doing sudden movements, or creating attention), don't totally ignore them. Be aware of where they are; if they are coming closer to you and if you're uncomfortable, then move away.

If there is an incident involving someone else, do not necessarily get physically involved. Instead, alert the driver and make a note of who the troublemakers are.

Would you want someone to help you?

## | Travelling by train

At night especially, use busier stations.

Assess to see if there are any CCTV cameras and stay in view of them.

Look out for the help points that have an intercom which puts you directly into contact with a member of staff. Here you can sound the fire alarm, report an emergency or just ask for information.

If you are by yourself and you see a group that looks like trouble, if there is someone else on the platform, start a conversation with them. You are less vulnerable with company.

In a situation when there is no one around on the platform, but you see a group that looks like trouble, make a note of when your train is due; find a more public area where there are more people, return to the platform as soon as the train arrives.

Sit in a busy carriage or closer to the driver's carriage.

If someone sits next to you and you feel uncomfortable, move to another carriage.

Keep your possessions close to you, handbags zipped and under your arm or in front of you, and wallets in front pockets. This is particularly important if you are getting on a busy train or bus. Pickpockets find it easy to operate in these areas.

If you are suddenly nudged, immediately check your belongings and anyone who may be acting suspiciously around you.

Make a note of where the emergency levers are on the train, so that you have an idea where they are located. Read the instructions so at least you will have an idea and respond faster if you ever have to use it.

If someone is pick-pocketing you, then shout out loud what is happening.

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If they are touching you in a sexual way, follow the same advice as above. Also shout out, pinch or scratch their hand.

If you see someone else in trouble, you do not have to get physically involved, but get a good description of the person who is causing the trouble. Also listen carefully to what is being said. If necessary, pull the alarm when you are at the station and dial 999 if you're on an over ground train. Please note: the driver or guard will only be able to assist you when the train has stopped at a station.

Ask other passengers to assist you. They are more likely to respond to you if you ask, rather than just hoping or expecting help.

If someone is making lots of noises on the train, ignore them and sit somewhere much further away from them.

**I Walking**

You may find yourself in a position whereby you have missed the last bus or train. There may be a long wait for the next one and you don't have any money. You are then compelled to walk. Let someone know what has happened. Keep alert and remember the safety guidelines. **See Chapter 2 on page 23.**

Don't stop to have a conversation with anyone. Your main priority is to get home safely.

**| Now test yourself**

**What would you do if:**

- You don't have the number of a reliable taxi company to call?
- You want to prevent yourself from missing your stop by falling asleep on the bus?
- Someone is making lots of noises on the train?

**Referring to the image**

- What would you do if a strange person sat next to you on an empty bus or carriage?

[Answers on page 123]

# BULLYING

*"Look mate, I really don't want any trouble"*

*"Can we just leave it?"*



Bullying can take place in and out of school in a number of ways, i.e. being called names, threatened, harassed, pushed around, verbally pressured, neglected, forced to give money, etc.

Always tell your parents, teacher or the police. You will then be given the correct support so that the bullying ends.

Keep telling adults until someone listens and takes action to stop it, especially if it is more than one bully.

Avoid being in places alone where bullies are more able to bother you.

Don't be a loner, as this makes you an easy target for bullies. Spend time with groups of friends or try to make new friends.

If they call you names, do not respond by calling them names back.

If you don't want to talk to them, you can always just walk away.

Do not show the bully that you feel hurt, scared or vulnerable. Giving them a reaction that shows you lack confidence may only encourage them further.

Avoid insulting the bully, especially if they have a history of being able to physically hurt you. This can be a conflict that you can't win. So instead of making the situation worse, just walk away.

Tell your friends, parents, school guidance counsellor, head teacher or someone else who can deal with or punish the bully and protect your safety. It's important that you talk to someone about the problem to get it to end. Do not be scared about the bully seeking revenge if you report the incident, they will hurt you anyway and doing what they say doesn't solve your problem.

Stay calm at all times, as this will puzzle and frustrate a typical bully, as their attempts to elicit a reaction from you fail.

Be assertive and stand your ground. You can say "No", "Leave me alone", "I'm going to tell...", etc.



Always follow up. If you say you are going to tell specific people, then do it.

Speak firmly, loudly and with assurance. Stand tall with a confident posture. Slouching shoulders, unable to make sustained eye contact and looking down to the floor are signs of lacking confidence. Bullies usually pick victims who will not stand up to them, as they see you as an easy target.

It's okay to be scared, but don't act afraid, even if you are.

If someone offends you or hits you, this is your chance to stop them before the situation gets worse. Show that you are confident straight away, as it sends a message that they should leave you alone. If you let them get away with it by looking away or ignoring it, it may continue and others may join in. This is particularly important at the early stages if you are starting a new school or college.

If you have met someone you like and they tell you to do things that you are not comfortable doing, you need to stop this. They may demand that you carry out sexual acts, hide drugs or weapons, tell you what to wear and when you can and can't go out, who you can't speak to or threaten to tell others lies about you. It is so important that you tell and discuss the matter with someone who understands your situation and will help and support you. If you refuse to tell anyone, then you will probably be the only person suffering, which will make you unhappy. **See useful sites on page 136.**

To help improve your confidence, take martial art lessons. Go to your local sports centre and watch different martial art classes. Join in and see which one you prefer. Assess to see if the instructor pays attention to all students, there is not any bullying, lots of discipline is shown within the class and the students look like they are enjoying themselves.

These sessions will enhance your self-esteem and the ability to defend yourself and fight properly if necessary. You will learn how to be disciplined and assertive and not to appear to be an easy target.

It is also important to mention that if you do take up a martial art, then not to brag about it, not to tell everyone what grade you are and what you're

capable of doing. This is because some people will challenge you because of it.

NEVER start a fight but if someone is physically hurting you, then use self-defence if you can't run away.

## | Now test yourself

### **What would you do if:**

- The bullying takes place outside of school?
- They call you names?
- You are scared to tell anyone, as the bully has warned you not to, otherwise they will hurt you even more?

### **Referring to the image**

- What would you do if the bully tries to take your bike or any other belongings?

[Answers on page 124]

# EXERCISE OUTDOORS

*"Exercise outside can be fun, invigorating,  
tiring but, attacked outside, really?"*



Jogging outside is normally safe, but you may have to be more cautious, depending on the time of day or area you are jogging in.

Therefore, if you can, jog with a friend, join a local running club or a gym.

You may be more vulnerable if you are running outside alone in the dark or when your route is deserted. This also applies particularly during the winter season, when there are longer periods of darkness in the mornings and evenings.

Plan and choose your route carefully by not running in quiet areas and keep changing the routine. This is to prevent anyone from monitoring your routine.

Vary the times you run and jog in areas where lots of other joggers go.

Let someone know that you will be jogging and for what duration, especially if it's a long run. You may also want to have your schedule written down.

Carry a panic alarm, your mobile phone and keys. Long, treacherous runs may require you to bring a first aid kit.

Ideally, wear something comfortable and possibly something that illuminates in the dark. Also wear clothing that will not bring too much attention to you.

If you must listen to music, use one ear piece with the volume low.

Do not jog to exhaustion. If you begin to feel very tired, slow your pace down and try to pace yourself enough to get home safely. If you are increasing your duration, do so in small increments.

Even though you may be focused on your running, still try to be alert and stop only if you have to.

**| Now test yourself**

**What would you do if:**

- You want to jog but not alone?
- You want to listen to music whilst running?
- You want to carry safety precautions, which are?

**Referring to the image**

- What 3 things expose this girl to danger?

[Answers on page 125]



# CYCLING SAFETY

*"Can't wait to test my new bike"*

*"I'm so excited"*



Always check and keep your bike in good working order. If you need to repair it, the best time is at home rather than on the road; therefore, avoid looking vulnerable and being a potential victim.

Cycle confidently, look like you know where you are going and plan your journey.

Wear a safety helmet and bright colours so that you can be easily seen and have a bell fitted to the bike.

Try to avoid short-cuts or places where there are not many people around.

Find out where the cycle routes are.

If someone wants you to stop for some unknown reason, trust your instincts about what to do. You do not have to stop.

If you must leave your bike anywhere, make sure you have a secure chain and padlock for it. Also, keep it where it is seen by many people passing by.

Try not to leave your bike at the same place at the same time every day.

Park your bike where it can be seen, as people are more likely to see if someone is trying to steal it. Use designated cycle parking areas.

Make sure the locks you use catch the bike frame as well as both wheels and the post, or a thief may steal the bike and leave the wheels behind.

Try not to leave removable items with the bike such as a pump, seat, lights, etc.

Use a “D” lock and try to fill the “D” part of it with as much of the bike as possible. Never leave the lock lying on the pavement, where it can be sledge hammered easily.

Get your bike included in your home contents insurance.

Register your bike frame number. It can be found under the pedals, below

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the seat or near the handle bars. **See useful sites on page 136.**

Be careful when cycling close to drivers.

If you ever see someone trying to steal your bike, call the police immediately and be able to give them as much information as you can, such as a description of the person, where you are, any witnesses etc.

*I was stuck in traffic (or I was traffic) and a cyclist scraped my car as she manoeuvred through the other cars. I did not scream out or even chase after her, because there was not much I could do (legally), although there was a scratch of evidence on the metallic paint. This scenario could easily have turned into a road rage, as you never know whose car you might scrape.*

**| Now test yourself**

**What would you do if:**

- You want to get somewhere quickly via your bike?
- You need to leave your bike in an area where bikes are frequently being stolen?
- You see someone attempting to steal your bike?

**Referring to the image**

- What 2 positive things can you see from this cyclist?

[Answers on page 125]



# GOING ON A DATE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

*"So, you got a date then?"*

*"What am I going to wear? I really can't be asked"*



The following tips are just things to think about and maybe discuss with your friends and not your date.

When you are going to meet someone you do not know well (especially on the first meeting), let someone know who you are meeting, where you are going and the time you expect to be back. Also, plan how you are going to get home at the end of the date.

Ask the person where they will be taking you or what you will be doing. If you are uncomfortable with it, ask them to make another suggestion or you give an alternative.

Be mindful how you dress, as this can send out the wrong messages, i.e. be seen as sexually provocative.

Arrange the date to be in a busy public place.

If your plans change during the date, text someone to let them know.

If you feel uncomfortable with the person, have a few get away excuses ready.

Control the amount of alcohol you drink (if you're old enough) and know your limits.

Watch but be discreet when your date brings you drinks or food to ensure that nothing is added to them. If something tastes odd, do not eat or drink any more of it. However, if you start to feel uneasy or light headed, then tell a member of staff or leave wherever you are as quickly as possible. It is also important to bear in mind that, if any drugs has been added, some are colourless and tasteless.

Try not to leave your drink unattended.

Whether you expect to pay the bill, go halves, or your date to pay the full bill, always have cash or a card with you.

Just because they are charming and make you feel at ease, this does not mean

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that someone is automatically safe to be alone with. Here, you would have to trust your instincts. If in doubt at any point, then rely on your instincts and leave.

After the date, do not go home with someone until you know and trust them. Avoid sharing a taxi home but if this is unavoidable, do ensure that you are dropped off last so that your date does not learn where you live.

Prepare and have your keys ready before you get to your home front door or your car.

If you decide to go home with them, let a friend know what's happening and where you are.

| **Now test yourself**

**What would you do if:**

- You ask the person where they will be taking you or what you will be doing and you are uncomfortable with it?
- You feel uncomfortable with the person?
- You decide to go home with them?

**Referring to the image**

- Is 10.30pm a good time to be getting ready for your date?

[Answers on page 126]

# DATING ONLINE

Set up a separate email address that is specifically for dating purposes. Never use your work email address or an address where you can easily be found or traced.

Or just use the online dating service's email facility.

Avoid giving out your full name, phone numbers, other contact information, ID or any other types of personal information too soon. Do not tell your date where you actually live. Don't feel pressured into doing so just because they give you their details.

If you receive any vulgar comment that makes you feel threatened or uncomfortable, do not respond. Instead, report it to the complaints section of the site.

Keep a record of all your conversations.

Be on your guard if anyone wants to talk about their personal finances and asks about your income.

Build up trust before you meet up. Ask for an updated photo or something that proves they are who they say they are and look like.

Use a legitimate dating website. Do you know anyone else who uses it or has recommended it; is the dating website high on search rankings; is there an address on the website; have you been sent an anonymous email offering their services; does the address represent a business name, etc?

Also, be aware of anyone who falls in love with you quickly, especially after a few messages.

Never respond to a spam email advertising dating for singles.

If you ever use webcam, be careful about what you are doing, saying and wearing. Ask yourself: would it be suitable if all your family and friends saw it.

.....

As always, if in doubt, trust your instincts without questioning them. **See useful sites on page 136.**

*I have to admit, I tried online dating with NO luck. The first of two bad experiences was when a beautiful young lady became overzealous and immediately gave me her number. Feeling suspicious, I investigated her number and found that I was being charged £1 per minute. (Ouch! That hurt my phone bill!). The other case was another beautiful young lady who wanted me to send some money to her in another country to pay for her flight fare. Hmmm, it was tempting, but I couldn't do it as it seemed like a fairy tale. But don't let me put you off it. I was unlucky to come across bogus people and lucky not to fall into an even bigger trap. However, there are many success stories for online dating.*

# SOCIAL MEDIA

Always check your security and privacy settings, so that you know who will be able to view your posts and personal information.

Ask fellow users and friends how they use social media and test sending trivial messages and posts first.

When you show your full name, date of birth and your location, you give away a lot of information to be exploited, so be careful.

Be extra careful if you are making contact with a stranger. Check to see if they are connected to any of your other friends.

Don't tell everyone when you're going on holiday, especially if there isn't going to be anyone at home. It would be safer to show snap shots when you get back from your trip.

Again, be careful what images you put up of yourself and keep yourself dressed if you are using a webcam.

Don't show images of where you live and your home contents.

Be careful when accepting friends and contacts, do you really want to accept someone you don't know anything about?

Never assume that you can immediately trust someone you have just met in a chat room.

If you are going to meet up with someone, always let your parents or friends know. If any malicious comments are made, it is important not to take them personally and discuss it with someone rather than keeping it a secret.



# DEALING WITH AGGRESSION

*"What is your problem?"*



How do you deal with someone who is being verbally aggressive?

In the build up to a violent situation, if you can, try to diffuse it early on before it escalates. Think about not just what you say but how you say it. Remain calm and don't get drawn into being aggressive as well.

Take deep breaths, as this will help to keep you calm. Don't panic and try to think straight.

Say as little as possible, but also sound confident. Being calm makes you more effective in how you respond.

Do not obviously show that you are afraid, even though you may be petrified.

Walk away quickly if you sense trouble is about to begin.

If you start to walk away, make sure that you can still see them. Never take your eye off an attacker or potential attacker until they or you are safely out of sight.

If they are verbally aggressive, do not respond aggressively back to them. If they call you an abusive name and see that it bothers you, they are more likely to continue using those names.

Whilst keeping calm, talk in a confident way and use body language that shows confidence and non-threatening gestures. This may be by standing tall, holding your chin up, standing about one metre away from them, or standing with your hands away from your sides, showing your palms.

If they come up close to you, take a step back.

Try to talk to them by having a casual conversation. Ask them, "Why are you doing this, what will you do with the money, have you got any kids, siblings?" Or even a complete random question such as, "What's your favourite football team?" But do not call them any names or make them feel silly. In addition, the idea is to get them to alleviate their anger and become more confused about what you're talking about.



Don't say things like, "What you looking at? What you going to do about it? What's your problem? You're an idiot". These types of comments are more likely to create an argument.

Never grovel or beg (unless you're going to give them an element of surprise attack), as this gives them more confidence and will encourage them to harm you.

Be sympathetic and pretend you're on their side.

When trying to talk your way out of it, start with words such as:

- I'm really sorry...
- I assure you it won't happen again...
- I didn't mean to disrespect you...
- I think we've had a misunderstanding; what I actually said and meant was...
- I'm really in a hurry...
- My dad is a policeman or a lawyer...

*Many times I have been in situations and just said "sorry" or "sorry mate, didn't mean to disrespect you". It is said in an authentic, convincing and confident way that alleviates their anger. It also prevents them from continuing the argument.*

If you have a younger brother or sister with you, it makes it even more important to carry out appropriate procedures to get out of trouble with no violence.

If you are with a large group, this can give you more confidence, but don't try and get others unnecessarily involved.

If someone bumps into you, you have two main choices:

- 1) continue walking, but use your peripheral vision to make sure the person

isn't coming after you;

2) confront them, this may be passively or aggressively. The latter may easily escalate into a fight, so it's probably better to ask yourself is it worth it?

Carry a panic alarm.

**| Your instincts, intuition and inner voice**

There are normally warning signs that tell us danger is nearby or to be careful about the decision we're making.

This may result in you being or feeling hesitant, suspicious, have a gut feeling, curious, you keep thinking about it, anxious, etc.

Have you ever said or asked yourself:

- "I had a funny feeling that..."
- "I knew it"
- "Come to think of it"
- "Wouldn't it be funny if...?"
- "There's something strange about that person..."
- "It seemed strange but I couldn't understand why"
- "Just don't think it's a good idea"

These are just some examples of our intuition telling or warning us that there is potential danger.

## | Now test yourself

### **What would you do if:**

- Someone calls you abusive names?
- Someone bumps into you?
- Your instincts are telling you to leave, even though the situation seems OK for now?

### **Referring to the image**

- If you accidentally bounce into someone, what's the best thing to say?

[Answers on page 126]

# BEING ATTACKED

*"Seriously, it happened so quickly,*

*I was totally freaked out"*



Normally, things happen so fast and you don't have time to think; however, if you are attacked, then try to defend yourself. There are many weak areas of the body to aim for. **See Chapter 14 on page 76.**

Try to disable your attacker as soon as possible and then run away. Do enough for you to get away.

Always watch your attacker; yell and scream as loud as possible. This may startle the attacker and let other people nearby know you are in distress. It also helps you to be more aggressive if you do have to physically respond.

Whilst making a loud noise continuously screaming, shout out what is happening, i.e. "This man is mugging me!" The more hysterical and loud you sound, the more likely you will get a response or create attention.

If you are being attacked by two or more people, never stand in the centre of them. Instead, position yourself so they cannot attack you from behind.

If you are in an argument with someone on the street, don't stand close to the person you're arguing with. Maintain a distance of at least one metre. This prevents the attacker from giving you a surprise attack such as grabbing or head butting you. If they are going to punch you, the chances are that it will be a wild swing, which gives you the opportunity to move out of the way.

If you ever have the opportunity, just run.

If you are ever in a crime incident, call the police first, then call your family/friends.

## **| What to do if your friend(s) are being attacked**

Normally, there are verbal build ups to fights; this is the best time to drag your friend away. Even if you are not scared, the sensible thing is to avoid it getting worse. This type of situation may be even harder to control if your friend has been drinking. Therefore, try and diffuse the situation even sooner.

.....

Always support your friend(s) as much as you can and maintain your own safety.

If you run off, try and keep at a distance where you can still see them, and get help immediately.

If you get separated, try and make contact with your friend(s) as soon as you can.

Never assume that your friend is or will be OK; make contact with them as soon as possible.

Be extremely cautious if you are physically trying to break up a fight involving your friend.

Never stand and watch a fight. You might get in the way of someone's fist, foot or even a bottle or debris that has been thrown.

If you want to be supportive, call the police.

*Many years ago, when I was 9 years old, my friends and I used to go to an adventure playground where there were always older kids. One day, this 14-year-old got into an argument with one of my friends and started to whack him with a snooker cue. I froze, not knowing what to do, and felt helpless. I couldn't bring myself to run away; I also didn't want to get a hiding with the stick and didn't have the confidence at the time to fight someone bigger and older than me. This was one of the first experiences that taught me that I should learn some kind of martial art. Also how important it is to never desert your friend(s).*

## | Now test yourself

### **What would you do if:**

- You find yourself suddenly surrounded by a group of youths that want to take your belongings?
- Your best friend is being attacked?
- You see someone having a fight? Why?

### **Referring to the image**

- If you are suddenly attacked by someone and it is not your friend playing around, what would you do?

[Answers on page 127]



# SELF DEFENCE

*"So when can I use it?"*





By law, you are allowed to use reasonable force if you are being attacked, but there are many variations to this. So the best thing to do is protect yourself and get away as quickly as possible.

Once you have disabled the person or injured them, if you continue to attack them, you may become liable, the blame put on you and you will end up getting into trouble.

Keep it simple but effective. Do not try anything that is flash. A lot of techniques you see on TV are precisely for TV and may not work in reality.

Respond quickly and then move on quickly.

Do not tell the person that you know some kind of martial art. This will spoil the element of surprise and they may want to challenge you even more.

There are many parts of the body you can aim for, but try to remember G.E.T. = groin, eyes and throat. The groin may not be the easiest target to hit, but at the same time it is a weak area, in particular for men.

Poking the eyes in most cases will cause an immediate effect and an opportunity to get away.

Once you are physically attacked, then kick, knee, elbow, punch, scratch, bite, pinch, dig your nails in and run off as soon as you can. Or use your personal weapons as a deterrent such as keys, umbrella, shoes, spray (pepper spray is illegal in the UK).

If you are not used to punching anything, your hands are most likely to be fragile once you connect with a target. Therefore, rather than trying to punch someone, use the palm of your hand. At the same time, your other effective tools are knees, elbows and feet.

Do not worry about whether the person will get even angrier if you physically attack them back. If they are attacking you, then their intentions are to hurt you.

.....

## | Freezing

There are situations where you can be surprised and caught off guard. You may freeze because you're scared, don't know what to do or even forget. You may not even know how you would respond in a real situation. Hopefully, the knowledge you have read so far, gives you an insight into what you can do. One of the best ways to test this situation is to join a martial art class to develop your confidence and reaction skills.

I always remind people that they normally have two options if they are attacked. You can either do something, which can be to give them what they want, talk your way out of it, run or defend yourself. Or do nothing, which is to be still, freeze and make no attempt to get away and let the person take advantage of you.

*During a self-defence session I was teaching, I was attacking each student to see if they could respond to an attack. There was a small 14-year-old boy whom I grabbed by the wrist. He kicked my other hand, which at the time was relaxed at my side. The kick didn't hurt and I thought nothing of it. As I was driving home, my finger had swollen up, with excruciating pain. I had a hairline fracture in my index finger which took 5 weeks to heal.*

This goes to show that no matter what size you are and who you are up against, it's still worth doing something.

I have known many people to be in a situation where they have been attacked and they knew some sort of martial art but did not use it. When I have questioned them as to why they didn't do anything, their response was either: they realised that the martial art they had learnt was not useful, they froze, they were worried that they might hurt the person who was attacking them, or they might get into trouble, etc.

If someone is attacking you and you have done everything you can to avoid it, DO SOMETHING!

## | Carrying your own weapon

People carry weapons for protection, self-defence, peer pressure, power, control and respect from others, etc.

If you carry a weapon, you are more likely to use it, get yourself hurt and get into trouble with the police.

Carrying a knife or an unlicensed gun is illegal in the UK.

*In my early teens I used to carry a weapon. It was for protection in case I got into any trouble. However, one day my weapon was stolen from me, which was probably the best thing that could have happened. Since then I have never carried a weapon; there is no need.*

## | Now test yourself

### **What would you do if:**

- Someone is attacking you?
- The person has really annoyed you. You have kicked them in the groin, they have fallen but you want to do more?
- You have the urge to carry a weapon?

### **Referring to the image**

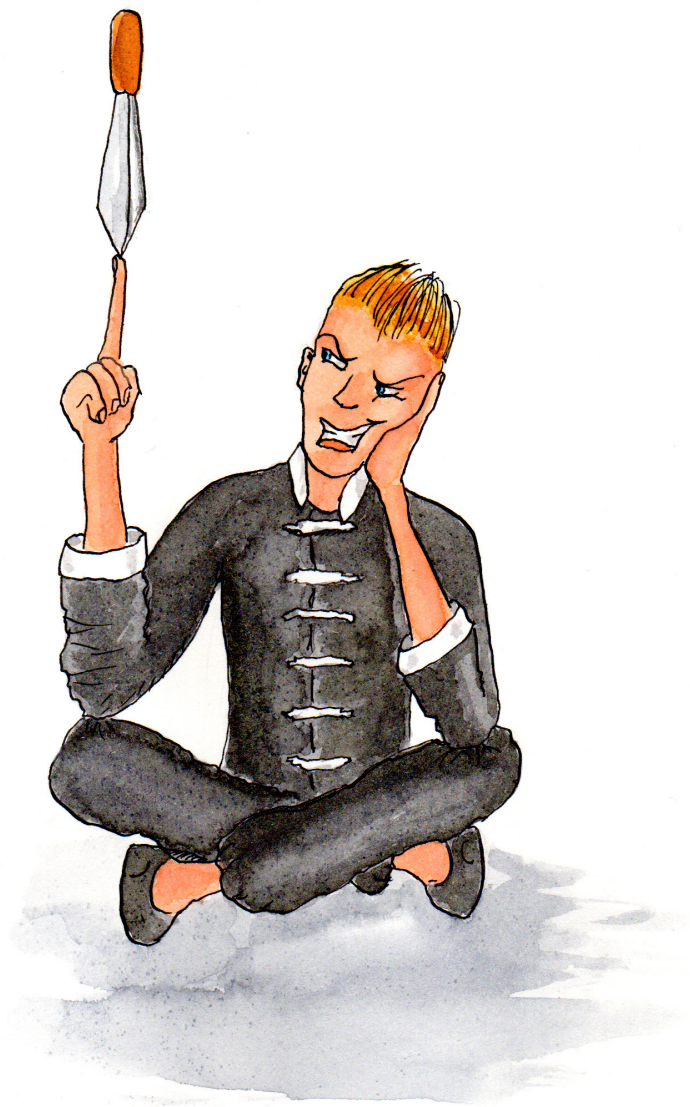
- You have tried to walk and talk your way out of a situation and this person attempts to hurt you, what would you do?

[Answers on page 128]

# ATTACKED WITH A WEAPON

*"Oh my God, he's got a knife. Now what?"*

*"Do a runner"*



## | **Weapon = knife, stick, sharp or blunt object**

Even I would run away if an assailant pulled out a weapon as described above. Just because you know self-defence techniques, one mistake could be fatal for you. Therefore, it is not worth taking the risk.

Normally, if you are being mugged, all they want are your possessions. Therefore, give it to them if they demand it, especially if your life is at risk.

If you have an opportunity, run away. Once you start running, do not stop until you are safe. Do not start running then stop and try to talk, as by this time your attackers will be furious and more likely to harm you.

Do not worry if you can't run fast or if the other person is more athletic than you are: RUN. If you have high heels on, take them off and RUN.

### **Hope I made this point clear: RUN.**

One of the many reasons why I emphasise running is because when I was younger, I never got caught if I ran, regardless of whether the person was older, bigger, faster, or there were lots of them, etc. When you run in these situations, you tend to move a lot quicker than you think.

You may be able to drop what they are asking for and then run. Bear in mind, if it is a phone and the phone smashes, it's no use to the attacker and then they may take any anger or frustration out on you. However, dropping what they ask for gives you an extra few vital seconds to get away.

Sometimes it is not convenient to run or even possible. Therefore, always give the attacker what they want.

If they demand something from you that has sentimental value, ask yourself: is it worth getting hurt badly to save it? Your life is much more precious.

If you have a bag, chair, broom, belt, umbrella, etc, available, hold it out in front of you and use these as a deterrent for your attacker and to keep them at a distance.

.....

If someone pulls out a gun, give them what they want. If you have the opportunity and are far away, keep your head down and run in a zigzag line.

Even if the gun is not loaded or is a fake, still use the same precautions. The attacker doesn't have to be trained to pull a trigger.

*An old colleague, who was about 20 stone, 6' 3", got out of his car to confront someone who had used his parking space which compelled him to use another area. The other person was not frightened at all. All he did was go to the back of his van and pull out a rake. My colleague then promptly got back into his car and left.*

Sometimes it is just not worth it and walking or running away is the best option. Below is a similar situation whereby you have time to think before you act.

*When I was younger and only had the knowledge of one knife technique, I was in a situation where I was being poked with a knife in an environment where I couldn't run. In the attacker's other hand was a stick, and his brother was also present. The one knife technique I learnt wasn't going to help because even if I did block it I would get hit with the stick and by the other person. All I could do was talk my way out of it by confessing that there was a mistake, that I was sorry and that it wouldn't happen again. I was able to leave without a brawl taking place and being stabbed.*

There are extreme circumstances where you can't run, you're trapped, they don't want your belongings, you're being bullied (**See Chapter 8 on page 51**), you can't talk or your talking isn't working. All I suggest is to try to keep calm and hope the matter will resolve itself quickly.

One more extreme circumstance where a lesson can still be learnt.

*This time I may have been about 11 years old. Whilst talking to a group of friends outside, I suddenly felt this horrendous pain in my stomach. As*

*I raised my t-shirt I saw blood. At the time I didn't know, but there was a lunatic in the area that was shooting people with a pellet gun from a block of flats.*

I should have reported it to the police, but the thought didn't even occur to me. In a bizarre situation like that, still report it, as the information you provide may help to find the perpetrator.

## | Now test yourself

### **What would you do if:**

- You start running and then think about stopping to talk to them?
- You are surrounded by youths and one of them has a knife?
- The person pulls out a gun, but you are not sure if it is real?

### **Referring to the image**

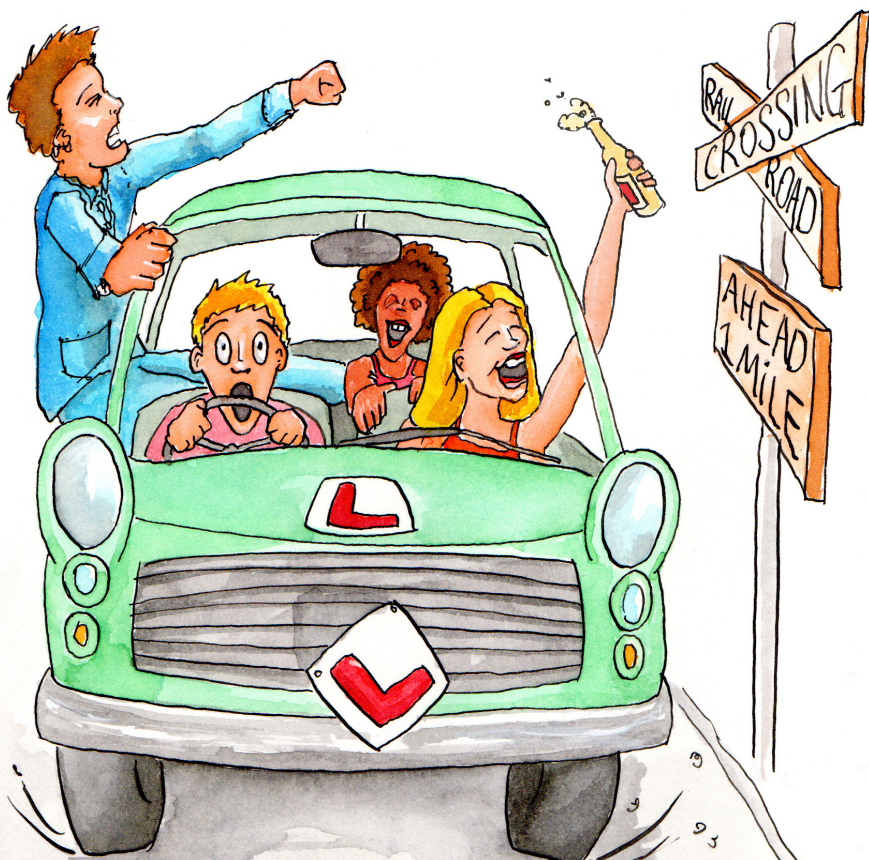
- If you see someone from a distance, and they are playing with a knife or looks threatening with it, what would you do?

[Answers on page 128]



# DRIVING SAFELY

*"This is so weird"*



At present you may be too young to drive, but there's a high chance that soon you will be or travelling with someone who is.

Driving your first car can be exciting and scary. However, there are many safety points to consider.

Do not have your valuables on display in your car whilst driving or stationary. At least keep them on the floor or hidden somewhere else, even if your car has a fitted alarm.

Whilst driving, do not have a conversation on your phone (unless it's hands free) or texting.

Always be checking your mirrors.

When you have parked your car, make a note (or even use your phone) of the road it is on and never park in an area where it is dark and/or deserted.

If you're driving and break down and you're by yourself, stay in your car and wait until help arrives. If someone offers to help, decline and politely tell them help is on its way.

After calling the emergency service, then call a family member or friend.

If you have called a breakdown service and you are female, with children or disabled, then you will be given priority.

Avoid driving with your petrol, water and oil at a low level.

If your car doesn't have built in satellite navigation, invest in a mobile one or have the map facility downloaded on your phone.

Leave a spare phone charger in your car.

If you are on the motorway and you need to leave your car, park on the hard shoulder and put on the hazard lights. If you need to use the emergency phone on the motorway and don't know where you are, the emergency service will know where you are calling from.

.....

Useful equipment to keep in your boot is: a road map or atlas, blanket, coat, warning lights, torch, first aid kit and a give way triangle.

Obviously, do not drink and drive; and if you feel tired, always take a break.

*I was 17 when I brought my first car. As I drove it out of the showroom, within 15 minutes I lost control and crashed it. The engine size was a lot bigger than the car I learnt in (I was gutted). A few months later I was out night clubbing and parked up on a back street where there wasn't much light. I came back to my car and it had been broken into and the contents stolen. A couple of years later someone crashed into me. I pulled over to a side road to sort things out. They carried on driving and disappeared for ever. Other than that, I've been all right.*

Simple precautions can make a huge difference to your driving experience.

**| Now test yourself**

**What would you do if:**

- You have valuables on display in your car?
- You break down and you are by yourself?
- You don't have a built-in satellite navigation in your car?

**Referring to the image**

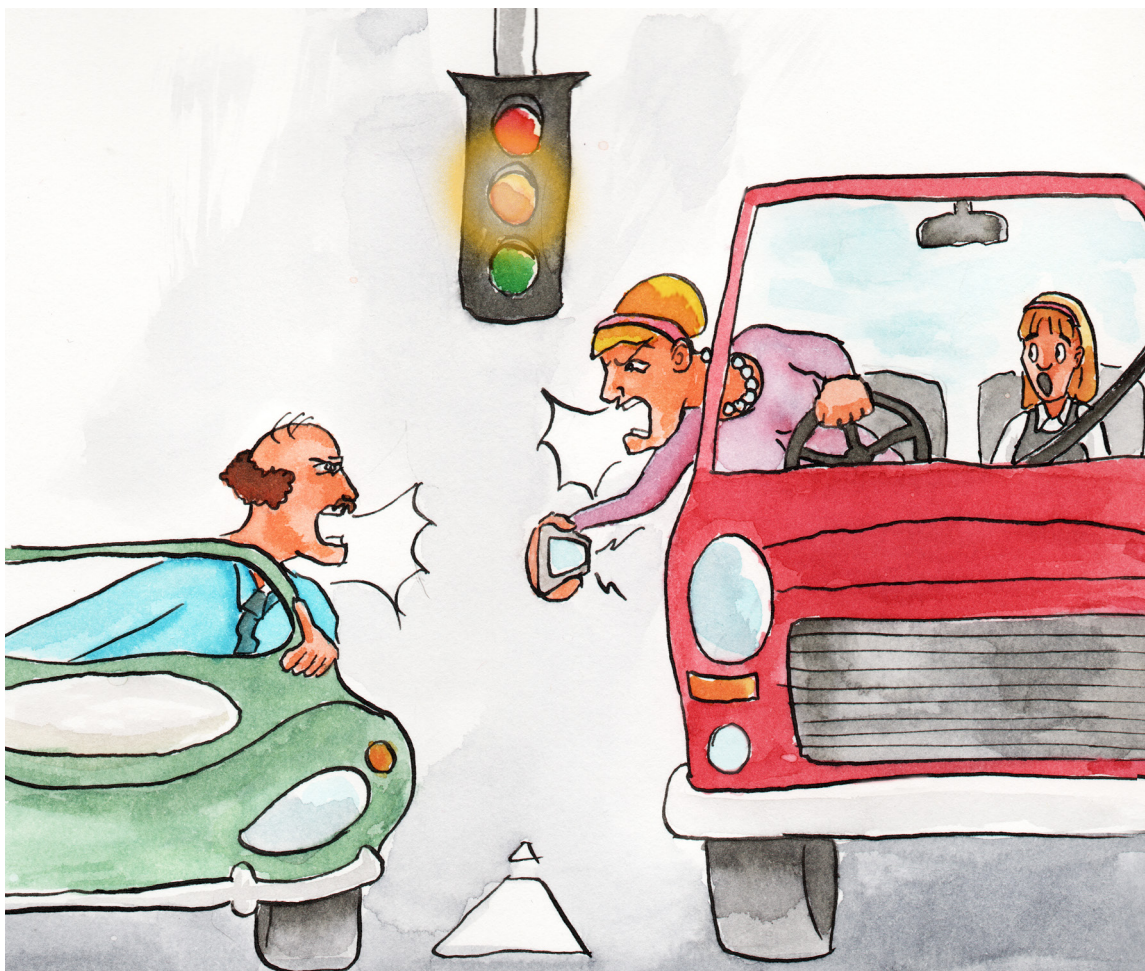
- If you don't feel confident driving, what would you do?

[Answers on page 129]

# ROAD RAGE

*"Stop stressing me out; I can drive you know"*

*"Are we there yet?"*





Road rage is extremely common. People’s moods and stress levels can have an impact on their driving. There may be times when you are in a hurry, have things on your mind or are lost. These are factors which can affect your driving.

If you are driving and someone blocks you in or cuts you up, getting into a state of anger and tooting them ferociously won’t necessarily change anything.

If someone is blowing their horn at you, first assess to see what the reason may be. If you have done something wrong, sometimes apologising verbally or with an apologetic hand gesture can ease the tension.

If someone is driving very slowly in front of you, if it is not feasible to overtake them safely, slow down yourself or even pull over for 30 seconds.

If you like playing your music loud (like I do), try not to have it too loud, as this is the ultimate distraction alongside mobile phones. It also makes it difficult to hear any emergency services behind you.

If a car pulls up beside you at the traffic lights, try to avoid sustained eye contact. If you stare back at the driver, then you are more likely to get a response from them. At the same time, make a descriptive note of them.

Don’t make any abusive hand gestures, as this may only infuriate the other person. Remember that they could be having a very bad day (I know it’s not your problem), but sometimes anything could trigger them off.

If you start swearing at someone and they return the abuse, this can easily lead to physical confrontational road rage.

Keep a distance between cars that enables you to get away, reverse or manoeuvre easily if necessary.

Always keep your car doors locked. Make it a habit that as soon as you get into your car, you lock the doors first and then put your seat belt on.

When running late, it may seem like you stop at every traffic light and have

the slowest driver in front of you or a learner driver. Take deep breaths, slow down, count to 10, pull over for 30 seconds, or try whatever method to see what works for you that alleviates anxiety.

If someone gets out of their car, always stay inside your car. If you want to communicate verbally with them, then lower the window down no more than one inch. This is to prevent them throwing anything at you or even grabbing you; simultaneously you will be able to hear what they have to say.

Do not get out of your car to approach them or stick your head in their car window if it is down.

If you are very concerned, then sound your horn to get more attention from the public. Someone may not intervene, but you may gain more witnesses if anything does happen.

If you are involved in an accident and are not injured, take some deep breaths before you do anything else. Assess the other driver to see whether they are all right. If you can see that they are hurt, then dial 999. If they get out of their car OK, when you're ready, also get out to assess any damage. There is no point in arguing who was wrong or right. This is because the insurers will decide. If you are obviously wrong, just apologise. If you think they are wrong, just take down their details. Ensure you include their name, car registration, make and model, their insurers, their contact number, where the accident took place, the time, any witnesses and pictures of any damage. Call 999 if the person becomes aggressive, violent or withholds information.

If you think someone is following you, pull over to the nearest garage and make a note of their registration, car make and model. If you cannot write it down immediately, say it aloud to yourself and keep repeating it so you can easily remember.

Keep two pencils (they should always work) and paper in your car so you can always take down details if necessary.

If someone indicates that there is something wrong with your car and for you to pull over, acknowledge their gesture and only pull over when you get

to your destination or at a petrol station.

*On my way home, I was travelling back on the motorway in an area I was unfamiliar with, using the 'satnav'. I accidentally got into the wrong lane and blocked a motor cyclist in. Although it was a genuine mistake, the motor cyclist was livid. He was riding a Harley Davidson, was about 6' 2", 200lbs, wearing a leather jacket and had a grizzly beard (do you get the picture?). He pulled up at my passenger side and started to hail racial abuse at me. My first thoughts were, or my ego's thoughts were, to get out of my car, check that he was by himself, check for any CCTV cameras, jump over my bonnet and give him a good hiding.*

*I then had a sudden flashback. I was actually on my way home from giving a talk to 100 students about avoiding trouble. I therefore needed to practise what I preached. I apologised profusely and continuously just kept saying sorry, sorry, I'm really sorry. The man then sped off on his bike, no violence, no one hurt, and I'm able to tell this story without any heroics, being hospitalised or having a criminal record.*

## | Now test yourself

### What would you do if:

- Someone is blowing their horn at you?
- You are involved in a car accident, what details would you take down about the other driver?
- You think someone is following you?

### Referring to the image

- If someone is shouting abuse at you, do you shout back?

[Answers on page 129]



# SAFETY AT HOME

*"Surely I'm safe at home? Are you trying to wind me up?"*



Being at home may be one of the safest places to be; however, there are still precautions that should be made.

Particularly at night, if you don't have a burglar alarm, use the chain and bolt if you are indoors.

Use your peephole or have one fitted if you don't.

If you have no peephole and live on one floor, shout out "Who is it?". If in any doubt, do not answer the door.

If you live in a house, or are able to see who is knocking your door from the window upstairs, open your window from upstairs and look down to see who it is. Then again shout out "Who is it?" or "Who's there?".

If you live in an apartment where there is an intercom system, support yourself and neighbours by making sure the door is always closed. Also agree with your neighbours not to allow anyone unfamiliar in. In addition, be friendly with your neighbours, even if it means just saying hello.

Anyone from the utility services will be able to provide ID. They may have their company business vehicle outside and would normally have made an appointment with you. You can also take down their details and ask the company for verification.

If in doubt, never open the door. Contact the utility service to verify their visit.

If someone you don't know knocks on your door asking for help, say that you will call the necessary emergency services to help them.

Do not leave any spare keys under your doormat or any other close hiding place.

If someone breaks into your home and you are indoors and awakened by the disturbance, do not approach them. Shout out so they can hear you and switch on the lights. Try and get a good description of them, the direction they are going and whether they have a partner in crime. Dial 999.

They will probably try to get out as quickly as possible so therefore do not try to tackle them. DO NOT confront them; they may be as startled as you and just want to get out. However, if they do attack you then try to defend yourself.

Once they have gone, do not touch anything, as the police will need to identify any fingerprints and assess your home for vital clues.

Keep all your valuables insured (and serial numbers noted) and make sure any music, images or files are backed up.

Also, make sure that if you are insured, your policy covers you if your belongings are lost, stolen or damaged.

Submit your details to your insurance company or the National Mobile Property Register. **See useful sites on page 136.** Here you can log all your valuables' serial numbers so that if they are recovered the police will contact you to return them.

Do not keep large amounts of cash at home.

Avoid getting into any altercation outside or near your home; this is to prevent any reprisals if someone knows where you live and wants revenge.

*One night, about 3 o'clock in the morning, I heard a loud banging which sounded like it was coming from my front door downstairs. At first I thought I was dreaming, but the noise became persistent. Then I started to think that someone was trying to kick my door in. I began to wonder who was after me, or why would the police want me? I immediately leapt out of bed and grabbed a tool from under my bed. I didn't want to suddenly rush downstairs to confront whoever it was, without knowing if they had a gun, any other weapon or how many people there were. So I looked from my upstairs window to see who it was. I then saw a police officer talking and walking towards someone who was kicking my neighbour's door. Apparently, it was a drunken person who couldn't remember where they lived and was kicking many doors. Someone had already alerted the police.*

Even though by law you are allowed to protect your property, it's still important that you deal with the situation tactfully and cautiously.

| **Now test yourself**

**What would you do if:**

- Someone is breaking into your home whilst you are there?
- You get an unexpected visit from someone from a utilities service?
- You arrive home to find your door wide open?

**Referring to the image**

- If someone knocks on your door and looks suspicious, should you still open your door?

[Answers on page 130]



# SOCIALISING

*"Yaay! I'm having a wicked time"*

*"Before you party and party and party...."*



Plan how you are getting there and especially how you are getting home.

Have a plan of action with your friends in case anything goes wrong.

If someone is talking to you and you are uncomfortable with them, politely wish them a pleasant evening and rejoin your friends. Go to the toilet or inform a member of staff if they continue to bother you.

Always watch out for each other.

Have a back up plan confirming where to meet if you lose your friends.

If you have anything in the cloakroom, start queuing before everyone else does at the end. This prevents long waits where you may easily lose each other. It also enables you to have a quick and safe get away.

Do not carry too much cash with you and make sure your phone is fully charged.

Always be aware of where your valuables are.

Always use a taxi or licensed minicab when leaving and arrange for them to pick you up at an agreed location. **See Chapter 7 on page 44** for transport safety tips.

If you're wearing high heels, carry a pair of flat shoes in your bag.

Carry some form of ID with you.

Make it a rule that you always text or call your friends when you are home safely.

If you are old enough to drink, try not to leave your drink unattended in case drugs are added to it. Do not leave it if you are going to the toilets or smoking outside. Ask your trustworthy friends to watch it for you.

It would be helpful if a member of the group does not drink in order to keep an eye on the others.

Know your alcohol limit and stick to it. Waking up in some stranger's bed, not

knowing how you got there or home, how you got all those bruises, getting text messages from people you can't remember, throwing up on people and being totally unaware of it, can't be that much fun, can it?

If someone offers you a drink and you are unsure, do not accept it; if you do, then do not drink it. Alternatively, accompany them to the bar to make sure you get the drink you asked for.

If you feel unwell, tell someone immediately in case your drink has been spiked. Symptoms may be loss of limb control, amnesia, slurred speech or difficulty remaining conscious.

Remember that some date rape drugs are tasteless and colourless.

*Whilst on holiday, a friend of mine befriended some local residents. They decided to go back to my friend's hotel for some drinks before moving onto another social event. The residents insisted my friend drank a particular can of beer. Not being suspicious, he willingly drank the beer and then after a while felt dizzy. He passed out and regained consciousness not knowing how long he had been out for. The next thing he realised was that the residents were going through his belongings. Luckily, he was able to get up and restrain them. They eventually fled empty handed.*

Although this happened abroad, it could happen anywhere. Always listen to your instincts.

*I have a confession to make. When I was 12, the grown-ups in my family were having a party. I smuggled a can of beer into my room without anyone noticing. I drank all of it at once on an empty stomach (come on, I was young). I then became mortified when I realised that I couldn't walk back to the kitchen. I have never had a can of beer since. Yes, I am weak when it comes to alcohol, but I definitely know my limit.*



## | Drugs

When you are on the social scene you may be tempted to take some drugs. This may seem appealing at first, but it is important to remember that you don't miss what you haven't had. It can also be very harmful and sometimes fatal.

It is important to choose your friends carefully. If they are taking drugs then you may also be influenced to do it and then feel obligated to join in. It may also become a social habit which can last a long time.

Eventually, it may become a habit with so many disadvantages and adverse effects, short and long term.

These include: depression, paranoia, sleeping problems, nausea, severe anxiety, financial deprivation, becoming violent, committing a crime, losing friends, etc.

You may be tempted to use drugs for many reasons. If so, then please contact any of the relevant websites on the useful sites page.

## | Now test yourself

### **What would you do if:**

- Someone is talking to you and you are uncomfortable with them?
- Someone offers you a drink and you are unsure about them?
- You want to get a taxi?

### **Referring to the image**

- What would you do if you were having a great time and tempted to have lots of alcohol?

[Answers on page 131]

# USING THE CASH MACHINE

*"I was like, get some cash yeah and he was like...."*



Some of you may be thinking I haven't got a debit or credit card, so why would I be at a cash point? I totally agree, especially if you're about 10 years old. However, within time, you probably will and some of you will have one earlier than others.

So when you do use a debit card, if you are unhappy with the location of a machine or uncomfortable with the people nearby, do not use it.

Thieves will target their victims before they even withdraw their cash. So be vigilant about anyone or groups acting suspiciously or loitering.

Some people are courteous and will stand a fair distance behind you whilst you are using the machine. If they are too close, cancel the transaction.

Stand close to the machine and use your hand to cover the number pad when tapping in your pin number.

Do not be distracted when you are using the machine. If someone tries to make conversation whilst you are using it, then cancel the transaction. This also includes not having a conversation on your phone.

Wait for your receipt to come out, put it away quickly or discard it.

Withdraw large amounts of cash in a safe environment. The sound of lots of cash being dispensed can cause unwanted attraction.

Try not to walk around with large amounts of cash on you.

If you are with someone, don't have a conversation about how much money you are withdrawing. This applies if there are other strangers around at the time who may be listening.

Do not walk away counting your money; be discreet and count it whilst you are at the cash point or when you get to somewhere safe.

If you are paying for something in a shop and a mobile device is to be used, hold the device close to you. Cover and tap your pin at the same time. Some of the devices give you the option of removing it from the holder to tap in your details.

Remember, you also have the option of obtaining smaller amounts of cash from certain supermarkets, which offer a cash back system.

*A friend of mine had just withdrawn some cash from a cash machine and someone distracted him by calling him abusive names. He then gave chase and suddenly he was surrounded by five youths. He was hit in the eye with an object and fell. The youths then took off with his cash. It all happened so fast, he didn't attempt to defend himself; he never reported it to the police and therefore the assailants got away with it. Always try and protect yourself if you can (even if it means running off) and also report it to the police. Always be vigilant!*

**| Now test yourself**

**What would you do if:**

- You desperately need some cash but are not happy where the nearest cash point is, as it seems unsafe?
- Someone is standing too close to you?
- There are no cash points around?

**Referring to the image**

- What would you do if you are making a transaction and feel like you are being watched?

[Answers on page 132]



# THE MIND OF AN ATTACKER

*"I knew that; well kind of"*



It is helpful to have an idea of how an attacker thinks. This gives you the opportunity to be a step ahead of them.

**| Thieves and gang members**

Some thieves are bold and experienced enough to carry out a crime by themselves. However, once there are two or more of them, then their confidence is increased and they may become more cunning.

It is possible to identify the ring leader. This may be the one who seems more confident, taking control of the attack, holding a weapon, etc. Therefore, he or she is the one that you may need to be focusing on, talking with or attacking first.

If you are passing a group of youths who look suspicious and they call you over, never go. Look confident and keep on walking.

Never give them the opportunity to surround you. If in doubt, start running.

The list below depicts how you may appear to be looking vulnerable and therefore a target.

**| Looking vulnerable**

- Bad posture showing lack of confidence
- Lots of shopping bags
- Wearing high heels
- Wearing expensive jewellery
- Looking lost
- Using your mobile phone
- By yourself
- Drunk/tipsy/showing effects of drug use
- Bag, wallet or purse exposed

- Not paying attention to your surroundings
- Appearing scared and lacking confidence if approached

Thieves like to operate on those who are in vulnerable situations.

Sometimes they work in groups and choose their spots to make the attack. They may follow you until you get to a quiet street or as you are coming out of the station or a shop. At these times you may have your wallet or purse out, or be about to use your phone.

The list below depicts vulnerable situations.

## **| Vulnerable situations**

- Late at night
- Leaving the train station by yourself
- In an unfamiliar area
- Withdrawing money from a transaction machine
- Getting on/off public transport, especially during rush hours
- In other crowded areas
- Around car parks
- Leaving valuables on the table whilst at a restaurant

## **| They may be distracted by someone who:**

- Responds to them verbally in a confident manner; this could also mean in an aggressive way
- Looks strong and therefore could physically give them a hard time
- Makes lots of noise and attract lots of attention
- Strikes them before they make a physical attack
- Runs off immediately
- Is within a group



# | How to describe an attacker

If you had to make a report to the police, the following points would be useful to remember;

- Sex and age – male or female with approximate age
- Height – short, tall, 5ft, 6ft 1in approximately
- Hair – grey, long, curly, bald
- Build – fat, slim, muscular, lean
- Scars/tattoos – what part(s) of the body, any names/type of images, colours
- Clothes – suit, jeans, hoodie, hat, trainers
- Voice – deep, soft, accent, terminology used
- Accessories – rucksack, jewellery, glasses
- Direction – which way did they go, walking or driving, with a partner

# | Now test yourself

## What would you do if:

- A group of youths calls you over?
- The group starts to surround you?
- You want to identify the ring leader?
- What 3 ways make you look an easier target?
- What 3 situations can make you an easier target?

[Answers on page 132]

# RAPE

*"Look, don't even think about it"*

*"Worst case scenario...."*



Rape or sexual assault is a serious crime. It's really important that you remember it is not your fault, the abuse is wrong and you should always report it to the police.

Many victims know their rapist. They can be a friend, family member, partner or ex-partner.

If you are unsure about someone and something doesn't feel right (**See Chapter 12 on page 67** for dealing with aggression), then trust your instincts.

The signs to look out for are: a sudden change in personality, they become more aggressive and intimidating, being too persistent with their demands, playing mind games and trying to make you feel guilty, making you feel obligated to carry out their request, holding you tightly, not letting you leave, not listening when you first tell them to stop, etc.

Rapes can occur when the victim is intoxicated, so don't consume excessive amounts of alcohol on a date. They can also occur during the drive home, so prepare how you are going to get home.

Don't allow a blind date to pick you up at your house. This is to avoid them knowing so soon where you live.

If someone starts to touch you sexually and you are uncomfortable with it, tell them abruptly to stop. If they continue, leave immediately.

If you are being raped, make as much noise as possible. The rapist will probably tell you that if you keep quiet they won't hurt you. Don't believe them.

Tell them that you are on your period, you are pregnant, you have a sexually transmitted disease, the police are coming, your partner or father is a lawyer; ask them what will their family and friends think? Say anything that may put the attacker off.

Once the attack starts, dig your nails into them, scratch, bite, pinch etc. If they try to open your legs, squeeze your knees close together and turn side

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to side, or kick your legs out in a cycling motion. Keep moving as much as possible to make it difficult for them so you can get away.

Also, try to grab their hair or items of clothing, as these may lead to evidence later.

Don't stop moving, even if you begin to feel tired, as they may also become tired.

After this incident occurs, you may be inclined to have a bath or shower. Refrain from doing this, as you may tamper with vital evidence. Contact the police as soon as possible.

It is so important to report any incident of this nature to the police. This will enable the police to get you the necessary support you will need, and investigate to stop the person from doing it again.

**See useful sites on page 136.**

**| Now test yourself**

**What would you do if:**

- The person seems really nice, but something tells you not to go with them?
- Someone starts to touch you sexually and you are uncomfortable with it?
- You are actually being attacked?

**Referring to the image**

- Why is it important to listen to your instincts?

[Answers on page 133]



# WHAT TO DO IF THERE IS A RIOT

*"Catch you later yeah"*



Fortunately, there are not many riots. Whether you witness a full scale riot or a group of youths causing trouble, the following actions can be taken.

If any such incidents occur, immediately avoid the area, even if you sense trouble is about to begin.

Call the police if you think it is necessary and do not assume someone already has.

Stay indoors, especially if it is near where you live.

Be as vigilant as possible regarding who is causing trouble. Do not blatantly take pictures or record anything where the perpetrators can see you.

Avoid being part of the crowd that wants to see what is happening. Make your own safety a priority.

If you insist on watching, you can make it harder for the police to do their job and it is not worth putting yourself in a vulnerable position.

If you're tempted to join in, you will be caught at some point.

*My mother was on a bus, along with many other passengers, that were struck by the myriad of riots in London in August 2011. They were all petrified of what was going on, wondering if the youths were going to board the bus. To make matters worse, the driver panicked and stopped the bus whilst the passengers were shouting to keep moving. Eventually, he did move on and no one was hurt or harmed. This is a reminder to always avoid the area if you can, as you can unexpectedly get caught up in the fiasco.*

## | Now test yourself

### What would you do if:

- You see on the news that there is a riot in your area? Unfortunately, you need to go to the shop where the incident is taking place?
- You see large groups of youths accumulating with a tense atmosphere?
- You want to see what is happening?

### Referring to the image

- What would you do if it is tempting to get involved with the rioting, especially as you recognise people who are involved?

[Answers on page 134]



# BEING STOPPED AND SEARCHED

*"You're nicked!"*

*"Hey it wasn't me; I was just hanging around and stuff"*

*"It's not fair"*



If you are being stopped and searched by the police, remember they are there to do their job, so always try to co-operate.

Always keep calm.

If you are unhappy about being stopped, do not get angry and start shouting and complaining. Listen to why you have been stopped. If you know you are innocent, then you have nothing to hide.

If they are a plain clothes officer, they will need to show you their ID.

They will tell you why you have been stopped and will also issue you a record of the date and time you've been stopped, the name and station of the Officer. You will be given a slip which shows a copy of their record.

If you are unhappy with the way you have been dealt with, then make a note of their ID number on their shoulder. Also keep the copy of the slip they have given you and report it.

Remember, they have the right to stop and question you with a valid reason.

During a stop and search, the police may ask:

What you are doing? Where have you been? Where are you going? What are you carrying?

They may then search you, your clothes or anything that you are carrying, like a bag, wallet, purse etc.

The procedure also applies if you are driving.

You may be stopped by a Police Officer or a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO).

Always keep some kind of ID on you; this will simplify their assessment process.

If you ever hear these words, "You have the right to remain silent. Anything

you do say can be taken down and used in evidence against you. If you choose to remain silent this too can be used against you in a court of law". Bad news – you're being arrested!

*I have been stopped many times and found that the calmer I am the quicker I can move on. OK, I'll give you just one example. During the bomb scares in 2007, London city was on edge and the police were extra vigilant with increased presence. As part of my job as a Personal Trainer, I wear a tracksuit, trainers, sometimes a hoodie and a rucksack. Combined with my ethnicity, this made me a stereotyped suspect. I felt like I was always being watched and as soon as I made eye contact I would be pulled over. There would be a quick bag check and then I could swiftly move on. As I knew there would be a high chance of being stopped, I always took a deep breath and answered their questions succinctly which enabled me not to have my day disrupted. I have learnt to answer the officer's questions without getting into any arguments.*

**| Now test yourself**

**What would you do if:**

- You are unhappy with the way you have been dealt with?
- You have been stopped whilst driving?
- You hear these words, "You have the right to remain silent. Anything you do say can be taken down and used in evidence against you. If you choose to remain silent this too can be used against you in a court of law"?

**Referring to the image**

- If you have been stopped and feel angry that you have because you have done nothing wrong, how should you respond?

[Answers on Page 135]

# CONCLUSION

So glad you have made it to this point. By now there should be a lot more clarity and knowledge in knowing what to do in certain situations.

Ironically, I have managed to avoid fights since I was in school, although I have been tempted many, many times. Most people who seriously train in martial arts normally have the same form of discipline of not getting into any trouble. Regardless of whether you train in martial arts, you can still have the discipline and insight to deal with various confrontations, without having to spend years perfecting martial arts skills.

It is also important to be around people who do not want any trouble. Remember to stay away from those who always attract it and also troublesome areas. I believe that most situations can be avoided, but there will be exceptional circumstances.

However, now I hope you know “how to avoid trouble”.

# QUESTIONS FROM STUDENTS AGED 9 TO 18

I have visited many schools and always give the students the opportunity to ask random questions about street safety. Below I have outlined some common questions and how I answered them.

## **What's the point of learning self-defence if you don't even use it?**

I had to really think about the way I answered this question as I could understand why the pupil was asking it. My response was that it gave me the confidence to be able to walk or talk my way out of situations. It is also fulfilling to know that I could have done something if I really wanted to, but was able to maintain the discipline which is essential for any martial art.

## **What if the person is too strong?**

With common questions like, what if they're stronger, faster, bigger or I can't run fast, I always remind students that they normally have two options. They can do something or nothing. By doing nothing I mean to just stand there, say nothing and freeze (which is a natural response if you are petrified). By doing something I mean to either run away, shout and scream out or use some self-defence techniques.

## **What if I'm gagged?**

Unfortunately, if you are gagged whereby you cannot scream or move, then you can only hope and escape if an opportunity arises.

## **The nerve spots you have taught me, I can't feel them?**

Even though there are many sensitive spots on the body that cause pain when pressure is applied, not everyone will feel it. I have found that one person in ten may not feel a particular nerve spot. However, if you have

targeted a few of their vulnerable areas and it has not made any difference, run like hell!

**If I was followed, I would knock on a stranger’s door, is that OK?**

Personally, I do not advise this but have heard many people talk about doing it. You could be putting yourself into more danger or there may not be anyone inside the door you are knocking on. Maybe approaching a stranger that looks reliable and decent is a safer bet.

**I practised with my brother and the techniques you have taught me don’t work?**

Even though I try to discourage students from practising on others, many still do. When they tell me it didn’t work, I inform them that when people are expecting you to do something, the impact is not the same, especially if you haven’t got the technique right. In addition, do you really want to punch your Dad in the face, then kick him in the groin?

**What would you do if you were being raped?**

I occasionally get asked this, but what’s more worrying is that it has been asked by 9 year olds. There are many ways of getting out of a rape scenario, but unless you are trained for fighting techniques on the floor, it is not that easy. Therefore, all I can advise is that you make as much noise as possible, kick your legs out in a cycling motion, scratch, bite, pinch, squeeze the groin, poke the eyes and keep moving until you hopefully break free.

**What is the most effective place to hit someone?**

Again, I need to be careful what I tell certain age groups, just in case they want to practise it in the playground. If they are very young I may suggest the groin and shin. The older ones I suggest the G.E.T (groin, eyes and throat), with a few more areas if they seem disciplined enough.

**Can I just head butt them?**

Sometimes the questions I get are what the students have previously been

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taught or seen on TV. Here I remind them to only do what they have just been taught by me, which then gives me the opportunity to correct if necessary. Techniques like head butting, biting and scratching I do not encourage them to practise. This is because some spiteful techniques, although simple and effective, can be difficult to control.

**I am passive, I don't like fighting and I'm definitely not aggressive!**

Sometimes whilst teaching, some students do not put much effort into it. There are many reasons for this, but the one mentioned here was a real issue in this particular session. I reminded them that I am passive too and my aggression is controlled. But, more importantly, if someone is physically attacking you and you have the option of doing something, you can either take the physical abuse, minimise it or even avoid it.

**I want to learn more self-defence; where shall I go?**

These days there are more martial art clubs that incorporate mixed martial arts. These styles are more realistic in defending yourself. However, I remind students that the self-defence course (or workshop) I have just given is a crash course. Therefore, there are a lot more techniques taught in comparison to a normal weekly club format. Nevertheless, it is important to research clubs near to you. Go and watch a class to see if it's what you're looking for and then join in. You have nothing to lose and so much to gain.



# ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

## BEING AWARE Chapter 1

### What would you do if:

1. You are by yourself and you see a group of youths looking suspicious a fair distance away?  
*If you see a group of youths looking suspicious or something seems strange, cross the road at a fair distance away, look confident and know which way you intend to walk, keep your head up and do not stare at them. If they shout at you to get your attention, ignore them. If in doubt, just run to a safe area.*
2. You are being given verbal taunts?  
*Don't let verbal taunts or quick movements distract you. Try not to be nervous. Take deep breaths and be as calm and relaxed as possible. Don't panic! Believe in your ability to defend yourself. If in doubt, just run!*
3. You are offered sweets, gifts or money, etc?  
*Never accept any gifts, sweets, offerings of money, a lift or any kind of proposal from a stranger, no matter how tempting.*

### Referring to the image

What 5 things should this young girl be aware of?

*There is a fire going on, the bank is being robbed, she's crossing the road, her bag is exposed and she is focused on her phone.*

## BEING FOLLOWED Chapter 2

### What would you do if:

1. You suspect you are being followed, you cross the street and they

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cross the street as well?

*If someone is walking behind you, they may just be going in the same direction as you. However, if you think they are following you, the best thing to do is to cross the street. Once you are across the street, check back and see if the person is still following you. If they are, then cross back. Glimpse at the person and try to memorise their appearance. Do not stare at them, as this may cause unnecessary attention.*

2. You are being followed by someone in their car?

*If you are being followed by someone in their car, then turn and walk the opposite direction. Walk somewhere where the car cannot go. This does not mean down a dark alley, park, block of flats or a cul-de-sac, but where there is a large open space with plenty of people around. Try to memorise the make/model of the car, colour, registration and description of the person, or just as much as you can. This is to provide the police with as much information as possible. Make a note of it as soon as you can on scrap paper or your phone whilst your memory is still fresh. If you can, without putting yourself in any danger, take a picture of the car.*

3. They start to chase after you?

*If they run after you, run to the nearest crowd and get some help.*

## Referring to the image

What 3 things expose her to danger?

*She is focusing on her phone, wearing large earphones and wearing gym wear that may cause more attention on the road.*

## BEING STALKED Chapter 3

### What would you do if:

1. The person stalking you is an old friend, ex-partner or colleague?  
*Politely tell them to leave you alone and repeat this by sending them a message via text or email, otherwise you will call the police.*
2. They have your number and keep calling you?

*If the stalker has your number, then record all the times they call and also report it to your phone service provider.*

*If they call you, do not speak to them and be drawn in to having a conversation. If they call you continuously at home on your landline, then unplug your phone.*

*If they call you nine times and you answer on the tenth, this will make them think that as long as they are persistent, you will give in. Never have any more conversation with them once you have communicated to them to leave you alone. Let the police do that.*

*If the phone calls are continuously to your mobile, check the settings to see if you can divert their number or withhold calls to voicemail. If they fill up your voicemail then your phone service provider will be able to identify where the calls are coming from.*

3. You become really frustrated by what is going on?  
*Always discuss the problem with someone so that you don't isolate yourself, become frustrated and carry out inappropriate actions.*

### **Referring to the image**

If you saw the suspected stalker hiding in a bush, would you go into a park, an area where there are lots of houses or an area where there are lots more people?

*Always go to an area where there are lots more people. It is easier to lose them and you can also seek help.*

## **GOING TO AN UNFAMILIAR AREA** Chapter 4

### **What would you do if:**

1. You thought there was a possibility that you would get lost?  
*Look like you know where you are going, plan your journey and give yourself enough time to get there.*
2. You are asked for the time, directions, a light or money and are not sure about the person?  
*Politely decline. Sometimes this can be a ploy to distract you.*

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3. You accidentally bounce into someone?  
*If you accidentally bounce into someone, nudge them or their belongings, quickly apologise and move on.*

### Referring to the image

What 3 things expose this boy to danger?

*There are some boys sneaking up behind him, his bag is exposed and he is listening to his music.*

## MOBILE PHONE AND OTHER GADGETS Chapter 5

### What would you do if:

1. You need to make that important call?  
*If you must make that call, keep it brief until you are in a safer environment.*
2. You are running for a bus or train whilst on the phone?  
*If you are running for a bus or train whilst on the phone, tell the person you will call them back.*
3. You want to listen to music stored on your phone?  
*Hide the wires as much as you can (especially if they're white, as they are more noticeable) so that they are not on the outer layer of your clothing.*  
*Use one ear piece and keep the volume down.*  
*Have your music/data/numbers backed up on your computer/laptop at home.*

### Referring to the image

What 3 things expose this boy to danger?

*He is talking loud on his phone, he is showing off a few gadgets and he is not paying attention to someone that is watching him.*

## TRAVELLING TO SCHOOL Chapter 6

### What would you do if:

1. You have to stay behind at school and therefore need to travel home by yourself?  
*Plan your journey. Let someone know when you're going, who with, how you're getting back and what time you will be back. Also, inform that person if you change any plans.*
2. A stranger starts to talk to you?  
*If a stranger starts to talk to you, calmly keep on walking. You do not have to have a conversation with them.*
3. On your journey to and from school there is an optional alley that you can pass through. Should you use it?  
*Use a route that is safe, even if it takes a little longer to get home. Therefore, avoid areas such as subways, dark alleys, areas that are not well lit, have been vandalised, or where gangs hang out.*

### Referring to the image

What would you do if a group of kids try to distract your attention by calling you names as you are leaving school?  
*Always ignore them and continue your journey.*

## PUBLIC TRANSPORT Chapter 7

### What would you do if:

1. You don't have the number of a reliable taxi company to call?  
*Always plan your journey, especially if you are by yourself. Store taxi numbers on your phone and make a note of the Transport for London website address. Here you will be able to find information 24 hours a day about local taxi services, buses, trains, etc.*
2. You want to prevent yourself from missing your stop by falling asleep on the bus?  
*Try to keep awake. Set your phone alarm to go off and vibrate (just in case you fall asleep), but control the volume so that it is not too loud.*
3. Someone is making lots of noises on the train?  
*If someone is making lots of noises on the train, ignore them and sit somewhere much further away from them.*

**Referring to the image**

What would you do if a strange person sat next to you on an empty bus or carriage?

*If you ever feel uncomfortable, politely ask them to move if they are in the way and sit somewhere else where you feel much safer. This could be near the driver or a completely different carriage.*

**BULLYING** Chapter 8

**What would you do if:**

- 1. The bullying takes place outside school?  
*Always tell your parents, teacher or the police. You will then be given the correct support so that the bullying ends.*
- 2. They call you names?  
*If they call you names, do not respond by calling them names back.*
- 3. You are scared to tell anyone, as the bully has warned you not to, otherwise they will hurt you even more?  
*Tell your friends, parents, school guidance counsellor, head teacher or someone else who can deal with or punish the bully and protect your safety. It's important that you talk to someone about the problem to get it to end. Do not be scared about the bully seeking revenge if you report the incident, they will hurt you anyway and doing what they say doesn't solve your problem.*

**Referring to the image**

What would you do if the bully tries to take your bike or any other belongings?

*Always stand up for yourself and be confident. You do not have to resolve it in violence.*

**EXERCISE OUTSIDE** Chapter 9

**What would you do if:**

- 1. You want to jog but not alone?  
*If you can, jog with a friend, join a local running club or a gym.*
- 2. You want to listen to music whilst running?  
*If you must listen to music, use one ear piece with the volume low.*
- 3. You want to carry safety precautions, which are?  
*A panic alarm, your mobile phone and keys. Long, treacherous runs may require you to bring a first aid kit.*

**Referring to the image**

What 3 things expose this girl to danger?  
*She is running by herself late at night, she is running in a deserted park and becoming exhausted.*

**CYCLING SAFETY** Chapter 10

**What would you do if:**

- 1. You want to get somewhere quickly via your bike?  
*Cycle confidently, look like you know where you are going and plan your journey.*
- 2. You need to leave your bike in an area where bikes are frequently being stolen?  
*Park your bike where it can be seen, as people are more likely to see if someone is trying to steal it.*  
*Use designated cycle parking areas.*  
*Make sure the locks you use catch the bike frame as well as both wheels and the post, or a thief may steal the bike and leave the wheels behind.*
- 3. You see someone attempting to steal your bike?  
*If you ever see someone trying to steal your bike, call the police immediately and be able to give them as much information as you can, such as a description of the person, where you are, any witnesses etc.*



## Referring to the image

What 2 positive things can you see from this cyclist?

*The cyclist is wearing bright clothes and a helmet.*

## GOING ON A DATE AND SOCIAL MEDIA Chapter 11

### What would you do if:

1. You ask the person where they will be taking you or what you will be doing and you are uncomfortable with it?  
*Ask them to make another suggestion.*
2. You feel uncomfortable with the person?  
*Have a few get away excuses ready.*
3. You decide to go home with them?  
*If you decide to go home with them, let a friend know what's happening and where you are.*

## Referring to the image

Is 10.30pm a good time to be getting ready for your date?

*If you can, arrange to meet your date a lot earlier, especially if you want to be confident in finding your way back home.*

## DEALING WITH AGGRESSION Chapter 12

### What would you do if:

1. Someone calls you abusive names?  
*If they are verbally aggressive, do not respond aggressively back to them. If they call you an abusive name and see that it bothers you, they are more likely to continue using those names.*
2. Someone bumps into you?  
*If someone bumps into you, you have two main choices: 1) continue walking, but use your peripheral vision to make sure the person isn't coming after you; 2) confront them, this may be passively or aggressively. The latter may easily escalate into a fight, so it's probably better to ask*

*yourself is it worth it?*

3. Your instincts are telling you to leave, even though the situation seems OK for now?  
*Always listen to your instincts.*

### Referring to the image

If you accidentally bounce into someone, what's the best thing to say?  
*Sorry.*

## BEING ATTACKED Chapter 13

### What would you do if:

1. You find yourself suddenly surrounded by a group of youths that want to take your belongings?  
*If you are being attacked by two or more people, never stand in the centre of them. Instead, position yourself so they cannot attack you from behind. If you ever have the opportunity, just run.*
2. Your best friend is being attacked?  
*Always support your friend(s) as much as you can and maintain your own safety. If you run off, try and keep at a distance where you can still see them, and get help immediately. If you get separated, try and make contact with your friend(s) as soon as you can. Never assume that your friend is or will be OK; make contact with them as soon as possible. Be extremely cautious if you are physically trying to break up a fight involving your friend.*
3. You see someone having a fight? Why?  
*Never stand and watch a fight. You might get in the way of someone's fist, foot or even a bottle or debris that has been thrown. If you want to be supportive, call the police.*

### Referring to the image

If you are suddenly attacked by someone and it is not your friend playing around, what would you do?  
*If you are being attacked, use self defence.*

## SELF DEFENCE Chapter 14

### What would you do if:

1. Someone is attacking you?  
*By law, you are allowed to use reasonable force if you are being attacked, but there are many variations to this. So the best thing to do is protect yourself and get away as quickly as possible.*
2. The person has really annoyed you. You have kicked them in the groin, they have fallen but you want to do more?  
*Once you have disabled the person or injured them, if you continue to attack them, you may become liable, the blame put on you and you will end up getting into trouble.*
3. You have the urge to carry a weapon?  
*If you carry a weapon, you are more likely to use it, get yourself hurt and get into trouble with the police.*

### Referring to the image

You have tried to walk and talk your way out of a situation and this person attempts to hurt you, what would you do?  
*If you are being attacked, use self defence.*

## ATTACKED WITH A WEAPON Chapter 15

### What would you do if:

1. You start running and then think about stopping to talk to them?  
*If you have an opportunity, run away. Once you start running, do not stop until you are safe. Do not start running then stop and try to talk, as by this time your attackers will be furious and more likely to harm you.*
2. You are surrounded by youths and one of them has a knife?  
*Sometimes it is not convenient to run or even possible. Therefore, always give the attacker what they want.  
If they demand something from you that has sentimental value, ask yourself: is it worth getting hurt badly to save it? Your life is much more*

*precious.*

3. The person pulls out a gun, but you are not sure if it is real?  
*Even if the gun is not loaded or is a fake, still use the same precautions. The attacker doesn't have to be trained to pull a trigger.*

### **Referring to the image**

If you see someone from a distance, and they are playing with a knife or looks threatening with it, what would you do?

*Leave the area immediately.*

## **DRIVING SAFELY** Chapter 16

### **What would you do if:**

1. You have valuables on display in your car?  
*Do not have your valuables on display in your car whilst driving or stationary. At least keep them on the floor or hidden somewhere else, even if your car has a fitted alarm.*
2. You break down and you are by yourself?  
*If you're driving and break down and you're by yourself, stay in your car and wait until help arrives. If someone offers to help, decline and politely tell them help is on its way.  
After calling the emergency service, then call a family member or friend. If you have called a breakdown service and you are female, with children or disabled, then you will be given priority.*
3. You don't have a built-in satellite navigation in your car?  
*If your car doesn't have built in satellite navigation, invest in a mobile one or have the map facility downloaded on your phone.*

### **Referring to the image**

If you don't feel confident driving, what would you do?  
*Ask someone who is an experienced driver to sit with you.*

## **ROAD RAGE** Chapter 17

### **What would you do if:**

.....

1. Someone is blowing their horn at you?  
*If someone is blowing their horn at you, first assess to see what the reason may be. If you have done something wrong, sometimes apologising verbally or with an apologetic hand gesture can ease the tension.*
2. You are involved in a car accident, what details would you take down about the other driver?  
*If you are involved in an accident and are not injured, take some deep breaths before you do anything else. Assess the other driver to see whether they are all right. If you can see that they are hurt, then dial 999. If they get out of their car OK, when you're ready, also get out to assess any damage. There is no point in arguing who was wrong or right. This is because the insurers will decide. If you are obviously wrong, just apologise. If you think they are wrong, just take down their details. Ensure you include their name, car registration, make and model, their insurers, their contact number, where the accident took place, the time, any witnesses and pictures of any damage. Call 999 if the person becomes aggressive, violent or withholds information.*
3. You think someone is following you?  
*If you think someone is following you, pull over to the nearest garage and make a note of their registration, car make and model. If you cannot write it down immediately, say it aloud to yourself and keep repeating it so you can easily remember.*

### Referring to the image

If someone is shouting abuse at you, do you shout back?

*No, be as calm as you can. Shouting back may make the situation worse.*

## SAFETY AT HOME Chapter 18

### What would you do if:

1. Someone is breaking into your home whilst you are there?  
*If someone breaks into your home and you are indoors and awakened by the disturbance, do not approach them. Shout out so they can hear you and switch on the lights. Try and get a good description of them, the direction they are going and whether they have a partner in crime. Dial 999.*

2. You get an unexpected visit from someone from a utilities service?  
*Anyone from the utility services will be able to provide ID. They may have their company business vehicle outside and would normally have made an appointment with you. You can also take down their details and ask the company for verification.*
3. You arrive home to find your door wide open?  
*Once they have gone, do not touch anything, as the police will need to identify any fingerprints and assess your home for vital clues.*

### Referring to the image

If someone knocks on your door and looks suspicious, should you still open your door?  
*No, never open the door.*

## SOCIALISING Chapter 19

### What would you do if:

1. Someone is talking to you and you are uncomfortable with them?  
*If someone is talking to you and you are uncomfortable with them, politely wish them a pleasant evening and rejoin your friends. Go to the toilet or inform a member of staff if they continue to bother you.*
2. Someone offers you a drink and you are unsure about them?  
*If someone offers you a drink and you are unsure, do not accept it; if you do, then do not drink it. Alternatively, accompany them to the bar to make sure you get the drink you asked for.*
3. You want to get a taxi?  
*Always use a taxi or licensed minicab when leaving and arrange for them to pick you up at an agreed location.*

### Referring to the image

What would you do if you are having a great time and tempted to have lots of alcohol?  
*Know your limits and as soon as you start to feel a little uncomfortable, then stop drinking.*

## USING THE CASH MACHINE Chapter 20

### What would you do if:

1. You desperately need some cash but are not happy where the nearest cash point is, as it seems unsafe?  
*If you are unhappy with the location of a machine or uncomfortable with the people nearby, do not use it.*
2. Someone is standing too close to you?  
*Some people are courteous and will stand a fair distance behind you whilst you are using the machine. If they are too close, cancel the transaction.*
3. There are no cash points around?  
*Remember, you also have the option of obtaining smaller amounts of cash from certain supermarkets, which offer a cash back system.*

### Referring to the image

What would you do if you are making a transaction and feel like you are being watched?

*Immediately cancel the transaction and look to use another cash machine.*

## THE MIND OF AN ATTACKER Chapter 21

### What would you do if:

1. A group of youths calls you over?  
*If you are passing a group of youths who look suspicious and they call you over, never go. Look confident and keep on walking.*
2. The group starts to surround you?  
*Never give them the opportunity to surround you. If in doubt, start running.*
3. You want to identify the ring leader?  
*It is possible to identify the ring leader. This may be the one who seems more confident, taking control of the attack, holding a weapon, etc.*



*Therefore, he or she is the one that you may need to be focusing on, talking with or attacking first.*

4. What 3 ways make you look an easier target?

- *Bad posture showing lack of confidence*
- *Lots of shopping bags*
- *Looking lost*

5. What 3 situations can make you an easier target?

- *Late at night*
- *In an unfamiliar area*
- *Withdrawing money from a transaction machine*

## **RAPE** Chapter 22

### **What would you do if:**

1. The person seems really nice, but something tells you not to go with them?

*If you are unsure about someone and something doesn't feel right (See Chapter 12 for dealing with aggression), then trust your instincts.*

2. Someone starts to touch you sexually and you are uncomfortable with it?

*If someone starts to touch you sexually and you are uncomfortable with it, tell them abruptly to stop. If they continue, leave immediately.*

3. You are actually being attacked?

*If you are being raped, make as much noise as possible. The rapist will probably tell you that if you keep quiet they won't hurt you. Don't believe them.*

*Tell them that you are on your period, you are pregnant, you have a sexually transmitted disease, the police are coming, your partner or*

.....

*father is a lawyer; ask them what will their family and friends think?  
Say anything that may put the attacker off.*

*Once the attack starts, dig your nails into them, scratch, bite, pinch etc.  
If they try to open your legs, squeeze your knees close together and turn  
side to side, or kick your legs out in a cycling motion. Keep moving as  
much as possible to make it difficult for them so you can get away.  
Also, try to grab their hair or items of clothing, as these may lead to  
evidence later.*

## Referring to the image

Why is it important to listen to your instincts?

*This may be a sign that danger may occur and that you should act in a  
way that makes you safe.*

## WHAT TO DO IF THERE IS A RIOT Chapter 23

### What would you do if:

1. You see on the news that there is a riot in your area? Unfortunately,  
you need to go to the shop where the incident is taking place?  
*Stay indoors, especially if it is near where you live.*
2. You see large groups of youths accumulating with a tense  
atmosphere?  
*Call the police if you think it is necessary and do not assume someone  
already has.*
3. You want to see what is happening?  
*Avoid being part of the crowd that wants to see what is happening.  
Make your own safety a priority.*

## Referring to the image

What would you do if it is tempting to get involved with the rioting,  
especially as you recognise people who are involved?

*Never get involved. Get yourself to safety as soon as possible.*

## BEING STOPPED AND SEARCHED Chapter 24

### What would you do if:

1. You are unhappy with the way you have been dealt with?  
*If you are unhappy with the way you have been dealt with, make a note of their ID number on their shoulder. Also keep the copy of the slip they have given you and report it.*
2. You have been stopped whilst driving?  
*The police may then search you, your clothes or anything that you are carrying, like a bag, wallet, purse etc.  
The procedure also applies if you are driving.*
3. You hear these words, "You have the right to remain silent. Anything you do say can be taken down and used in evidence against you. If you choose to remain silent this too can be used against you in a court of law".  
*Bad news – you're being arrested!*

### Referring to the image

If you have been stopped and feel angry that you have because you have done nothing wrong, how should you respond?

*Keep as calm as possible and give the details you have been asked. The sooner you do that, the sooner you will be on your way.*

# USEFUL SITES

## **Support for bullying, drugs, abuse:**

[www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)

[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

[www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)

[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

## **Theft of mobile phones, bikes and other belongings:**

[www.immobilise.com](http://www.immobilise.com)

## **Rape:**

[www.rapecrisis.org.uk](http://www.rapecrisis.org.uk)

## **Transport:**

[www.tfl.gov.uk](http://www.tfl.gov.uk)

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## SERVICES

### **Street safety**

Jason can provide your school or organisation, a talk about street safety. The session would be devised specifically for your group.

### **Self defence**

These sessions are for all age groups and levels. The types of techniques taught will be structured accordingly.

For any of the above, please enquire for further information;  
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This book is also available in an eBook version.  
ISBN 978-0-9931963-0-0

Paperback version  
ISBN 978-0-9931963-2-4

[www.howtoavoidtrouble.co.uk](http://www.howtoavoidtrouble.co.uk)

Kosen Publishers PO Box 51194 London SE13 9DL

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*For any questions, reviews, queries or to share an experience, please contact me via the details below.*

*Thank you.*

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