

# INSIGHT

## Personal Safety Australia Newsletter

Feb-March 2007

### FEATURES

*A Time for Resolutions:*  
**Our Resolution**

*We Won't Be Beaten:*  
**Safety When Walking and Jogging**

*What About the Little People?:* **How to Empower Children to Stay Safe**

*Ready to Face the World?:* **Personal Safety Seminars for Year 12 Students**

**Personal Safety Australia**

### MISSION STATEMENT

*To equip, empower and inspire individuals, organisations and their clients to maximise their safety, enhance their wellbeing and advocate the safety and wellbeing of children and other vulnerable groups.*



### A TIME FOR RESOLUTIONS

Happy New Year! It's that time of year when we make resolutions, generally to improve our lives in some way. It can also be a good time to reflect on how fortunate we are, considering the dire straits of others. Here are a few sobering statistics:

- 854 million people across the world suffer from hunger and malnutrition, 2 million more than a year ago;
- Every 3.6 seconds someone dies of hunger;
- Every year 15 million children die of hunger.

*Personal Safety Australia* challenges you to consider New Years resolutions that benefit those in need. We have taken up the challenge and pledge to donate 10% of all income generated to charities supporting children living in extreme poverty.

### WE WON'T BE BEATEN

**Women encouraged to take charge in response to bikeways attacks**

Not many people's lives remain unaffected in some way by the spate of sexual assaults on Brisbane bikeways, parks and footpaths. Countless women have restricted their lifestyle, many eliminating exercise they would have otherwise undertaken, for fear of assault in public areas. Partners, parents and friends are often taking on a protective role of the women in their lives providing warnings of 'dangerous activities', resulting in a heightened fear of crime, lifestyle restriction and a diminished quality of life.

Rather than allowing the fear of crime to impact so extensively on their health and wellbeing, *Personal Safety Australia* encourage women to take onboard a range of preventative measures to increase their feelings of safety when out and about. Suggested strategies include:

- Be aware of what is around you 360 degrees to prevent someone creeping up behind you.
- Attackers target vulnerability, so adopt strong, confident body language and a casual, 'streetwise' appearance when assessing your surroundings, rather than looking paranoid. Walk or jog tall with your head up, shoulders back and look people in the eye, if only for a brief moment, to show you are not intimidated.

## Words of Wisdom

"A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty."

Sir Winston Churchill  
(1874-1965)

"The true measure of a man is how he treats someone who can do him absolutely no good."

Samuel Johnson  
(1709-1784)

"It's not the size of the dog in the fight, it's the size of the fight in the dog."

Mark Twain  
(1835-1910)

- Only engage in activities you feel safe and confident to do. If you don't feel safe walking or jogging alone, don't. Instead consider exercising with a friend or dog or an alternative activity.
- Develop a plan of how you would respond to various contingencies, such as an actual attack or a suspicious person approaching. The best response is what you believe will best preserve your safety at the time. Where possible, running away to a place of safety is arguably the best option. Others include physical self defence, screaming, a verbal response or anything else you can do to distract, deter or disable the attacker.
- Attend a *Personal Safety Australia* **Personal Safety Seminar** to equip and empower you with a comprehensive range of effective preventative and responsive options together with the opportunity to have your questions answered.
- Attend a *Personal Safety Australia* **Women's Self Defence Course** to equip and empower you with a range of effective physical self defence techniques and practical personal safety information to: increase your confidence and commitment to your safety; reduce the risk of attack; and develop the ability to effectively respond, should an attack occur.

**THE FIRST 10 BOOKINGS FOR WOMEN'S SELF DEFENCE COURSES IN RESPONSE TO THIS ARTICLE WILL RECEIVE 20% OFF GROUP BOOKINGS OR INDIVIDUAL COURSE FEES**

Please contact us for further information regarding *Personal Safety Australia* seminars and women's self defence courses.

## Personal Safety Australia SERVICES

### Children's Safety: Protective Behaviours Workshops and Awareness Sessions:

Equipping participants with communication, problem-solving and networking skills to relay to their children and clients to enable them to feel safe and to take effective action in any threatening situation.

## WHAT ABOUT THE LITTLE PEOPLE?

### Empowering children to stay safe

There is nothing more precious or vulnerable to harm than our children. While most parents and teachers have some strategies in place to keep their children safe, are they effective?

#### **Dangerous messages:**

Research indicates almost 90% of child abuse is perpetrated by a person known to the child, including immediate and extended family members, family friends and acquaintances. This fact highlights the ineffectiveness of the popular 'Stranger Danger' message, which also prevents the assistance of potentially 'good strangers' in an emergency. Another well-intentioned message, but one fraught with danger, is the instruction given to our children to do whatever an adult tells them to do.

### **Child Protection Policy Development:**

Maximising the safety of children in care and providing a supportive work environment for staff and volunteers by implementing policies and procedures that: minimise access for child abuse offenders; and deal appropriately with abuse or suspicion of abuse that may occur.

### **Recognising and Reporting Child Abuse Workshops:**

Increasing awareness and enhancing understanding of the surrounding issues to enable participants to recognise and report child abuse and to implement preventative measures to protect children in their care.

### **Women's Safety:**

#### **Women's Self Defence Courses:**

Incorporating practical, non-strength related, physical self defence techniques and preventative and responsive safety strategies to gain defensive skills, maximise safety and increase confidence.

### **The Right Message:**

So what is the right message to pass onto our children to protect them from potential threats to their safety? Firstly, it is vital to teach children that they have a *right to safety*. They need to *identify when they are not feeling safe* ("early warning signs") and be equipped with *communication and problem-solving skills* to deal with these situations. Brainstorming possible situations together with a range of potential options to feel safe again is a good way of broaching this issue. Children also need to be aware of who to approach for help in an emergency and should be encouraged to develop a 'network' of trusted adults to ensure help is always at hand.

Parents, teachers and carers should be aware of *methods used by paedophiles*, as these incredibly calculating people groom parents as well as children to ensure they escape detection. Tragically, paedophiles are often the most trusted and highly regarded people in a school community. An awareness of *physical and behavioural indicators of abuse* is also important to ensure abuse is quickly detected and stopped. The value of parents having *open communication* with their children cannot be overstated. Children who feel comfortable to talk with their parents about sensitive matters are more likely to disclose abuse quickly. Finally, for parents, teachers and carers, the ability to pass on the above-listed *Protective Behaviours principles* to children is vital. These principles include acknowledging a child's right to safety, an awareness of early warning signs, strategies to deal with emergencies and developing a network of trusted people. Research evidences the significantly greater success of programs which involve children receiving a reinforced message from both parents and teachers.

Children's organisations can maximise the safety of children in their care with *effective policies, procedures and staff selection and training practices*. Staff training should include recognising and reporting child abuse and Protective Behaviours principles to convey to children in their care.

### **Training Opportunities:**

*Personal Safety Australia (PSA)* provides a range of training workshops to ensure parents, teachers and carers are equipped, empowered and inspired to reduce the risk of harm to children in their care and empower children with communication and problem-solving skills to deal with any threat to their safety. These workshops include:

- Recognising and Reporting Child Abuse Workshops (3hrs);
- Protective Behaviours Information Sessions (2-4hrs); and
- Protective Behaviours Presenters' Training Courses (1 day).

PSA can also assist organisations with child protection policy development. For further information please contact us.

### **Resources:**

A range of excellent resources based on the international child abuse prevention program Protective Behaviours (PB) is also available to assist parents, teachers and carers with conveying the 'PB' message. One of the best sources is: [www.protective-behaviours.org.au/orderform](http://www.protective-behaviours.org.au/orderform).

## **Workplace Safety:**

### **Workplace Bullying Prevention Workshops and Awareness Sessions:**

Raising awareness of the workplace bully and dynamics of bullying in the workplace to address this behaviour appropriately and prevent it from occurring.

### **Dealing with Aggressive and Difficult Clients Workshops:**

Equipping clients in customer service roles with a range of communication and problem-solving skills to maintain their personal composure, safety and wellbeing and provide an excellent standard of customer service when dealing with difficult and aggressive clients.

## **Safety for Everyone:**

### **Personal Safety Seminars:**

Incorporating preventative and reactive strategies to deal with any threat to one's safety including: at home, in the workplace, out and about, in the social scene, on public transport and in the car.

## **Ready to Face the World?**

### **Personal Safety Workshop for Year 12 Students**

Personal Safety Australia has recently developed a one day Personal Safety Workshop designed to provide Year 12 students with practical personal safety strategies to maximise their safety and preserve their wellbeing as they embark on a life after school.

The workshop aims for participants to be able to:

- Implement a range of preventative strategies to enhance their wellbeing and reduce the risk of their safety being threatened;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the key factors when dealing with confrontation;
- Demonstrate an awareness of, and the ability to implement, a range of responses to confrontation, including various physical self defence techniques; and
- Adopt environmentally-specific personal safety strategies to preserve their safety: at home; out and about; in the car; on public transport; on the social scene; and in the workplace.

Toowong College Students undertook the workshop in their final week of school 2006. Student evaluations included: 'Very enlightening'; 'Entertaining and informative'; 'Very helpful for me and my future'; 'I learned a lot'; 'It was so much fun learning how to keep yourself safe'; 'Very useful, I'm sure this will be used sometime in my life'; 'Very well done, made it feel real'; 'This was top stuff'; 'Interesting and fun'.

Please contact us for further information or bookings.

## **CONTACT US**

Please contact us if you:

- Would like further information regarding PSA services;
- Wish to subscribe or unsubscribe to *Insight*, our free e-newsletter; or
- Have a personal safety question or topic of interest you would like included in a future edition of *Insight*.

**Tel/Fax: (07) 3379 4475**

**Email: [admin@personalsafetyaust.com](mailto:admin@personalsafetyaust.com)**

**[www.personalsafetyaust.com](http://www.personalsafetyaust.com)**



