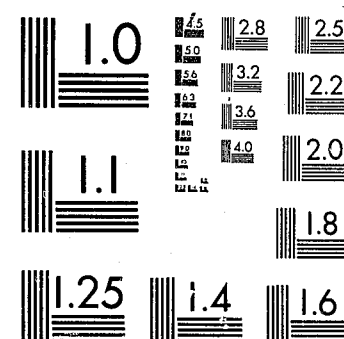


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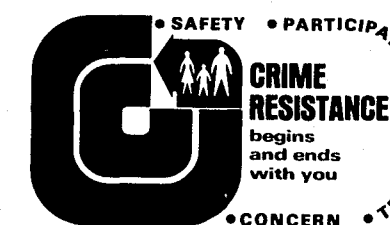
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**A WAY TO  
PROTECT YOUR  
FAMILY  
AGAINST CRIME**



FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

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### WHAT IS CRIME RESISTANCE?

The men and women of the FBI believe that there is much that you can do to protect yourself and your family from crime. You can begin by adopting a personal attitude of crime resistance.

For you and your family, crime resistance is a way of reducing your chances of becoming crime victims. Simply stated, it means making things tougher for criminals by removing their opportunity to commit crime.

This booklet explains how to develop an anticrime strategy for your family through use of a "Family Council." It also discusses many of the crimes that threaten most families and offers tips which you can use to protect yourself and your family from crime.

### HOW TO CONDUCT A FAMILY COUNCIL ON CRIME

Simply get together all of the members of your family to talk over the weaknesses which make it easy for a criminal to make you or your family a crime victim. In addition, talk about how to make yourselves safe from crime in your home and discuss how each of you can protect yourselves against crime as you go about your daily routines -- commuting to and from work, traveling in the family car, walking to school, and shopping.

Use your Family Council to insure that the whole family becomes wary of the crimes of burglary, robbery and car theft. Children, especially, should be cautioned about criminals such as molesters and bike thieves. Women should be alerted to the dangers of purse snatchers, molesters and rapists. The elderly should be warned about swindlers and pick pockets.

Once members of the family have determined their weaknesses, each should become wary of those circumstances which create opportunities for criminals. By adopting certain preventive measures, most of which are simply common sense, you and your family can greatly reduce your chances of falling victim to crime.

Each member of the family should bear certain responsibilities for insuring that other members of the family, as well as the family's residence and property, are safe from criminals. Children, for example, can be given the responsibility for seeing that doors and windows around the home are secure at night or when the family is leaving the residence unoccupied. Adults and older children can be responsible for teaching and reinforcing crime resistance practices in younger children.

After developing an anticrime strategy for your family, become responsibly involved with your police and with other families in your neighborhood to form a united front against crime.

### SOME CRIME RESISTANCE TIPS FOR YOUR HOME

Think about the shock, the heartbreak and the anger that you would experience if you came home one evening and found that your residence had been burglarized. Think about your valuables -- including mementos that you've collected and cherished over the years -- being stolen or wantonly destroyed. Think about the possibility of walking in on a burglar while he was ransacking your home at night!

Trying to scare you? No. Just hoping to make you aware that you could very well become a victim of burglary. It is essential that you think about -- and, more importantly, practice -- techniques that can help you reduce the possibility of becoming a burglary victim!

Most burglars won't take a second look at a house or apartment that appears to be occupied. To discourage these criminals from selecting your residence as a target, consider using the following antiburglary procedures to help create the impression that someone's home when you're out during the day or evening.

- Don't leave messages on the door or mailbox indicating your absence.
- Use electric timers to turn house lights and a radio on and off during evening hours.
- Enlist the help of neighbors to keep mail, newspapers and ads from collecting while you are away.
- Remember that unattended yards and unmowed lawns over an extended period of time are signs that the residents might be away.
- Consider also that when empty trash cans or when no trash cans are set out on collection day, it is an indication that the residents might not be home.
- Advise your local police, as well as a reliable neighbor, when your home will be unoccupied for any length of time and where you can be reached.

In addition to these crime resistance tips, your local police may have other useful antiburglary suggestions.

### MARK MY WORDS -- AND EVERYTHING ELSE, TOO!

Many police property rooms are crammed full of valuable items that the police have recovered but are unable to return to the legal owners. TV sets, tools, stereos, bicycles and other costly items remain unclaimed because they do not bear any identifiable marking. Had such property been etched with the owner's state license number, it may have been by-passed by the thief in the first place. But, if it was taken by a burglar and recovered by the police, the officers probably would have been able to locate the owner immediately. Think ahead. Consider these simple crime resistance rules about marking your property.

- Etch a number that is unique to yourself. Your state's abbreviation and your state driver's license number is readily traced back to you.
- Mark your items permanently in a place that is readily visible and difficult to remove.
- Mark all your valuables. TV sets, weapons, jewelry, and stereo sets are popular targets of thieves. Small items such as rings and watches can be marked by a jeweler without defacing the property.
- Photograph antiques, coins, stamps or other similar valuables that would be defaced by etching numbers upon them.
- Keep an inventory of your property. How and where you marked it, as well as any manufacturer's serial numbers on the items, should be included on that inventory.
- Contact your local police department for information on etching tools, window stickers advising thieves that your property is marked, tips on where and how to mark and other details of property identification programs.

The marking of property, like all of crime resistance, begins and ends with you!

- Don't be an easy mark -- when marking is so easy!

### CRIME RESISTANCE IS KID STUFF

Yes it is! Nothing is more valuable to us than our children. So why not insulate them from becoming the criminal's victim as much as possible by applying some basic -- yet very practical -- crime resistance rules where the youngsters are concerned.

- The old rule about never taking candy from a stranger -- is still a good rule -- tell them not to take candy, a ride or even a walk with a stranger -- tell them why!
- Tell them never admit to being home alone -- on the phone or to someone at the door.
- Give the school instructions only to release your children to the people you have designated in writing -- in case of emergency.
- Locate and point out "block parent" or similar homes in the neighborhood or along the route to school to your children and explain the meaning of such refuges.
- Select one or two neighbors who will provide sanctuary for children should any threat or emergency arise while you are away from them. Provide that neighbor with phone numbers where you can usually be reached. Offer to do the same for those neighbors.
- Instruct children to look out for each other and to tell you when something unusual or suspicious occurs.
- Report suspicious individuals or vehicles lurking in areas where children play to the police. Obtain license numbers and descriptions whenever possible.
- Be prepared to assist a child who appears lost or in trouble. Do not hesitate to notify the police if you think a child needs assistance.

Wanting to protect our children is part of loving them. Crime resistance is part of protecting them. Don't throw this message away -- keep it where you will see it -- pass it on to other parents.

### WHEELING AND STEALING

Thinking back a few years bicycles were, for the most part, considered toys. When one disappeared, it was usually because some youngster took it for a joy ride and failed to return it. Unfortunately, that's often not the case today. Many bicycles are hardly toys. They are quite valuable, especially those equipped with finely machined gears and accessories. As a result, bicycles are stolen in great numbers by professional thieves.

Bicycles are often stolen off of lawns or porches and out of unlocked garages at night. School yards and playgrounds are popular targets of bike thieves during the daytime.

Don't make it easy for a bike thief to steal your bicycle. Practice these few crime resistance reminders which could help you to "keep on biking."

- Register all bicycles with the appropriate local agency. Permanently etch your driver's license number preceded by your state's initials on the frame of all your family's bicycles. This will make it identifiable to a police agency. Report the theft of any bicycle to the police.
- Don't leave bicycles on the lawn, on the porch or in an unlocked garage -- especially at night. If a bicycle must be left unattended anywhere, it should be secured to a solidly fixed rack or tree with a good quality chain and lock. The chain should not be looped just through a wheel but through the frame and both wheels.
- Regularly remind your children that just as bicycle safety rules will reduce the chances of their being hurt in an accident, crime safety practices will reduce the chance that their bike will be stolen.
- Encourage school and recreation authorities to provide secure bike racks located where they can be viewed by employees of the facility.
- Keep your wits -- and keep your wheels.

### DRIVING THE CRIME RESISTANCE MESSAGE HOME

An Ohio couple was kidnapped while stopped at a traffic light -- their car was not locked. Following a shopping trip, a Florida woman was assaulted as she returned to her car -- parked in a dimly lit back street. These, as well as many more kidnappings, robberies, rapes and other crimes, befall victims as they leave or enter their cars or are simply traveling from one place to another in their cars. Some simple crime resistance rules can be followed which could very well keep you from becoming a victim while using your car:

- Keep your car doors locked while traveling.
- Keep your car doors locked when parked. This helps to keep intruders out. Look into your car before entering.
- Do not pick up hitchhikers. It should not be necessary to caution on this point, but every day some kind motorist ignores this rule and becomes the victim of a violent crime perpetrated by a hitchhiker.
- In the event you observe an individual in need of assistance on the highway, look for the police or a telephone or business establishment from which you could obtain assistance for the stranded party rather than stopping in an isolated area to assist him.
- Consider gas cap locks and hood locks, as well as auto theft alarm systems, as additional safeguards.
- Park in well-lighted areas and avoid parking in remote or secluded streets whenever possible.
- Leave only your ignition key when parking your car in a public lot. Do not leave your house key which could easily be copied.

Be aware. There is more to car safety than watching the other car -- watch yourself!

### YOUR CAR -- ONE IN A MILLION?

If your car was stolen in 1975, then it was one in a million! More than one million motor vehicles were reported stolen in 1975! While this crime does not strike with the terror of a violent crime, it often means a great financial set back to many who have to bear the loss themselves. It is at the very least a great inconvenience to return to a parking lot after a family outing and find that someone had stolen the family car! It must be an even greater inconvenience when the police advise that the car has been recovered but was seriously damaged by a teenage car thief who was barely able to drive.

Over half of the persons charged with auto theft during 1975 were under 18 years of age. Most of them were amateurs whose thievery efforts could have been foiled by some simple crime resistance techniques. Here are a few techniques which, if practiced, will greatly reduce the possibility that you will be the victim of car thieves.

- Don't leave the keys in the ignition. Many car thieves just keep looking in parked cars until they find one with the keys in the ignition -- and they steal that one.
- Lock your car when you park it. This won't keep a determined thief out of it but an unlocked car is an easier target and a thief will often bypass one that is locked.
- If you must leave your car parked for a prolonged period of time -- remove the rotary cap or coil wire or some other necessary part of the engine so that it cannot be driven off.
- Don't let strangers take your car for a "test drive" unaccompanied if you advertise it for sale. Many such prospective buyers just never brought the car back.
- When buying a car make sure that title papers and vehicle identification number (VIN) are in order. If doubt arises about the validity of the title or the ownership, contact your local police who can advise you about your state's legal requirements concerning the buying and selling of a motor vehicle.

It only takes an extra minute to practice anti-auto theft measures. Take that extra minute to protect your car when you park it -- if not -- it may be a long walk home!



### CON ARTISTS -- AND THEIR SCHEMES

One of the most despicable thieves prowling our streets today is the confidence swindler -- a scoundrel who often preys on our elderly citizens. Regardless of the number of warnings issued by police departments, many older Americans are still being bilked out of their life savings by con artists using such swindles as the Bank Examiner Scheme and the Pigeon Drop Swindle.

Recognizing the earmarks of these schemes can help you to avoid falling victim to them. Here, then, is how they work.

In the Bank Examiner Scheme, the con artist, posing as a bank officer or a police officer, asks you to withdraw money from your bank account so that he may trap a dishonest teller. After you make the withdrawal, you are to meet the swindler away from the bank and give him the money so he can "compare the serial numbers" and arrest the employee. The money, according to the con man, will be immediately redeposited to your account. Once you give the money to the phoney officer, he goes back into the bank -- and then out another door with all your money. Of course, he does not work for the bank. He makes his living cheating people.

The Pigeon Drop is usually worked by two or more con women. The first swindler pretends to find a money-filled envelope lying near your feet on the street. The swindler's partner walks up and demands that the finder split the large sum of money three ways. It is suggested that the three of you put up five hundred or a thousand dollars in "good faith" money. You are selected to hold all the money for thirty days. If no one claims the lost money, the three of you will meet again in the same spot and split the find. You, of course, are to hand your "good faith" money over to the other two women. All the money is wrapped and tied. You are given the envelope that was found. It now actually contains cut-up newspapers, the money having been switched by the swindlers during the wrapping. Of course, by the time you become suspicious and look into the package the con artists are long gone with your "good faith" money. You are the pigeon.

A crime resistance technique that is strongly advocated is to make sure that you and everyone that you know, especially senior citizens, are aware of how swindlers work. Always beware of strangers offering secret get-rich-quick propositions -- deals which must be acted upon immediately. Remember, very few people will give you something for nothing.

### IT'S TO YOUR CREDIT TO BE CAREFUL

Did you ever hear the joke about the store clerk who was so accustomed to taking credit cards that when a customer offered him cash he insisted on two pieces of identification? That story may be humorous but it also reflects the widespread use of credit cards in America today. That widespread use has created a situation that is not so humorous -- the theft and fraudulent use of credit cards costing Americans millions of dollars each year.

There are many ways you can be "ripped off" as a result of being careless with your credit cards. For example, you might pay for items that you did not purchase or receive. Similarly, unless you are careful, unauthorized tips or unexplained charges might be placed on your receipts without your knowledge.

You can avoid such problems by practicing a few simple crime resistance techniques that can help reduce the possibility that you will become the crime victim of a credit card crook:

- Protect your credit cards just as you would your cash. Don't think of them as just pieces of plastic. Report the theft or loss immediately both to the issuing company and the police. Also, immediately notify the company if your renewal credit card doesn't arrive well before the old one expires.
- Be certain that all charge slips are completely filled out and totaled before you sign them. If a corrected credit card receipt is necessary, make sure that the first receipt is destroyed.
- Keep your copy of all charge slips and compare them with your monthly statement to insure that your copies agree with the copies submitted by the companies where you made purchases.
- Always determine that the credit card being returned to you after a purchase is your card and not one that may be expired or on the "hot list."

With credit cards, just like so many other instances in which an easy opportunity to steal presents itself, a thief will find a way to cheat the citizen who is careless. Don't provide that easy opportunity the thief is looking for. It will be to your credit to be careful.

### CRIME TAKES A VACATION -- WITH YOU!

When you go on vacation, make sure that crime doesn't travel along with you. Unless you take the proper precautions, crime can become an unpleasant part of your vacation. When the summer months arrive, criminals seem to work harder and the number of crime victims increases. To insure that you can fully enjoy your vacation, here are some suggested strategies that should make you and your family less vulnerable to crime. Before you even leave home, however, make sure that your residence has that "occupied-at-the-moment" appearance while you are gone.

- As you travel, try to avoid having that "I'm a tourist" look about your car. Vacationers' autos are frequently victimized because thieves know that travelers often leave valuables in their vehicles. Maps and travel brochures left on the dash and seats are telltale signs that the occupants of the car are on vacation.
- Clothing hanging in a car or luggage on the back seat is an open invitation to car prowlers. Even though it only takes a thief a very short time to break into the trunk of a car, your spare clothing and luggage are safer in the trunk. Whenever possible, do not leave those items in your car while the vehicle is unattended.
- Don't carry an excessive amount of cash. If it is necessary to travel with a large sum of money, don't display it openly.
- Don't leave valuables in your hotel or motel room. Most lodging facilities will provide a safe place to secure your valuables while you are staying in their accommodations.

Be careful, not careless. Enjoy a carefree vacation.

### UP A CREEK WITHOUT A PADDLE -- OR A MOTOR OR A BOAT!

All too often boat enthusiasts find themselves literally up the proverbial creek -- or on some other body of water -- without a paddle or worse without a motor or even a boat. The reason -- simple carelessness.

Boaters know and practice water safety rules. Most obey the navigational laws. However, many fail to utilize crime resistance techniques in pursuing the pleasures derived from boating. If practiced diligently, a few preventive measures could well prevent the theft of a boat or valuable accessories such as motors, life jackets, oars and CB radios.

Small boats such as canoes, rowboats and motor boats are easy to steal and thereafter to conceal and transport away. If it is necessary to leave such a craft unattended, secure it with a good lock and a tempered steel chain fastened to a solidly fixed post or a tree. Remember, the boat is only as secure as the object to which it is chained.

Larger boats should also be securely fastened when possible. In addition, by removing a necessary part of the motor, you make it difficult for someone to drive the boat away, to steal it or take it for a joy ride.

Permanently mark your craft with the boat's name and your driver's license number preceded by your state's initials. Do the same with all your accessories. This may deter a thief from taking them. Even if it doesn't stop a thief, it will make the property identifiable if it is recovered by the police. It is also important to keep a record of all the serial numbers and descriptions of radios, motors and other gear for the purpose of identification in case of theft.

When you have to leave your boat unattended, take a few minutes to lock up your gear and accessories. Putting items in the trunk of your car is much safer than leaving them lay around loose in and around your boat.

Do not hesitate to call the police and report suspicious persons loitering or prowling around boats or marinas.

Remember, too, that your local police department can offer additional suggestions to make your boat and boating equipment less vulnerable to thieves.



### SNATCHING THE OPPORTUNITY FROM A PURSE SNATCHER

A lot of school-aged young people are alert, agile, and fast on their feet. Excellent qualities for someone on the athletic field? Absolutely, but they are also talents being misused by many youths to make a dishonest dollar -- purse snatching. These youthful criminals are constantly looking for an opportunity -- a chance to grab an unguarded purse from an unsuspecting person and to take off with it after meeting little or no resistance. To discourage these young criminals and to avoid the loss of valuables and the headaches involved in replacing driver's licenses and in obtaining new credit cards, keep the following suggestions in mind:

- Don't carry a purse if you don't have to do so -- consider carrying valuables and other necessary items in a pocket instead.
- Don't make yourself a particularly desirable mark by displaying a lot of money or leaving your purse open so that money or valuables are plainly visible.
- Be particularly alert when leaving a bank or other location where people frequently obtain money or something of value.
- Don't put your purse down and allow your attention to be diverted from it. When carrying bags, packages or other items, carry your purse between these items and your body.
- When walking, carry your purse close to your body with your hand over the clasp to make the purse harder to grab and therefore less inviting. Shoulder bags should be carried in much the same manner.
- Avoid wrapping a purse strap around your wrist or arm -- if the purse snatcher struggles for the purse, you might be injured because you can't free yourself (don't risk serious injury to thwart a determined criminal).

Be conscious of the security of your purse at all times. Making your purse a less attractive target for the young purse snatcher will discourage him from victimizing you and perhaps encourage him to use his talents in more legitimate and beneficial ways.

### WALKING AWAY FROM CRIME

Some people are under the mistaken impression that robberies happen only to banks and rapes only to women who pick up hitchhikers. However, that is not the case. Many victims of these crimes are people out for an evening stroll or walking to or from a business appointment at night. The familiar refrain that "it isn't even safe to walk the streets any more" has, unfortunately, proven to be true on many occasions.

Certainly no one wants to yield to criminals by staying behind locked doors. There is a choice and that is to exercise care. Here are a few crime resistance techniques which should be practiced to reduce the possibility of becoming a crime victim when walking at night.

- Avoid walking alone at night. The maxim that "there is safety in numbers" is particularly true on the street at night!
- Avoid walking on dimly lit streets and stay out of alleys. Don't use remote or little traveled shortcuts.
- Walk on the part of the sidewalk close to the street and away from shrubbery, trees and doorways. Sometimes it is even safer to walk in the street rather than on the sidewalk.
- If someone drops you off near your home, have them wait until you are in the house before they drive away.
- Women can carry a whistle or other noisemaker and should sound it loudly if accosted.
- Women should not carry purses openly when walking at night.

Remember, don't drop your guard because you are walking in an area that is familiar to you. Exercise care at all times. Keep crime resistance in mind. Walk away from crime rather than into it!

## CRIME RESISTANCE QUIZ FOR KIDS

### True or False

- (1) Chain the front wheel of your bike to a solid object when you leave it!
- (2) Taking little used shortcuts when walking home at night is always safer because it is quicker!
- (3) "Never take candy from a stranger" is just an old fashioned saying that isn't true anymore.
- (4) A "block parent" is a football play.
- (5) Keeping the doors of the family car locked while riding is only good for keeping you in it!

(Turn this page upside down for the answers)

### ANSWERS

- (1) False. The bike frame must also be chained. (See Page 7).
- (2) False. You are safer on regularly traveled streets, but always remember to be careful of traffic. (See Page 15).
- (3) False. The old rule is still a good rule. (See Page 6).
- (4) False. Specially selected parents who have agreed to aid lost children or those who need help are often called "Block Parents." (See Page 6).
- (5) False. It also keeps strangers out! (See Page 8).

