

Keeping Yourself Safe:

Anti-trans violence awareness and prevention

Safety is an elusive concept. We can feel safe when we might be in an unsafe situation or relationship. We might feel unsafe when we are in a safe situation or relationship. For some transgender people (and for some people of any gender), even stepping outside of the house can feel risky and uncomfortable. For other transgender individuals (and people of any gender), they feel infallible and rarely feel fearful in any situation or location.

There is a very fine balance between being careful and prepared for potential violence (no matter what your gender identity or appearance, age, race, size, or any other demographic, visible characteristic) and living in a constant state of fear. Violence is always the responsibility of the perpetrator and never the fault of the victim. Although we cannot control the behavior of others, there are some simple precautions that can be taken to reduce the risk of some types of violence.

12 things you can do to minimize your risk of violence



Act confident! Stand/sit tall. Move with certainty. Even if you don't know where you are going, act like you do.



Carry a **whistle** or other loud noise-making device when out in public/on the streets. If you don't have a whistle, you can shout or use your voice to make loud noises (e.g. yelling "fire" can get other people's attention).



When in public, move about with a **friend** or in a group of people. Violence is less likely to occur to a group of people.



Choose paths that are well lit and highly traveled by others. It's more difficult to act violently when others can easily see a perpetrator's action.



Make conscious choices about **clothes** and accessories that may restrict your movement. It's important to have personal choice and expression, but also smart to wear shoes you can easily walk in, handbags you can carry without effort, binders that are not so tight you cannot breathe when exerting yourself.



Be alert and aware of your surroundings. Consider not wearing headphones or talking on a cell phone when in public. Be aware of who is around you and where you are headed.

Limit alcohol and drug use. Alcohol and drugs (prescription or non) may dull your senses, your awareness of your surroundings, or your ability to respond. If you are drinking in a public place, always keep track of your glass or bottle.



If you travel by car, make sure it has **ample gas** and is in good working order.



Keep your car and house/apartment **locked**. Again, be mindful of your surroundings when entering your car or house/apartment.



Have a **cell phone** with you, charged and turned on, easily able to dial 911 if necessary. (Many cell phones have a GPS system already installed – so if you do need to dial 911, the emergency response team will know exactly where you are.) If you can't afford a cell phone plan, "disposable" cell phones are a cheaper option.



If you believe you are being followed, go to a **public place** or towards other people (not to your home/apartment).



Trust your instincts. If you feel uncomfortable, find a way to leave the situation or location.



Live... without fear



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