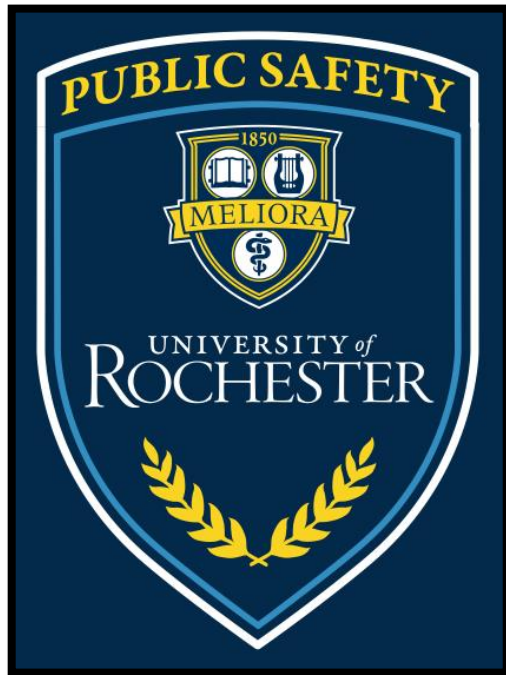


Research Study

Personal Safety During Home Visits



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Learning Objectives

1. Identify Factors That Impact Your Personal Safety
2. Minimizing Risk of Becoming a Crime Victim
3. Planning for Potential Encounters



Your Resources

Emergency & Non-Emergency

- **Local Law Enforcement – 911**

Non-Emergency

- Department of Public Safety 275-3333
 - Documenting events
 - Personal safety plans

University

- Department leaders
- Research Subject Review Board Guidelines
http://www.rochester.edu/ohsp/documents/ohsp/pdf/policiesAndGuidance/Guideline_for_Home_Visits.pdf
- Covid guidelines [https://www.urmc.rochester.edu/coronavirus/coronavirus-research/guidance-for-researchers/human-subjects-research.aspx#Field%20Work%20\(Off-Site\)%20Study%20Subject%20Visits:](https://www.urmc.rochester.edu/coronavirus/coronavirus-research/guidance-for-researchers/human-subjects-research.aspx#Field%20Work%20(Off-Site)%20Study%20Subject%20Visits)
- Employee Assistance Program <https://www.urmc.rochester.edu/eap.aspx>
- University Counseling Center (students) <http://www.rochester.edu/uhs/ucc/>



Bias That Impact Personal Safety

- **Cognitive Biases:** Personal safety is an outcome of decision making. Consciously identifying and considering risk factors before acting will lower the odds of negative safety outcomes over time.

<https://youtu.be/Ahg6qcgoay4>

- **Anchoring bias** - Relies on the first information or first impressions we receive, regardless of how reliable it is.
- **Availability Heuristic Bias** - Making decision based on past experiences, to include what we've seen or heard, but not necessarily a personal story.
- **Selective Perception Bias** - Our brains tell us what to focus on and what to filter out. It's based on beliefs and past experiences.

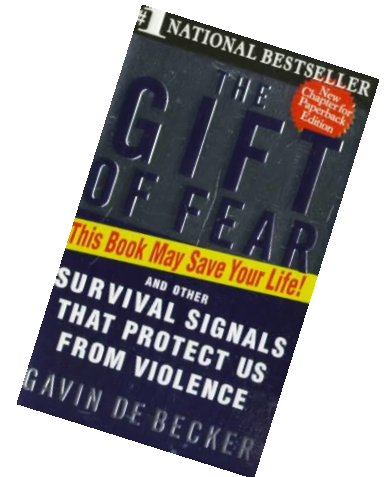


Factors That Impact Personal Safety

Inattentional blindness. Our limited capacity to take in the sights, sounds, and other sensory inputs that bombard the senses every moment causes inattentional blindness. This is a feature of our *intuitive system*. The more sensory inputs, the more likely the blindness. We FILL IN THE BLANKS. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Ymtjy844OE>

SURVIVAL SIGNALS

- Rule of Opposites – list favorable behaviors – pay attention to the opposite
- Forced teaming. This is an effective way to establish premature trust.
- Charm & Niceness. Charm & Niceness are abilities, not character traits. Smiles can be used to mask emotion. Do the words match the actions.
- Look for context. Every type of con relies on distracting us from the obvious, “Do you know what time it is?” Typecasting is a way of forcing an interaction by using a critical description that can be easily disproven, “You’re too important to give me the time!”
- “No,” is a complete sentence. Anyone who ignores this is someone who wants control. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bBProrposzc>



Use All of Your Instincts

Intuition is always right and always has our best interests at heart.

- Fear
- Apprehension
- Suspicion
- Hesitation
- Doubt
- Gut feelings
- Hunches
- Curiosity

Trust what your intuition is telling you



Before you go: Prepare!

- Be mindful of your presence on social media
- Call in procedures
- Know exactly where you are going
- Work in pairs, Visits should be done during daylight hours
- Vehicle maintenance and travel
- Minimize what you bring with you
- Dress professionally and functionally
- Mentally rehearse the visit and what you need to accomplish prior to the appointment
- Have barriers been identified and planned for (spoken/written language/physical abilities, etc.)
- If the researcher is a NY State Mandated Report, how will this be communicated
- Your body won't go where your mind has never been



The home visit

- Arrive on Time. This sets the tone and send an important message of the families value.
- If parking in a driveway, consider backing in. This will make it easier for you to leave.
- Check the surrounding area and activity. If you feel uneasy, do not get out of the car.
- Before getting out of the car, call the study subject and tell them you are outside and coming up to their house. Ask that all pets be put away.



During the visit

- Use basic safety precautions:
 - Ask who else is in the home
 - Evaluate each situation for possible surprises
 - Watch for possible warning signs and have a plan
- Maintain behavior that helps to diffuse anger
 - Ask where they would like you to sit (this tells their comfort level, but this can vary by culture)
 - Present a calm, caring attitude
 - Practice basic de-escalation skills
- Keep an open pathway for exiting. Know how to get out.
- Trust your judgement and instincts. If it doesn't feel right, it isn't.
- If you cannot get back on track, shorten the visit or leave.



Recommend weekly team debriefings

Invite everyone to the conversation and have a questioning mindset

What happened?

A quick re-cap of the incident from various perspectives

Why did it happen?

Were there any indicators?

Where did it happen?

Was there a choice of locations?

If so, was this the safest location, or if in the future can we choose another location?

Who was involved?

Did we have opportunity to remove others who did not need to be involved?

Did we have opportunity to invite others who were not involved?

Is everyone okay?

When did this occur?

Was there an opportunity to delay and call more resources?

How did it go?

What went right, what went wrong, and what are our opportunities for improvement?

Going forward

- Do we need to develop a safety plan?
- Do we need to involve other leadership?
- Use what works and change what doesn't.
- Do we need additional debriefings (this is usually in a more scheduled, controlled, and measured response for emotionally fraught events)



Questions

