

Street Safety

* Assailants tend to prey on people who appear preoccupied or confused, so the primary rule of street smarts is to stay alert and aware of your surroundings.

* When walking, keep your back straight, hold your head high, and take a determined stride. Continually glance to the left and right, so you know who and what is nearby.

* If someone stops you to ask for directions or the time, step away at least two-and-a-half arm lengths, stand with feet shoulder-width apart, speak in a neutral but authoritative tone. Never take your eyes off the person's face and hands. Answer quickly and continue walking.

* Walk in the middle of the sidewalk, facing traffic. Some purse-snatchers ride motorcycles or bicycles.

* Pickpockets operate most successfully in crowds. In a crowd, women should tuck their purse in the crook of their arm and keep it close to their body. Keep a hand over the clasp. It is best not to carry a purse at all if you can avoid it. Don't sling your purse across your chest, a purse-snatcher's yank could cause painful neck injury.

* Men should keep their wallets in a front pocket and in crowds should keep a hand on their pocket over their wallet.

* Don't wear expensive jewelry when walking and shopping. You're only

making yourself a potential target for street criminals.

* It is always a good idea to keep some money separate from your wallet, so you will not lose everything at one time.

Carry only the identification cards, money and credit cards you will actually need. If your Government of Belize I.D. card is stolen notify the RSO and Personnel office immediately.

* If someone suspicious is following you, walk into the nearest store or restaurant and ask for assistance. Let the suspicious person know that you are aware of him or her.

* If you use a pay phone, select one that is located in a populated, well-lighted area. Face the street or the sidewalk with your back to the phone while you are talking. This will allow you to be aware of suspicious persons in the area.

* Never accept food, candy or drinks from strangers on the street. They can be spiked with a drug that makes you drowsy or puts you to sleep. Knock-out drugs can be used to rob victims of their money and valuables.