



## Safeguarding Newsletter:

# Are women in the UK safe?

### UNDERSTANDING THE CURRENT SITUATION:

The tragic disappearance, and subsequent murder, of Sarah Everard in early March, has led to a national debate about the safety of women.

Women across the country took to social media to discuss their own experiences of walking the streets and the lengths they went to to feel safe. Out poured stories of being followed, harassed, catcalled, assaulted and exposed to.

Helena Wadia was one of those. She told BBC Radio 5 Live she wanted to highlight how common it was for women to feel unsafe.

"The first time I was catcalled I think I was about 12 years old," she said.

"I have been self-policing since then. We moderate everything - our clothing, our drinking. We get taxis where maybe we can't afford it. We hold keys between our fingers. We don't wear headphones when we're jogging. We stick to well-lit areas. It's exhausting."

One tweet asking women if they have ever faked phone calls, changed route, or even run in fear after feeling threatened by men in public spaces was liked more than 120,000 times.



### What you need to know

On International Women's Day every year, British MP Jess Phillips reads out the names of all the women and girls killed over the previous 12 months, where a man has been convicted or charged as the main perpetrator.

This year it fell on the day remains were found in the hunt for Sarah Everard, and she read out 118 names. "Dead women is a thing we've all just accepted as part of our daily lives," Ms Phillips told Parliament. "Killed women are not vanishingly rare. Killed women are common."

But the issue of violence against women is not one for the UK alone.

The World Health Organization this week published a report saying one in three women globally, around 736 million, had been subjected to physical or sexual violence in their lifetimes.

WHO Director General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said violence against women was "endemic in every country and culture", and had been exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-56384600>

### So what has been the response of men?

As women took to social media to tell their stories, Stuart Edwards, who lives five minutes away from where Sarah went missing tweeted:

"Aside from giving as much space as possible on quieter streets and keeping face visible, is there anything else men can reasonably do to reduce the anxiety/spook factor?"

The tweet received 27,000 likes and more than 3,000 retweets.

Among those who joined the conversation was food critic Jay Rayner, who also lives in south London. "If I find myself walking behind a single woman on a quiet street I always cross the road to the other side and ideally accelerate away as quickly as possible. I am a big man and absolutely aware what my silhouette looks like in the darkness," he tweeted.

Some however have been keen to point out that it's a tiny minority of men who are attackers - using the hashtag #NotAllMen.

Please contact Alison Hill, District Safeguarding Officer for more help and guidance by calling 07483 362 735 or via email at [safeguarding@sheffieldmethodist.org](mailto:safeguarding@sheffieldmethodist.org)

### Keeping safe whilst walking

Always try to walk facing on-coming traffic to avoid kerb crawlers  
If you do get asked for sex by someone slowly driving their car alongside you, feel free to report the creep to the police – it's illegal.

If you think you are being followed, trust your instincts and take action. As confidently as you can, cross the road turning as you do to see who is behind you. If you are still being followed, cross again. Keep moving. Make for a busy area and ask for help – for example from a shop keeper.

If a vehicle pulls up suddenly alongside you, turn and walk in the other direction: you can turn much faster than a car.

Avoid confrontation. Do not meet aggression with aggression, as this is likely to escalate the situation. Talk your way out of problems, stay calm, speak gently, slowly and clearly. Breathe out slowly to help you relax.

If you are trapped or in danger, yell or scream. Your voice is your best defence. Shout, 'Phone the police' or other specific instructions which people can understand easily.

### Safety on public transport

Have your ticket, pass or change ready in your hand so that your wallet is out of sight.

Always wait for the bus or train in a well-lit place near other people if possible and try to arrange for someone to meet you at the bus stop or station.

Avoid empty carriages on trains. Always try to sit where there are lots of people. If you feel uneasy, move to another seat or carriage.

If a bus is empty or it is after dark, stay on the lower deck as near as possible to the driver.

If you feel threatened make as much noise as possible to attract the attention of the driver or guard.

### Safety when drinking

'Drink spiking' doesn't just mean date-rape drugs; if someone buys you double shots without telling you, you could easily end up out of control and vulnerable.

Always watch your drink, or get your friend to watch it when you go to the loo;

If someone offers to buy you a drink, watch them order it at the bar;

If you start to feel weird (sick, dizzy, confused) find a friend and tell them.

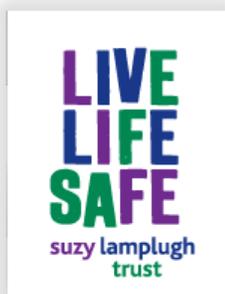
### Always carry in your pocket:

A mobile, or at least some spare change to make a phone call.

A couple of numbers for reputable cab firms in your area/ area you go out.

If possible, carry a personal alarm and know how to use it to shock and disorientate an assailant so that you can get away.

Thanks to The Suzy Lamplugh Trust for providing information for this article.



## Help and Advice

### 5 Personal Safety Apps To Download If You're Scared To Be A Woman Right Now - By Georgia Aspinall, featured in Grazia 10.3.2021

According to a 2019 study by YouGov, at least one in three women consciously take steps to avoid being assaulted on a day to day basis. These include not travelling alone, informing others of our whereabouts, not drinking as much, dressing a certain way, minimising interactions with strangers, having a phone prepared, the list goes on and on.

We shouldn't have to change our behaviour, but we do - and one of those includes downloading personal safety apps on our phones. In a world where simply leaving the house can be terrifying for a woman, they provide a sense of security that many of us need just to feel less anxious living our lives.

1. bSafe
2. Life 360
3. Kitestring
4. One scream
5. Red Panic Button.



To read the full article go to: <https://graziadaily.co.uk/life/in-the-news/best-personal-safety-apps-keep-safe/>

Australian men are being encouraged to "**Walk Like a Woman**" in a new ad campaign aimed to make women feel safer. Women's rights group Plan International has launched the promotion, which includes seven tips for men on how to behave while walking the streets:

TIP 1: KEEP YOUR DISTANCE

TIP 2: DON'T RUN UP FROM BEHIND

TIP 3: DON'T STARE

TIP 4: KEEP COMMENTS TO YOURSELF

TIP 5: KEEP YOUR MATES IN LINE

TIP 6: BE AN ACTIVE BYSTANDER

TIP 7: SHARE THE WALK

"Most men don't hurt women and most men do really want to make sure that they are not a threat to other women, and that women feel safe around them,"



"Even if most men know they aren't going to do anything, that doesn't stop women being afraid."