

# THE DENVER CENTER FOR CRIME VICTIMS

## **CRIME PREVENTION TIPS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

Persons with disabilities often face physical and attitudinal challenges. This could make them appear more vulnerable to those who assume that people with disabilities are incapable of protecting themselves.

If you have a disability or know someone who has, the following tips may help prevent you or a friend from becoming the victim of a crime.

### **General Tips**

- Have a plan for what you will do if confronted: show confidence, yell, use a body alarm, etc.
- Practice your responses often so you can recall them in a real situation.
- If you use a wheelchair or other adaptive device, keep money and personal items hidden from view but easily accessible to you personally. Use a fanny pack or pocket attached to the wheelchair arm rather than bags attached to the rear of the chair.
- Develop a network of “safe” people who can assist you in case of emergency.
- There are many laws to protect individuals from abusive situations. Educate yourself about what is a crime and how to report it. Abuse, harassment and intimidation are all crimes and should be reported. Educate yourself about all forms of sexual abuse.

### **Home Security Tips**

- Make sure doors have peepholes or viewing areas at a level that allows you to view visitors.
- Locks on doors and windows should be at levels you can easily reach and operate. Use them while you are at home as well as when you are out.
- Never open the door for a stranger. Ask for proof of who they are and the purpose of the visit. If you are visually impaired and the person at the door says they have official identification, verify by checking the person’s identity with their agency.
- Never tell a stranger calling by phone or at your door any personal information, including the nature of your disability.
- Plan an accessible escape route from each room in your residence to use in case of emergency. Practice your escape plans often so that you can recall them in a real situation.
- Have emergency phone numbers and a means of contacting emergency assistance available and accessible to you at all times.