



SOUTH CAROLINA FAMILY AND COMMUNITY LEADERS
Affiliated with National Volunteer Outreach Network, Country Women's Council, U.S.A., Associated Country Women of the World and in partnership with Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service

SCFCL website: <http://www.scfcl.com>

Leader Training Guide

Safety in Your Home and Around Town

Objectives:

The participants will be able to:

1. Review their own home and person safety
2. Learn about helpful agencies

Lesson Overview/Introduction:

Home safety is common sense. Sometimes we need to be reminded about being safe and I am sure each of you have tips to share on home safety. We also need to think about safety in the neighborhood.

Lesson:

Before you drove your car out of the driveway today:

- Do you have a map and/or telephone directory in your car?
- Have you checked your tires today?
- Did you check to see if you had enough gas?

If you don't have your telephone directory, people and numbers in your telephone, you can carry a 3 x 5 card with numbers because in an emergency you will most probably not be able to recall them.

Around your home:

- Does it look like someone lives there and cares about your home and yard?
- Are the bushes around your home cut window height so that no one can hide?

- Before you take a trip, do you tell a designated person to pick up your papers and/or mail or do you stop your mail at the post office? When your mailbox is full, the home occupant is usually away on vacation
- Do you have a light to come on so that it appears someone is at home at night? Indoor timers are available of as low as \$7 at hardware stores. Plug in a lamp and set it to come on and off as normal while you are away.
- Do things appear normal when you leave?
- If you use Facebook, do you post about your upcoming trips? Never post about trips before or during your vacation. This tells crooks that your home is empty. Be careful when posting about hospital visits that leave your home empty.



Timer for electricity

Rape: If you are raped, do not shower. Go immediately to the emergency room and get screened. This is the fastest way for the authorities to catch the person who violated you. The emergency room employees will notify the police and a rape victims center. People Against Rape was in Charleston and others around the state have different names. Their agency will send someone to be with you and counsel you. They also offer classes in how to protect yourself. These agencies are happy to get their information out, so they will come and speak.

Domestic Violence: Domestic violence can be a parent abusing a child, a child abusing a parent, a husband abusing his wife, or a wife abusing her husband. If you suspect a parent or parents are abusing a child, contact the sheriff or police department. They will investigate and if necessary will remove the child/children from the home and contact DSS where the child/children will be placed in a foster home. If you are the victim, ask around and see where you should go. In the Midlands, Sister Care has a designated house where only they know where it is. The counselor there will meet with you and help you find a place to go and also get out of town. *Have the group share stories or share this one.*

This woman who I knew wanted to leave her husband but spent more time planning that than leaving town. He and his family suspected that something was up, so he called the authorities. He became the good guy while she was portrayed as the drunkard. She lost her children.

These type agencies will speak to your group. They are also appreciative of items that you donate.

Bathroom Safety:

Many falls occur in the bathroom. Prevent them by first doing a little safety check:

- Do your bathroom rugs move? Get rid of all rugs throughout the house that move. They can cause a fall.
- Install grab bars at the toilet and in the shower. Portable commode chairs can be placed over the toilet if necessary.
- Do you need a shower chair?
- Is the bottom of your tub/shower slippery when wet? If so, install a slip resistant mat.

Who do you call when you need help?

Do you have a medical alert button that you wear around your neck or on your wrist? Do you wear it all the time? How does your work?

Medical alert systems (like Life Alert, Medical Alert, Medical Guardian, Mobile Help and more)—where the press of a wearable call button puts you in touch with a dispatcher who can summon emergency help or contact a friend or family member—may offer some reassurance. There are several types on the market.

Do You Want a Home-Based or Mobile System? A home-based system is just usable in the home and yard and works off of a landline. A mobile system goes everywhere you go and works off of a cell phone line. Many companies offer a home-based system that work over a cellular network.

With these systems, pressing the wearable call button allows you to speak to a dispatcher who will in turn call for help. The family can list who is called first and they will call up to 4 people plus the ambulance. Mobile units incorporate GPS so you can be located if necessary. Fall detection options is also available.

Ask your group to share stories where the medical alert system has helped someone or cases where they should have had a medical alert system.

Story to Share: As I left my mother at home, I reminded her to call her system and tell them she was home. She delayed and later did not feel well, so she called her sister who had Parkinson's disease. Her sister kept telling her that she was going to feel better soon. Mama finally decided to call 911 and go to the emergency room where she discovered she had had a mild stroke. The medical alert system would have been easier for her to use. What if her stroke was severe, and she could not dial a phone?

Things That Happen in the Neighborhood:

- How well do you know your neighbors?
- Are you observant or do folks think you are nosy?
- Do you lock your doors to the house when you go outside? Can an unwanted visitor enter in your front door when you are in the backyard? Lock your doors even when you are outside with repairmen.
- Do you take your cell phone with you? Even when you are just in the yard?
- Have you seen your elderly neighbor lately?

Ask your group for related stories or share this one: I once lived in Charleston where folks would not lock their doors when they went outside. Folks would observe and use the front door and steal whatever they wanted while the homeowner happily cleaned flower beds in the back. A Crime Watch group was organized and it worked, but we quickly reverted back to our old ways. And then there would be another incident.

Story to share: My mother and her sisters called each other every day to check on each other. They would often share a ride to town and go with each other to doctor's appointments. It is always safer in numbers. In today's world, children do not always live near their parents. As parents age, they need help, and it is better if it was close by.

Home safety equipment:

Have the necessities

Your home should have all the typical emergency response items in an easy-to-access location. These items include:

- A first aid kit complete with Band-Aids, gauze, anti-bacterial wipes, eye patches, pain-reliever, etc.

- Medicines for common ailments such as upset stomach or colds. Do you have a list of your medications that is where someone can find?
- Inhalers, if necessary
- Emergency numbers for contacts, doctors, hospitals or poison control centers
- Be sure the smoke detectors works
- Check your fire extinguishers too
- Carbon Monoxide detector if you use propane

Suggested Materials:

<https://www.consumerreports.org/medical-alert-systems/how-to-choose-a-medical-alert-system/>

Suggested Activities:

Lesson Summary: Keep safe by being aware of your surroundings at all time. End your program by asking for safety tips from the audience

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