

WOMEN'S COMMUNITY SAFETY AUDIT GUIDE

*Safety for Women
Safety for Everyone*

Let's Act on it



Prepared by the

**Women's Initiatives for Safer Environments
211 Bronson Ave. Room 205 Ottawa, Ontario K1R 6H5
Phone: (613) 230-6700 Fax: (613) 230-6249**

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This Community Safety Audit Guide is for every woman who wants to feel safer in her community and wants to do something about it.

But of course it will work for everyone

You have decided to do a safety audit because you do not feel safe in a particular area and you want to do something about it. The idea, then, is to gather the information that will help you articulate your concerns and lobby for changes. Safety audits focus specifically on preventing sexual harassment and all forms of assault by increasing women's safety in public and semi public places like:

- parks
- transit stations and bus stops
- streets
- the workplace
- colleges and universities
- underground parking garages
- schools and school yards
- washrooms in shopping malls
- the transit system
- laundry rooms
- parking lots
- recreation and community centres
- bars

Anywhere that makes the hair rise on the back of your neck.

This guide is designed to help you:

- identify the issues
- organize safety audits
- lobby for change

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Safety audits were first developed by the Metro Toronto Action Committee on Public Violence Against Women and Children (METRAC). The intended purpose of the safety audit was to reduce opportunities for sexual harassment and assault and to give women a voice in the design and management of their environments. The safety audit is based on the belief that the design of physical environments affects our safety and that an environment can be designed so that it feels safer. If it feels safer, more people use it and it becomes safer. The audit was also based on the belief that elements of the physical environment can actually reduce opportunity for violent or threatening behaviours. The experts on whether a space is safe are the people who use or choose not to use that space.

METRAC intentionally did not copyright the Safety Audit Guide in order to encourage the widest possible use. Thanks to the financial assistance of the Ontario Women's Directorate, Women's Initiatives for Safer Environments (formally known as the Women's Action Centre Against Violence- WACAV) of Ottawa-Carleton was able to build on the work of METRAC and update the safety audit process to include the concerns of women with disabilities, francophone women, women living in rural areas, Aboriginal women and immigrant and women from racial minorities. We have also adapted the Guide to the Ottawa-Carleton Region.

The following organizations were instrumental in bringing together the women who participated in the revisions of the safety audit process: Comité Réseau, the Aboriginal Women's Support Centre, the Ottawa-Carleton Independent Living Centre, the Cumberland Community Resource Centre and the Gloucester Community Resource Centre. Comprehensive consultations to update the guide represented over 500 hours of WISE staff and volunteer time. We are also thankful to METRAC for their initiative and would like to acknowledge their innovative efforts in the continued struggle to enhance women's safety.

We, in turn, would ask all who use the Women's Safety Audit Guide to respectfully acknowledge the work of the Women's Initiatives for Safer Environments in updating the Guide to make it more inclusive of women's diverse experiences. At the same time, we encourage you to continue to revise the Guide to suit your circumstances. In addition, please let us know of your experiences with the Guide. Working for women's safety is an ongoing process.

Women's Initiatives for Safer Environments

In May 1990, a group of women met to talk about safety for women in the streets of Ottawa-Carleton. From the work of this small group came the Women and Urban Safety Committee. After a two-year community process, involving more than 200 women and men from across the region, the Women and Urban Safety Committee were granted core funding by the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton. These funds were to establish and operate a local organization that would work to create a community that was safer for women. The original grant was for an 18-month period. We now receive funding from the City, to be approved periodically, and project funding from other bodies.

Choosing a name under which to incorporate the organization in 1992 was difficult. Our choice, the Women's Action Centre Against Violence (Ottawa-Carleton), named the issue as violence, clearly stated our focus on women's experience and our desire to create change. By not identifying a focus on urban perspectives, it, then and now, better reflects our plan to address the concerns of women throughout the whole city of Ottawa. The organization keeps evolving with the changing community needs and we have decided to adopt a new name to allow the community to more quickly grasp our mandate and purpose. We felt that this was best accomplished with a new focus on the concept of promoting safety for women and everyone in our community. Hence, the adoption of the new name **WISE, Women's Initiatives for Safer Environments** came about.

The mandate of WISE is to work in collaboration with organizations and individuals in the city of Ottawa to prevent and end violence against women and create safer physical and social environments. We encourage local governments and institutions to work with communities to develop safer physical and social environments. In addition to this Women's Safety Audit Guide, WISE has also published a Women's Safety Audit Implementation Guide to help groups take action on their safety audit recommendations. We also offer Women's Safety Audit Facilitation Training to community and workplace groups as well as Personal Safety Workshops for Women & Girls and Teens for diverse population.

We would appreciate receiving a copy of your safety audit reports, your implementation plans and any letters you send or receive. By letting us know the results of your audits, your implementation plans and other personal safety initiatives, we can assist other communities with similar challenges. The more information we have about the places that do not feel safe for women, the better we are able to keep up the pressure for improvements to urban and rural design and policy making. In addition, if any part of this guide is unclear, please call us

with your questions or comments. Please send any in-progress or completed documentation or reports to:

Women's Initiatives for Safer Environments

211 Bronson Ave. Room 205 Ottawa,

Ontario K1R 6H5

Phone: (613) 230-6700 Fax: (613) 230-6249
info@wiseottawa.ca

For a negotiated fee, WISE is able to support groups in the following ways:

- Offer training in how to organize and carry out a community-based safety audit process
- Offer training in how to lead a safety audit group
- Facilitate the safety audit walk
- Assist community groups to develop and implement a plan of action based on their safety audit results.

WHAT IS A SAFETY AUDIT?

1. What do we mean by safety?

Safety and security have many meanings. Safety is often talked about in reference to occupational health and safety, traffic safety, building security, etc. Women's Initiatives for Safer Environments is concerned with personal safety -- specifically, how safe you are and how safe you as an individual feel in your living and working environments.

Feelings of safety in a particular space can be determined by our present and past experiences of that space, of a similar space, or by the experiences of other people we know or have heard about. We may also feel more or less safe in public spaces as a result of whether or not we have ever experienced a violent incident. Women who have experienced violence express more concern for their personal safety in all situations than women who have not experienced violence.

Our community is still a relatively safe place to live. Nevertheless, many of us feel afraid in parks, on public streets, working late, taking buses or parking our cars. In a variety of circumstances, and especially at night, we are afraid for our personal safety. Many women avoid going out alone at night. They don't want the anxiety, or the risk. Many of us experience this fear; women often live with it daily. It's unfair, and we know many women share WISE's goal of making cities safe for women 24 hours a day. Other groups who feel particularly vulnerable include people with disabilities, elderly people, visible minorities, gays, lesbians and aboriginal peoples. These groups experience more fear because they are more vulnerable to violence. They can be the targets of violent or threatening behaviour, not because of anything they do, but just because of who they are. If we want a place to be safe for everyone, we need to meet the concerns of the most vulnerable people in our communities.

Women should not have to limit/modify their behaviours in order to be safe. The majority of women have resigned themselves to the fact that they are at risk of becoming victims of violence because they are women and have, as a result, developed ways to reduce that risk. The women's safety audit process can be used to look at the physical environment with the goal of enhancing personal safety and can also be used as an opportunity to discuss the problem of violence against women. Physical environments can be designed to be safer. Changes in the physical design alone will not end sexual assault and harassment of women, but they will reduce the risk and increase women's access to public spaces. At the same time, it is essential to look at attitudes and behaviors that encourage violence against women. Women are experts in what needs to change in the physical environment in order to make it safer. Women have something

important to say to planners who have the technical expertise to implement changes.

2. Why women's safety?

Some people ask, "why women's safety?"

The answer is simple: because women are much more at risk of being assaulted in our society. The findings of the General Social Survey in 1999 states that:

18% of women felt unsafe about walking alone in their own neighbourhood after dark

64% of women are worried when waiting for, or using, public transit alone after dark

79% of women are worried when walking alone to their car in a parking garage

51% of all Canadian women have experienced at least one incident of violence since the age of 16

90% of disabled women are raped, abused or assaulted some time in their lives.

In May of 1991, Angus Reid conducted a local survey for the Ottawa Citizen on fear of violence in Ottawa-Carleton. They found that: in a *neighbourhood* after dark 64% of women limit their activities because of fear for their safety.

Statistics Canada, The Daily, National Survey on Violence Against Women, released in November 1993

Liz Stimpson and Margaret Best, Courage Above All, Sexual Assault Against Women with Disabilities, DAWN Toronto, 1991

3. What is a safety audit process?

Women's Initiatives for Safer Environments understands a safety audit as a process which brings individuals together to walk through a physical environment, evaluate how safe it feels to them, identify ways to make the space safer and organize to bring about those changes. In our experience, several steps are usually involved in safety audits as follows:

- ▶ **Organizing the safety audit**, choosing the sites to be audited, involving other agencies, and recruiting participants;

- ▶ **Orientation to safety audits**, training for facilitators or team leaders as well as introducing participants to safety audits.

- ▶ **The walk-about**, groups of individuals, using a safety audit checklist, walk through an area to identify where and why they feel uncomfortable and what other aspects of the area help them to feel safe.

- ▶ **Debriefing**, discussing what participants observed during their walk, writing down findings and developing recommendations for changes that would make the area feel safer.

- ▶ **Implementation**, sharing the results of the safety audit with community members, decision-makers and other people such as municipal staff. Strategies such as lobbying, negotiating for resources and developing partnerships may be used to help get the recommendations implemented.

- ▶ **Evaluation and follow-up**, reviewing at every step the goals and objectives of the safety audit; people's experience of the process; the effectiveness of the actions taken to improve safety; and what else should be done.

Details of these steps and things to consider will be discussed in depth later on in this guide.



5. Benefits to users

Safety audits offer a wide range of benefits to participants, the community at large, decision-makers, planners and those who work in crime prevention:

- ☀ The most tangible benefit is that they often result in measurable changes which improve safety for all users of the area. In about 50% of cases, they also lead to other programs or projects that address issues of violence. Directly linked to these tangible results is the fact that many participants gain a sense of their own ability to create change.

- ☀ Safety audits are useful as an educational tool. They increase awareness of violence against vulnerable groups, and they help users and decision-makers understand how different people experience their environments. They provide an opportunity for women and other people who feel threatened, to share their experiences.

- ☀ Safety audits provide useful information on personal security to decision-makers and to the people responsible for planning and managing a particular area. As a result, safety audits often give legitimacy to concerns which, in the past, have been marginalized or overlooked.

- ☀ Safety audits are an effective tool for building community. They offer an opportunity for people to share their experiences of feeling vulnerable. This sharing reduces isolation and helps those responsible for a facility to respond to the concerns of users.

- ☀ The experience of being listened to and creating change (no matter how small) builds confidence and increases individuals' sense of control over their lives.

- ☀ Participants in a safety audit learn about their physical environment, the others who share the area and the impact of violence on women and other vulnerable groups.

1. Organizing the safety audit

D. DEFINING THE AUDIT

You and your group have decided to do a safety audit because you do not feel safe in a particular area and you want to do something about it. The organization of a community safety audit begins with: creating a diverse audit group, choosing the exact site and the date and time.

How large an area do you want to cover?

Sometimes it's not clear how big an area you want to audit - one building, a street, a neighbourhood or the entire city. You may want to start small. For example, if your concern is the whole neighbourhood, you could:

- Do a full audit of a typical street;
- Audit the whole neighbourhood from the point of view of one or two factors, such as lighting and signs;
- Audit the route to and from a bus stop, a store or a community centre.

If you want to do an audit of a university campus, or another large area, you will need to do a lot of extra planning. As every environment is unique, we cannot tell you everything you'll need to do, but here are some things to think about:

- How many teams do you need?
- Do you have maps and any other important information?
- Can you arrange safe transportation to and from the audit areas?
What about childcare?
- How will you organize the volunteers, train the team leaders, collect the checklists, write a summary report and recommendations?
- How will you present the findings?

A survey handed out around the neighbourhood, in an apartment building, at work or at school, in advance of planning a safety audit is one way to find out where women in the area feel most unsafe or uncomfortable. It can also help to define the area to be audited. Survey questions could include:

- How safe do you feel in your building/street/waiting at the bus stop?
- Do you limit what you do because you don't feel safe?
- Have you ever felt unsafe, or at risk of sexual assault in this area?
- List specific places where you feel most unsafe.
- What would help to make you feel safer?

Examples of Audited Areas:

- University Campuses
- Parking lots
- OC Transpo Transit Stations

How much time should we allow for the audit?

The ideal time to allow for a "first audit" seems to be approximately 2 to 3 hours. You will need about ½ to 1 hour to talk about the audit and decide on the location and size, 1-1 ½ hours to do the audit, ½ to 1 hour to discuss the findings and plan to write the recommendations. The safety audit participants should:

- Meet a half an hour to three quarters of an hour before the audit to talk about the steps to be followed;
- Take enough time to do the audit;
- If there is more time after the audit, each group can share their safety audit findings with the other groups. If not, a separate meeting should be set aside to debrief and develop a plan of action.

More time should be allocated for all the steps of the women's safety audit process when working with women with disabilities, elderly women and any group where the members speak a variety of languages.

When to Audit

Time of Day

WISE recommends doing audits after dark, especially those that are done outside. It is the only way to know if there is a problem with lighting -- one of the most important safety features. Night time is when women feel most isolated and least safe. Since the most effective time to audit is at night, WISE recommends that an audit be done with other people.

Sometimes a place is more deserted and scary early in the morning, or in the middle of the afternoon when everyone else is away at work. Only you will know when you feel most concerned about your safety.

When organizing the meetings, it is important to give a clear and realistic indication of how long the safety audit process will take. As much as possible, participants should be called a couple of days before to confirm the date, time and place so as to ensure that everyone receives accurate information. The meeting can be made accessible to everyone by providing information that is clear, written in plain language and presented in alternative formats, childcare, IB safe transportation to and from the meeting, translation, etc.

Providing refreshments and time for socializing can be a way to create a friendly atmosphere that promotes dialogue and makes the participants feel welcome and at ease with the facilitators and with one another.

Time of Year

Seasons also affect how safe a place feels. Safety concerns are different when tree branches and bushes are bare in winter than when trees and plants are in full bloom in summer and might hide an attacker or block out light. Dry parking lots are different than when they are full of puddles, covered in ice, or surrounded by snow banks which may block the view.

You may want to go back to the same place more than once to see what it is like at different times of the day, or week, or year. You can also check up on how well the place is maintained.

The audit group

The audit group should encompass the whole range of people living and working in the community. What feels safe to one person may not feel safe to another. Involving a diversity of people in the safety audit process can ensure that safety is evaluated from a variety of perspectives.

There must be active involvement of, and direction from, people who use the area for various purposes and at various times (ie. those who live and those who work in the area, those who use the area when it is dark, those who work shifts, those who use cars, those who use public transit).

At least half of the participants in the audit must be women. The safety audit process is designed to help women express what it is about their physical environments that make them feel unsafe and to communicate these obstacles to people who can help them create safer physical environments. If women are not part of the process, their concerns will not be heard.

Promote the active involvement of people who are financially disadvantaged, people from various racial and cultural backgrounds, people with disabilities, gays and lesbians. Their safety concerns may not be represented if they are not included in the safety audit process.

Women's Initiatives for Safer Environments has facilitated a women's safety audit process with a wide variety of groups in Ottawa-Carleton. Some of them include:

- Community groups, public transit officials, and municipal councillors to evaluate the safety of several transit stops and along dedicated public transportation corridors;
- The National Capital Commission and the Safer Places Network to audit the safety of the recreational pathways behind Parliament Hill;
- University staff and students, to audit the Carleton University campus;
- The Youth Services Bureau, to audit the Safety of an apartment building for the purpose of enhancing the tenants' personal safety;
- Community police centres, city councillors, residents, workers and business owners in Vanier and in many Ottawa neighbourhoods, including Centretown, Hintonburg, Rideau St., Donald St. and Woodward/Laperrre;
- Immigrant women and men, to audit their apartment buildings and their neighbourhoods;
- Rural women, to audit a recreational centre, two parks, parking lots, a school and a church in their small town communities;
- Aboriginal women, to audit a park in Centretown;
- Women with disabilities, to audit a downtown street and public transportation stops;
- Francophone women to audit an indoor parking garage.

*Here is a list of some of **the people and/or groups you may wish to contact to be partners in a safety audit:***

Friends and neighbours
Tenants' or residents' associations
Religious groups
Women's groups
Advisory or resource groups for people with disabilities
Local community police centres
Municipal and Regional Councillors
Neighbourhood watch programs
Youth groups
Senior citizens' groups
Community associations and resource centres
Sexual assault crisis centres

Neighbourhood businesses (i.e. shops, restaurants, gas stations, 24 hour stores)
Public transportation representatives (i.e. buses, taxis)
School representatives

If you are doing an audit at your workplace, invite women you work with and your union or staff representative. If you are auditing your university or college campus, invite student union members, members and staff of the women's centre, and the staff.⁴

You may want to invite people who can help you implement improvements, such as your municipal councillor or school trustee, reporters from a community newspaper, or the person in charge of the site you want to audit.

You may also wish to invite people who use the area: clients, staff, family members, people who manage and maintain the buildings, people in charge of security, prostitutes and representatives from organizations who work with them, community and recreational workers, sports association members, and representatives of local places of worship, schools.

METRAC has written a Campus Safety Audit Guide to look at the problems that are unique to campuses.

It is also important to involve the institutions who own and/or manage the properties being audited. It may take more time and effort at the beginning to get institutions like these to be full partners in the audit. It also may take more time to work out how the audit is to be done. Having agreed to participate, such institutions are more likely to take the actions needed to help solve problems.

It is important to identify key people who are able to pass on the information, and encourage word of mouth and networking. Different forms of advertising such as public service announcements and advance notice to local agencies and community newspapers can be useful in reaching a wider audience. Using posters is also an option as they could include key elements such as a welcome to all who are interested, a reminder of safety issues, date, time and the specific route to be audited.

Practical considerations for a successful safety audit

It is clear that involving a diversity of people takes more time. It requires conscious and sometimes time-consuming effort on the part of organizers. Finding people with community development skills is also very helpful and so too are practical supports such as child care, transportation, cultural and sign interpretation. Audits which include the full diversity of users produce more thorough and appropriate solutions and often lead to changes which not only improve safety but improve the overall accessibility of the audited area.

Conscious outreach, preferably through talking to people face-to-face and explaining to them the concept of the safety audit and how it can address their particular safety concerns can increase the involvement of those who, otherwise, would not participate in a safety audit process. Through our work to revise the safety audit process to make it more accessible to marginalized groups, we have developed a list of some practical suggestions.

Here are some strategies to outreach to diverse groups:

Aboriginal groups

To publicize the safety audit, you can reach elders, grandfathers and grandmothers, youth and children, aunties, uncles, sisters, brothers, mothers and other community members through:

- Inuit and Native Friendship Centres
- Native women's organizations
- Non-profit housing geared toward native peoples
- Aboriginal newsletters
- Spiritual support groups
- Radio advertising and cable programs geared toward native peoples
- Mocassin fax tree

In organizing the meeting, ensure that:

- The safety audit is organized by an Aboriginal person
- The meeting place chosen allows for burning of medicines and for sitting in a circle
- An elder is invited and an offering is planned
- An interpreter/translator is available to translate the words being spoken and to help address cultural differences
- The meeting accommodates children
- A location is chosen where everyone will be at ease
- The meeting is informal
- Time is allowed beforehand for talk and guidance from elders

People with disabilities

In order to ensure that the area is audited from the point of view of accessibility and safety for women with disabilities, invite as many persons with disabilities as possible to participate in the safety audit process (those with wheelchairs, crutches, head injuries, developmental disabilities, a hearing impairment, visual impairment). Some key places to advertise are:

- Community centres, community bulletin boards, computer bulletin boards
- Advocacy groups (Independent Living Centres)
- Canadian National Institute for the Blind
- Canadian Hearing Society
- Home Care services
- Advisory Councils of people with disabilities
- Rehabilitation centres
- Co-operative housing locations with accessible units
- Publicize the event in various formats (braille, large print, audio cassette, computer diskette, closed captioned for the hearing impaired, CD FROM)
- Be clear about what types of assistance you can offer (sign interpreters, attendants)
- Put RSVP on flyer to get a sense of how many people to expect in order to assess the need for special services (interpreters, attendants guides)

In organizing the meeting

- The meeting place should be accessible, easy to find and quiet
- The meeting place and the place where the instructions for the audit will be given should be the same in order to save time, avoid confusion and enable those who arrive late to join the audit groups
- As much notification as possible should be given because Para Transpo has to be booked at least three to five days in advance if the meeting is not a regularly scheduled trip for the user
- Facilitators of the audit should arrive at the meeting place at least one half hour early to ensure that no one is waiting alone. Those who depend on public transportation for people with disabilities have little control over what time they arrive for or leave after a meeting. If they arrive early, they should not wait alone, especially if the meeting place is far from busy traffic.

Immigrant women

Make sure the safety audit is publicized at these places:

- Schools attended by immigrant women and their children
- Places of worship
- Neighbourhood committees

- Settlement agencies
- Organizations that service immigrant and racial minority women
- Employment centres
- Ethnic newspapers
- Community leaders

In organizing the meeting:

- At the request of participants, allow time for prayers
- Visual aids such as flipcharts, bright markers, overheads should be used
- Facilitators should speak slowly and clearly, and use simple explanations
- An interpreter/translator should be available to translate the words being spoken but also to help address cultural differences
- Facilitators should be sensitive to the fact that due to the vulnerability of their citizenship status and/or to their cultures, some women, especially if they recently arrived in Canada, may not believe they have a right to equal access to public spaces, or a right to complain. People from other countries or cultures may feel threatened if police officers are involved in safety audits.

2. DOING THE AUDIT

How many people on an audit team?

The best size for an audit team is 3 to 7 people. This size allows for different points of view, but is still small enough to have active discussion. If you want to cover a large space like a neighbourhood, you will need more than one team. The audit groups should have a maximum of four people when working with people with reduced mobility.

1. Helpful hints for the audit

- Take a flashlight along.
- Your notes will photocopy better if you use a red or black pen or marker instead of a blue one.
- Take a camera, if you have one. If you're going out at night, use a high speed film -- not less than 400 ASA (high speed films can also be used to take pictures indoors). It's also a good idea to write down the number of each photo and where it was taken.
- Take notes or use your camera to document positive features as well as problem areas. A very powerful argument can be made by contrasting good and bad examples of the same factor -- for example, a well-lit street and a poorly-lit street. You can also use a video camera.
- If it's difficult for you to take notes, use a tape-recorder.
It is important to talk to other women you meet during the walk. Introduce yourself. Tell them that you are looking at women's safety in the area and would like to know what they think. You might ask how often and why they are there, whether they have ever had any bad experiences, and what changes they'd like to see. If possible, ask a woman from the audit group to talk to the women you meet while walking.
- Whenever you are doing an audit of a street area that includes public transportation stops, be sure to look carefully at where people wait for a bus or a taxi, and how they get to and from the stops.
- Be creative! Try out emergency phones to see how long it takes for someone to answer (explain that you are doing a safety audit...); try doors to see if they are locked; check to see if electronic door openers are functional; move away from your group and then walk towards them again to see if they can see you at a distance of 25 meters away (approximately a short block); talk to police officers patrolling the area; etc.
- Wear comfortable clothing and shoes and go to the washroom before you go out. (It's amazing what a difference this one makes.)
- Ensure that each participant has safe transportation home from the audit.

3. Using a Checklist

The safety audit checklist is a tool that guides you through the walk and helps you identify exactly what elements in that area contribute to your discomfort. Stopping to look closely at different factors also lets people share feelings about a place. Sometimes one person will remember something, and that will bring out another story. And each of these stories helps to explain why a place does or does not feel comfortable.

If you are working with other people who do not understand the problems as well as you do, the checklist can help you work together. For example, one of the members of your audit group may want to rush past an area, but the checklist can help you to say "Hey, wait a minute. We need to look at the lighting here before we move on."

Finally, it is important that the questions in the safety audit checklist be applicable to the area being audited. Otherwise, safety audit participants become very frustrated and confused by questions that are not relevant to the area they are auditing.

The questions you're trying to **answer are**:

- Why do I or don't I like this place?
- When and why do I feel comfortable or uncomfortable here?
- What changes would make me feel safer?

The safety audit **checklist encourages safety audit participants**, to think about how they **use an area**:

- What if you were walking alone here late at night?
- What if you had to wait for someone to come and pick you up? Is this doorway a possible entrapment site?
- Does it feel safe in winter?... in the rain?
- Are there fewer people around at different times of the day, week, or year?
- How good is the lighting inside a bus shelter?
- How far away is the nearest public or private phone?

The checklist also helps participants to-consider **things like**: What is the lighting like?

- Can I see what's up ahead?
- Are there places someone could be hiding?
- Could I get help if I needed it?

The safety audit checklist is based on:

- Women's experience of what feels safe and unsafe in a physical environment;
- The importance of taking into account personal safety in the planning and design of the physical environment; and
- Studies of where public assaults take place and how offenders use public space.

Based on the feedback received from safety audit participants, Women's Initiatives for Safer Environments created a shortened version of a safety audit checklist for use during the walk (see appendix B). Using the comprehensive safety audit checklist (see Appendix A) during the walk can lengthen the walk considerably and cause some to become tired and cold. You can examine the comprehensive checklist more closely when you return with your group to the meeting place.

4. Leading a safety audit group

The person leading the group should encourage participants to

- Stay together so that each person is listened to and heard. Remember, note-takers cannot note what they have not heard;
- Voice their personal opinion about an area;
- Respect what others have to say. Remember, each person's experience of an area is different. The goal of the group is to note each person's opinion about a particular area;
- Be mindful of the person taking notes. Speak loudly, simply and slowly;
- Avoid making negative comments such as "Nothing ever gets done."

5. Taking notes

Take good notes. You may need to add some items later and may not need everything you wrote, but WISE experience is that using a checklist and writing notes on it will make it easier to organize reactions, ideas and suggestions later on; Use several checklists, one for each area, and share the note-taking; If the place being audited is large or complex, then the audit notes should focus on one area at a time. For example, when members of a Community Association were auditing a transitway station and its access routes, several copies of the checklists were filled out for each type of area, depending on its size and complexity. One checklist was filled out for the station platform, the other for the makeshift path leading to the bus station, one for the residential street, one for the parking lot near the bus station --

any area where lighting, availability of help, and other factors were considered;

- Write down all questions even if there isn't time to find the answers immediately;
- With the permission of all the participants, you can use a tape recorder; sometimes a place is so poorly designed that there aren't any really satisfactory solutions, but only measures that will make the area a little better. It is still important to note that there's a problem. Identifying and naming a problem is the beginning of changing the way new buildings and areas are designed;
- Take notes on everything, including comments on the process of the audit itself;
- Look over the notes a day or two later to see if they still make sense. Would someone who wasn't on the audit understand what was written down? If not, try to make your notes clearer.

5. IMPLEMENTING THE AUDIT

In order for safety audits to be effective, they must result in change(s). Implementation is the most critical and most difficult stage of the safety audit process. If actions are not taken to address the safety concerns that are identified, then no real improvements occur and the usefulness of safety audits is diminished. Also, participants become discouraged and may feel that nothing they do makes a difference.

One of the great strengths of safety audits is that they can help marginalized people gain a voice in decisions which affect their environments and develop a greater sense of their ability to create change. Successful safety audits also require the support of politicians, government officials, businesses and police to assist the community in the implementation of their safety audit recommendations.

The Women's Action Centre Against Violence, Safety Audit Tools and Housing: The State of the Art, and Implications for CMHC, a report prepared for the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, June 1995

Organizing your findings

After you've completed the audit, you'll have a lot of information about problem areas, and a lot of ideas about changes your audit group would like to see. One way of organizing the information is to group together all the points on one factor

like "lighting". Comments about how far a woman has to go to get help, whether there are enough telephones near by, and how likely it is that other people might see an assault, could all be brought together under the heading "isolation".

Another way of organizing the information from the checklist(s) is by type of area. For example, safety factors common to all parking lots could be grouped together. When you've finished organizing the findings, you should check to see if any part of the area has been overlooked. If it has, consider collecting more information with a mini-audit, or by asking people in the area to comment on that area.

Sharing the results

Whether they were part of the audit or not, you might want to get information, ideas, and feedback to and from the people living or working in the area (see Appendix C).

Now is the time to include people who could not participate in the safety audit walk. Consider holding small meetings where those people are able to talk about their concerns and help with the recommendations.

This way, you'll know more about the problems get ideas about what could be done, and get support for the changes you want to see.

Making recommendations

Your first step is to look at the results and decide what the most important concerns are. The second step is to make recommendations that solve the problems. For example, if the audit shows that buildings are hard to identify and find, then the recommendation might be to put up signs. Signs need to be readable at night and legible for those with Low vision (eg. lit signs with symbols instead of words, and braille or tactile signs).

Working for change -- Find out who is responsible:

If you're not sure who is responsible for the place, talk to your municipal councillor. Call, write, or ask for a meeting. Involve your councillor in the planning stages of the safety audit process. It is her or his responsibility to help you. She or he can tell you who owns what land and how to contact them, or who is responsible for what alley, or street, or parking lot (see Appendix D).

Ask Municipal or Regional staff working in areas such as property standards, planning, fire, police who is the best person to respond to your safety concern. Ask for their name so you can refer to them again. If these sources are not helpful, you can always go directly to the mayor.

Get in touch with the people who are responsible:

Call them or write to them about the audit. Tell them about the problems you've found. Tell them what they've got to do to make it better. Ask them to tell you what they will do about the problems and your suggestions, and how soon. It is more effective to put your suggestions on paper as it is much more binding on someone to respond to written documentation rather than just a phone call. It does give you some recourse if they refuse to make "necessary" changes. This is where it may help to have other women and other organizations to back you up.

[*The City of Ottawa has developed a process to effectively manage their response to safety audit reports. In consultation with Women's Initiatives for Safer Environments and the Crime Prevention Council, the City has compiled a set of principles on how a Safety audit should be conducted and how safety audit reports should be presented.*](#) Groups in Ottawa who complete safety audits which meet these standards, will find the City's process very helpful. The City will not only assign someone to coordinate their action on the audit recommendations, they will also refer concerns to other levels of government or other agencies when necessary. Since it is not always clear which organization or level of government is responsible for a particular concern, especially when the solution requires coordination between two or more jurisdictions, this "one-stop drop-off service" should help communities to get action on their audit findings. [*Copies of the City's process and principles are available from the Department of Engineering and Works at 2445300, extension 3799.*](#)

Safety audits are a new idea. They are part of a process of change, so don't be surprised if you get resistance to your suggestions. Here are some ideas you can use to respond:

Responding to "It's not my department."

If the people you are talking to tell you that the issues you're raising are not their concern, ask them to tell you who is responsible. They may be right, or they may be avoiding you. Either way, they will at least be more aware of your concerns.

Keep a diary of the people you contact

It's a good idea to write down the names, titles, and phone numbers of the people you talk to, the dates of your calls, and what was said. It may be that no one will admit to being responsible, and that you are sent in circles. In these cases, you will be in a good position to pressure for a better response if you can show all the effort that has gone into trying to get basic 'changes made to improve women's safety.

Try other people

If writing or talking to politicians gets you nowhere, try Municipal or Regional staff. If the staff are the problem, try the politicians directly. If owners want nothing to do with you, call the politicians, or Municipal or Regional staff, or the media.

Keep the pressure on

Once someone has agreed to make improvements, ask them to write you a letter stating when the changes will be made (see Appendix C). If they don't keep their promises, continue to write or call, and also get other people to write or cal.

Beware of the "Perception vs. Reality" debate

Sometimes the people who are responsible for an area will try to tell you that the place only seems unsafe, but that "in reality" it is safe, that nothing has ever happened there. This response denies the reality of women's experiences. If a woman feels uncomfortable enough about an area to go to the trouble of doing an audit, there is a problem.

FURTHER READING

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McLeod, Linda, 1989, The City for Women: No Safe Place, Secretary of State Canada.

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APPENDICES

This checklist has been adapted from the original Women's Safety Audit developed by the Metro Action Committee on Public Violence Against Women and Children (METRAC). It has been revised by Women's Initiatives for Safer Environments to include information that is pertinent to both urban and rural areas. You are welcome to reproduce this information and modify it to suit your own particular safety audit needs. In the near future, the checklist should be available in alternative formats (braille, large print, audio cassette, computer diskette, CD ROM) as well as in a variety of languages.

Would I feel safe here if I:

- was alone?
- was with children?
- had a disability?
- was an elderly person?
- was part of a racial minority?
- was a newcomer? was an aboriginal person?
- was in a car?
- was walking?
- had a long distance to travel?

Safety Audit Evaluation criteria

Lighting

- Is the lighting too bright or too dark in any specific area?
- How well does the lighting illuminate the area?
- How clearly does the lighting illuminate directional signs?

Do I know where/whom to call if lights are out, broken, not yet turned on,

- Am I able to identify a face 25 metres (75 feet) away?
- Is the lighting obscured by trees or bushes?
- How well does the lighting illuminate pedestrian walkways and sidewalks?

Sightlines

- Can you clearly see what's ahead?
- Is your visibility obstructed by: pillars, sharp corners, walls, bushes, advertisement panels, snow-banks, ditches and others?
- What would make it easier to see ahead?

Isolation

Can you see and hear people around you and do you feel you could be seen and heard by others?

Do you feel the nearest emergency service such as an alarm, emergency phone is close at hand?

Is there a monitor or surveillance system?

Is there a place near by where I can get help from someone who is culturally sensitive to my needs? (e.g. Friendship Centre, Settlement Agencies, Mosque)

Is the area patrolled by a community neighbourhood watch program, security guards, police, or other?

Possible assault sites

Are there any areas where someone could hide from view?

Are there any specific areas in and around the building where you feel more vulnerable?

Maintenance

Is there litter lying around?

Is there evidence of vandalism?

Are there any broken items?

Signage

Is the lettering on the signs easy to read and large enough?

Can you see signs directing you to emergency assistance?

Are there visual symbols to represent important information such as emergency telephones, stairwells, etc.?

Are the signs easy to understand for a person whose first language is neither English or French?

Are they within visual range for a person seated person with visual impairment?

Is there information posted describing the hours the building is open?

Animals

Are there any domestic animals in the area?

Is this area dirty due to the animals?

Accessibility

Are the wheelchair access ramps appropriate?

Is the area/building easily accessible for persons with mobility disabilities?

Are peepholes, mailbox, information shelves etc., located at an appropriate height?

Stairwells

Is the lighting level comfortable?

How do you feel using the stairs?

Would you use the stairs at night?

Could someone hear you if you called for help?

Elevators

Is the lighting level comfortable?
What atmosphere do the elevators project?
Do you know how to call for assistance when in the elevator?
Are there visual symbols to represent important information?
Is the lettering on the signs tactile, raised or in braille?

Crisis Prevention and Intervention

Are there reception staff trained to handle different situations?
Is there or are you aware of the policy/plan to deal with unsafe behavior?
Are there adequate security measures in place after hours?
Are you aware of policies/ plans in place to deal with safety issues for rental agreements to outside organizations?

Parking Garage

Does the color of the walls in the parking garage allow lighting to be used efficiently? Are the exits and main routes clearly signed, using distinctive colors and symbols? How far is the nearest person to hear a call for help? Is the parking garage presenting any entrapment sites?

Lobby/main entrance/ waiting room

Is access easy available to people from outside? Do you feel threatened by people waiting in the lobby alone at night? Do you have any concerns when the common room is rented?

Overall Design

If you were not familiar with the area would it be easy to find your way around?
Is it easy to access the building?
Is the building accessible for a person with a mobility impairment?
Are signs located within visual range for a person seated or within range for a person with visual impairment?

8. MOVEMENT PREDICTORS

How easy is it to predict a woman's movements (e.g. her route)?
 very easy somewhat obvious no way of knowing

Is there an alternative well-lit and frequently travelled route or path available?
yes no don't know

can I tell what is at the other end of the path, tunnel, or walkway? yes no

9. POSSIBLE ENTRAPMENT SITES

Are there small, confined areas where I would be hidden from view?

- between garbage bins unlocked equipment or utility shed
 alley or Janeway doorway construction site
 isolated parking lots or bus stops other(s)

Are there areas that should be locked, fenced or barricaded?

- vacant lots abandoned houses building entrances
 parking lots other(s)

10. ESCAPE ROUTES

How easy would it be for a victim to get away? not very easy quite easy

Is there more than one exit? yes no

If yes, are they: unlocked level

very easy

don't know

easily opened

11. NEARBY LAND USES

Can I identify who owns or maintains nearby land?

Impressions of nearby land use:

is the surrounding or nearby land used for?

- stores offices restaurants/bars residential houses and streets school park
 garage church heavilytreed/wooded area parking lots vacant lot factory
 farms •busy traffic street river bank •campus buildings don't know other(s)

13. FACTORS THAT MAKE THE PLACE MORE HUMAN

Does the place feel abandoned? yes no

Why?

Is there graffiti on the walls? yes no

In my opinion, are there racist or sexist slogans/signs/images?

yes no

Are there signs of vandalism?

yes no

Would other materials, tones, textures or colours, signs and symbols, improve my sense of safety?

yes no

Is there a security presence?

yes no

14. OVERALL DESIGN

If I weren't familiar with the place, would it be easy to find my way around? yes

Is the place too spread out?

Are there a confusing number of levels?

Are there benches strategically placed for rest stops?

yes no Are there curb cuts at crosswalks and corners? yes no

Is there a level route from the street level building? yes no

If no, is there an exterior ramp? yes no

Are there handrails on the ramp and stairs? yes no

Do the glass doors have decals on them so that a person with a visual impairment won't walk into them? yes no

Does the entrance door have an electric door opener? yes no

If there are stairs, is there a ramp available as well nearby? yes no

14. OVERALL DESIGN

Is there a detectable indicator denoting stairway or escalators for people with a visual impairment? yes no

Is the area free from obstacles or protrusions? yes no

If no, are they easily detectable by colour or protected by railings?

(This is imperative for a person with a visual impairment)

yes no

Impressions of overall design:

very good good satisfactory poor very poor

Now that I have completed my safety audit walk, do I still have the same general impressions as I did at the beginning of this process?

15. SUMMING UP YOUR FINDINGS

What improvements would you like to see?

Do you have any specific recommendations?

In your opinion, who should be responsible for making these changes?

Problems

Solutions

Recommendations

Audited Area:
Date:
Note taker:



Safety Checklist

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lighting | <input type="checkbox"/> Signage | <input type="checkbox"/> Visibility | <input type="checkbox"/> Possible Assault Sites |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance | <input type="checkbox"/> Accessibility | <input type="checkbox"/> Behaviour | <input type="checkbox"/> Others |

Specific concern

Why is this a safety issue?

Exact location:

Your recommendation:

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lighting | <input type="checkbox"/> Signage | <input type="checkbox"/> Visibility | <input type="checkbox"/> Possible Assault Sites |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance | <input type="checkbox"/> Accessibility | <input type="checkbox"/> Behaviour | <input type="checkbox"/> Others |

Specific concern

Why is this a safety issue?

Exact location:

Your recommendation:

Safety Audit Follow-up Questionnaire

AREA AUDITED: _____

LOCATION: _____

DATE OF AUDIT: _____

The Safety Audit Follow-up Questionnaire is an important tool that enables Women's Initiatives for Safer Environments and the participants alike to evaluate their progress, to identify what still needs to be done and to reflect upon the positive changes that have been a result of their efforts.

1. Participant Information

Name: _____

Organization's Name: _____

Telephone number: _____

2. Implementation of Recommendations

1. Since the Safety Audit have participants continued to work towards having the recommendations implemented?

not at all somewhat mostly definitively

Comments:

2. Have relevant people from outside the direct community demonstrated an active interest in the safety of your environment since the safety audit? (Police officers, government officials, etc.)

not at all somewhat mostly definitively

Comments:

3. Have recommendations from the Safety Audit report been implemented?

not at all somewhat mostly definitively

Which ones?

4. Do you feel there are there recommendations from the Safety Audit report that need to be implemented that have not yet been?

not at all somewhat mostly definitively

In your opinion which of these recommendations are the most important?

5. Has the Safety Audit group continued to meet to discuss progress, and to make sure the recommendations get implemented?

not at all somewhat mostly definitively

Comments:

3. Safety Awareness

Since the Safety audit:

- Have learned ways to improve personal security
 not at all somewhat mostly definitively
- Increased awareness of the personal safety in our community
 not at all somewhat mostly definitively
- Gained a greater sense of ability to create change
 not at all somewhat mostly definitively
- Feel confident that the safety audit recommendations will be implemented and will help make the environment safer
 not at all somewhat mostly definitively

- Would be willing to participate in another Safety Audit
 not at all somewhat mostly definitively

- Feel safer in the environment
 not at all somewhat mostly definitively

Additional Comments:

APPENDIX C: SAMPLE LETTERS

An audit success story:

Dear Councillor

Thank you for sending along the recommendations of the safety audit of Blair public-transit station. We are very interested in offering a safe environment to our customers and consequently we appreciate the opportunity to have a representative on safety related projects such as yours.

We are pleased to respond to the recommendations as follows:

a) Improve directional signage at entrance to transitway station from North:

b) Improve signage on top landings of station stairwells:

Signage has been improved at the top of the landings. We have signage that directs riders to Orleans. We will be adding

c) Add security convex mirrors in more locations

We will be adding three convex mirrors - one near the south end of the tunnel beside the elevator sign, one outside the elevator at the north stairwell entry level from the station centre and at mid-stair level.

I trust you find this satisfactory and urge you to call me if you have any further comments or questions.

Sincerely,

General Manager
Ottawa-Carleton Regional Transit Commission

APPENDIX C: SAMPLE LETTERS (Continued)

Porch Lights On!

Audit groups on residential streets have commented on how much safer they feel along a section of a street where porch lights are on than those where they are not. We enclose a sample "Porch Lights On" message for you to reproduce or make your own. These can be distributed in your neighbourhood during an audit as well as at other times. Recommend to your Hydro Authority that they encourage subscribers, on their monthly invoices, to leave their porch lights on.

Residential streets and private property audits

METRAC developed the attached form to use as an immediate follow-up for private property where you may not know who the owner or manager is. This is to inform the owner/manager that the property is in need of some changes to ensure public safety. This form can be left in the mailbox, given to someone on the property or mailed. You might want to photocopy several copies or use carbon paper so that you have a record of who you have notified, and when.

Sample letter 2

APPENDIX D: WHERE TO GET INFORMATION

To get you started, we have provided a list of where to call for information on safety audit related concerns in the Ottawa-Carleton Region. You can easily make up your own list since many of the organizations are similar from one municipality to another.

To report burned out street lights:
Ottawa Hydro

To report poor street lighting, dark alleys, poorly lit banking centres, bus stops, trees or bushes on public property that pose a safety hazard **or** sidewalks that are in disrepair or in need of snow clearance:

City of Ottawa, Operations Division 2445444

To report vehicles parking too close to an intersection:
City of Ottawa, Parking Control 2445600.

To report garbage problems, poor maintenance or deteriorating properties:
City of Ottawa, Property Standards Division 2445670

To report **stray or** unleashed dogs:
City of Ottawa, Animal Control

**Find out what the numbers are in your area,
and make a list for your records**

APPENDIX E: OTHER TYPES OF AUDITS

Auditing policies, practices and services

It is important to remember that improving the physical area is only one piece of a complex puzzle. Women's safety is affected not only by whether there are enough lights, emergency services such as telephones, or people within calling distances, but also by factors such as policies, practices and services. It is also feasible to "audit" human and policy practices. For example, the following questions can help you audit policies, practices and services at work, at school, in the groups you belong to, in your housing complex:

- Do you trust the people you would have to go to for help if you have been sexually assaulted? Would they be sensitive to your needs?
- Do you have the information that you need about sexual assaults that have happened in your neighbourhood or workplace?
- Do you have a say in decisions that affect your safety?

Here are some sample questions about policies and procedures -- they can be adjusted for use in a housing project, a school, a community centre, or a university:

1. Are there policies on sexual harassment?

yes no don't know

In your opinion, how well do they work?

very well well satisfactorily poorly

Comment:

2. Do you know of any attacks or harassment of immigrants or people of colour (racism)? yes no don't know

What was the response?

Comment:

3. Do you know of any incidents of harassment, inappropriate touching or violence against women or children (sexism or sexual assault)?

yes no don't know

What was the response?

Comment:

4. Do you know of any attacks or harassment of lesbians or gays (homophobia)? yes no don't know

What was the response?

Comment:

5. Are self-defence courses like the Wen-do model of awareness, avoidance and action offered nearby?
 yes no don't know

Is there a fee to take them?
 yes no don't know

In your opinion, how well do they work?
 very well well satisfactorily poorly

Comment;

APPENDIX E: OTHER TYPES OF AUDITS (Continued)

Immigrant and Refugee Women

The immigrant and refugee women with whom we worked to update the Women's Safety Audit Guide considered auditing policies, practices and services as an essential part of looking at issues of personal safety for immigrant and refugee women. They related experiences about not feeling safe or comfortable when using a public service because they were treated rudely, ignored or subjected to humiliating and insulting comments and questions about their race, language, culture and religion. They suggested the following questions as a means to evaluate how safe or comfortable they felt when interacting with public and government services providers:

1. As a person of a minority race, culture, language, physical and mental ability, sexual orientation, or religion, do I feel that I am treated fairly by people in the following institutions?

- Security guards, police, firefighters
- Social/Health Services providers
- Legal service and Court House staff
- Public transit officials (bus, taxi, etc.)
- Sales people/Businesses representatives
- Recreation/Community centre staff
- School personnel/administrators
- Immigration officials
- Employment/Placement centre staff
- Parkings/Buildings maintenance personnel
- Other (s)

2. Are my children treated fairly by Peers, teachers and school administrators?

yes no

3. Do I feel that there are materials used in classrooms or in media advertising that are offensive/insensitive of cultural and racial differences?

yes no

4. Do I sometimes feel that I am exploited by people in authority because it is assumed that I do not know Canadian Law or my rights as a citizen?

yes no

5. Do I witness or am I subjected to rude and offensive remarks and behaviors, aggressive or intimidating body language, or being ignored?

yes no

APPENDIX E: OTHER TYPES OF AUDITS (Continued)

Auditing Relationships

Sometimes we can't put our finger on why we feel uncomfortable with men we know. Pay attention to your "gut" reaction. There is likely a good reason for it. You may be experiencing, or be at risk of abuse. It is important to recognize a situation that puts you at risk, so do not ignore your intuition. You might regret it later.

You may be in a lesbian relationship. While the majority of perpetrators of partner violence are men, women in lesbian relationships can also be perpetrators. If your partner exhibits the behaviors listed below, you may be in an abusive relationship.

If something seems wrong in your relationship, watch for signs of abuse. You can audit your relationships for danger signs just as you would audit your physical environment. Some of the signs which should warn you of danger, especially with men or women you are close to, are listed below.

Do the following behaviors apply to partner, friend any your or spouse?

- 0 Very jealous and doesn't want you to talk to other men or women.
- 0 Criticizes your friends and wants you to stop seeing them.
- 0 Wants to know where you are and who you are with all the time.
- 0 Tries to control your contacts with family members.
- 0 Often criticizes what you wear.
- 0 Usually criticizes what you do and say.
- 0 Tells people about things you did or said that are embarrassing and makes you feel stupid.
- 0 Blames you for things that go wrong for him/her.
- 0 Makes jokes which put you and other women down.
- 0 Calls you stupid, lazy, fat, ugly, a "slut", or other things that make you feel bad.

If any of these behaviors sound familiar, then your partner, friend or spouse is trying to control your activities and who you see and talk to. If he/she succeeds, you will be much more dependent on him/her.

APPENDIX E: OTHER TYPES OF AUDITS (Continued)

*If any of the following behaviors apply to your partner, friend or spouse, he/she is putting you down and **making you** feel less confident, less in **control***

- Likes to drive fast or do dangerous things to scare you.
 - Gets carried away when you are playing and hurts you, or holds you down to make you feel helpless or humiliated, and to make you give in to his/her demands.
 - Becomes angry or violent when drinking or using drugs.
 - Makes threats about hitting you, hurting your friends, your pets, or members of your family if you don't do what he/she wants.
 - Threatens to leave you or kill him/herself if you don't obey' him/her.
 - Forces you, by threats or physical force, to do sexual things that you don't want to do.
 - Becomes very angry about small, unimportant things.
 - Won't express his/her feelings when asked and then he/she blows up.
 - Hits you. He/she may be sorry afterward, but he/she hits you.
- If your partner, spouse or friend does any of these things, he/she is threatening you and in some cases using physical violence.

You may know other individuals who make you feel uncomfortable, even unsafe, at times. For instance:

- Is there someone at work who bothers you?
- Do you feel uncomfortable dealing with a particular bus driver?
- Do you feel uneasy having to walk past a particular man or a group of men on the street?
- Does your doctor, lawyer, teacher, or another person in a position of authority do or say things that you don't like?

Ignoring your instincts about these gut feelings may also put you at risk. Whatever kind of audit you choose to do, it is important to remember that your feelings and experiences count. You are the expert, and you can take charge of making sure that the spaces you live and work in are safe, and the relationships you are part of are happy, healthy and safe.

1 List adapted from a leaflet on Teen Abuse developed by Crossroads Shelter, Peterborough, Ontario

APPENDIX E' OTHER TYPES OF AUDITS
(Continued)

Local Community Resources

Below is a list of community resources in Ottawa-Carleton that offer counselling and support for women who have been abused. You may find similar resources within your own community.

Anglophone and/or Bilingual Services:

| | |
|---|----------|
| Sexual Assault Support Centre, Crisis line | 234-2266 |
| TTY (for hearing impaired) | 725-1657 |

| | |
|--|----------|
| Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre Crisis Line | 562-2333 |
| TTY (for hearing impaired) | 562-3860 |

| | |
|--|----------|
| Gloucester Services for abused women../ Crisis line | 745-4818 |
|--|----------|

| | |
|--------------------------------------|----------|
| Family Service Centre Crisis Line | 725-3601 |
| TTY | 725-6175 |

| | |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Nelson House 24 Line | 225-3129 |
| TTY | 225-4653 |

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| Interval House Crisis Line | 234-5181 |
| TTY | 234-5393 |

Francophone Services:

| | |
|----------------------------------|----------|
| La Présence Ottawa 24hr ligne | 241-8297 |
|----------------------------------|----------|

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| Maison d'Amitié 24hr ligne | 747-0020 |
| TTY | 747-9116 |

| | |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| TEL-AIDE Outaouais Urbain | 741-6433 |
| Rurale | 1-800-567-9699 |

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