

Personal safety tips from the Sheriff's Department

According to the Sheriff's Department, there were TWO attempted abductions of students yesterday, Oct. 12. One was in the Meadowridge area of south Newhall Avenue and involved a girl who attends Golden Valley HS. The other was in Tesorro del Valle and involved an elementary school student. Both intended victims escaped and gave very clear descriptions of the cars and suspects involved. They appear to be two totally separate incidents--different areas of the valley, different descriptions of the vehicle and suspects. The Sheriff's Department is concerned enough to want to get the word out about how children can avoid this type of situation:

Santa Clarita Valley Sheriff's Station officials are offering the following personal safety tips:

- * Always be alert and aware of the people around you, especially if you are alone or it is dark.
- * Educate yourself concerning prevention tactics.
- * Be aware of locations and situations which would make you vulnerable to crime, such as alleys, dark parking lots, and remote unlit or sparsely traveled walkways and pathways.
- * Whenever possible, travel or walk with a friend.
- * Stay in well-lighted areas as much as possible.
- * Avoid doorways, bushes, and alleys where someone could hide.
- * Walk confidently, and at a steady pace.
- * Do not respond to conversation from strangers on the street when other risk factors are present, continue walking.
- * Don't set a pattern - use different routes of travel and varying times when walking, exercising, or leaving your house or place of business.
- * Immediately report suspicious activity or persons in your neighborhoods to the Santa Clarita Valley Sheriff's Station.
- * Be a good witness - Try to get a vehicle license plate number. If you can't get the vehicle license plate number try to get as much identifying information about the vehicle or person as you can. Such as, color, make, model, damage, type of rims, stickers, etc. pertaining to vehicles. Clothing, scars, tattoos, oddities, etc. pertaining to people.
- * Take a cell phone picture or video of the person or vehicle if you can safely do so. Save/store the information in your phone or PDA.
- * Write down license plates of unfamiliar vehicles in your neighborhoods in case something comes of them at a later date. The information may solve a case should a crime be occurring.
- * Immediately call 9-1-1 and use your cell phone if you have one as a deterrent.

Michele Krantz