

For immediate release

## **THE SHORTEST, DARKEST DAY OF THE YEAR IS HERE - A REMINDER FOR ALL OF US TO STAY SAFE ON THE STREETS DURING THE HOLIDAYS**

**Vancouver, B.C. (December 21, 2022):** A senior is knocked down at a bus stop in Strathcona. Another senior is attacked with bear spray in a New Westminster intersection. A woman is suddenly punched in the eye while walking in downtown Vancouver.

These are just some of the unprovoked, random attacks we've heard about as an ongoing string of assaults continues almost daily around the Lower Mainland. We've all seen it can suddenly come out of nowhere, and now that we're in the darkest part of the year, and the holiday season, we all tend to be out walking the streets more to shop, socialize at bars and restaurants, and attend special events.

**Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers reminds everyone young and old that there are several ways to help stay as safe as possible when walking outside or while visiting stores and other businesses.**

"Police and we at Crime Stoppers have complete lists of tips you can look up online to help keep parents, children and teenagers as safe as possible when they go out," says Linda Annis, Executive Director of Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers. "Awareness of your surroundings is important and there are actions you can take that might prevent an attack. And if you know anything about who might be behind these attacks, but want to remain anonymous, call us at Crime Stoppers. We'll pass the information to police, but not your personal information."

Anyone with information that will lead police to the suspect involved in any random attack can contact Crime Stoppers anonymously at 1-800-222-TIPS, or 1-855-448-8477 (new number), through the "P3" Crime Stoppers app, online at [solvecrime.ca](http://solvecrime.ca) or through Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers' [Facebook page](#).

**Summary of tips attached from <http://solvecrime.ca/index.php/en/safety-tips/personal-safety>**

### **About Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers**

Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers is a non-profit society and registered charity that offers rewards for anonymous tip information about criminal activity and provides it to investigators in the communities of Metro Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers accepts tips in 115 different languages and will pay a reward of up to \$5,000 for information leading to the arrest of a criminal, recovery of stolen property, seizure of illegal drugs or guns or denial of a fraudulent insurance claim. Tipsters stay anonymous by using code numbers to check back later and collect their rewards. Find MVCS on Twitter: [@solvecrime](#).

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## BACKGROUNDER

### PERSONAL SAFETY TIPS FROM METRO VANCOUVER CRIME STOPPERS

*We all want to be as safe as possible when out and about. Here are some simple precautions you can take:*

#### **CLUB/PARTY/CONCERT**

- *Where possible, do not walk around at night on your own.*
- *Familiarize yourself with the layout of the venue; try to stay in well-lit, crowded areas.*
- *Do not accept drinks from people you do not know; do not leave your drink unattended.*
- *If you are going to drink, do so responsibly*
- *Have friends/family you trust there to watch over you.*
- *Do not sample drinks; even from friends and acquaintances...most victims of sexual assault know their attackers.*
- *Take note of where event staff or security/police officers and first aid are located*
- *If you see something, say something as it is better to prevent something before it is too late*

#### **OUTDOORS**

- *Make sure you plan and know your route; be aware of your surroundings*
- *Always walk in well-lit areas; avoid wooded areas, especially at night*
- *Run facing oncoming traffic and wear reflective clothes*
- *Avoid headphones that make it hard to be fully aware of your surroundings, especially at night*
- *If you suspect you are being followed, cross the street, go to the nearest home, service station or business and call the police*

#### **SHOPPING**

- *Keep your handbag closed at all times – crowded shopping areas make you an easier target*
- *Stay alert when using your mobile*
- *Be aware of your surroundings in the parking lot*
- *Don't leave your house keys or portable garage openers in your car in sight*
- *Never display large sums of money in public*

#### **TRAVELLING**

- *Use a valid rideshare, taxi service or online cab checker to confirm it is licensed*
- *Listen to your instincts: if you feel uneasy about the driver, do not get in the car.*
- *When driving, make sure your car has enough fuel to complete your journey.*
- *Check it for broken lights, windshield cracks.*
- *Never give a ride to a stranger.*
- *Keep all the doors locked, even when you are in the vehicle*
- *On trains and buses, stand in a well-lit place near other people.*
- *If someone is bothering you, tell the driver of the bus or a Transit Security Officer - you can stay with them if you continue to feel uncomfortable.*

**Additional lists of safety tips are also available online from both the [RCMP](#) and [Vancouver Police](#).**