

the out-of-doors often in warm weather. They should take note of any strange behavior by men in the area and notice if there are people nearby who might offer protection if needed, she says.

Rapists often strike up conversations to feel out potential victims according to Wiemann. Women should not feel it is their responsibility to be polite; if they don't feel like talking they shouldn't.

Wiemann says society has trained both men and women in a "continuum of behavior." This continuum, she says, condones men whistling at, following and harassing women and women feeling afraid to be rude or "unladylike" if they reject a man's attempts at conversation.

"Men are trained since childhood that women like to be whistled at and receive attention," she says.

"Women need to get the message that that's not appropriate behavior. They have the right to say I don't like what you're doing, leave me alone."

Just developing such an attitude may in itself be enough to save a woman from being assaulted, Wiemann says.

Contrary to another myth, rapists usually back off when they meet resistance, she says.

"Women can protect themselves by resisting. Most rapists don't persist if she resists in any way. She doesn't need to know a lot of self-defense, just perseverance," she says.

Besides protecting herself physically, Wiemann says a woman should do anything possible to call attention to the situation, whether it's shouting or using a whistle.

The notion that a woman should give in and offer no resistance in order to prevent further harm is a fallacy, she says. Rapists prefer easy victims who don't resist and usually back off when confronted with an assertive woman, Wiemann says.

The Network teaches preventative behavior and assertiveness in women through workshops in the community. Attitude is the focus of these workshops, which are for men and women.

Prevention of rape is the goal of the workshops and if people change their attitudes then maybe they will change the "continuum of behavior", she says.

Faced with changing ingrained behavior to accomplish the Network's goals and realizing all indicators predict increased calls to the Network, Wiemann maintains a positive outlook.

Awareness can help women prevent rape

By Jim Moore
Of the Emerald

The following are some tips from the Rape Crisis Center and Eugene Police to prevent being attacked:

•**Be aware.** Know who's around you and take note of any strange behavior.

•**Be assertive.** Don't be polite. Women don't have to accept behavior they don't approve of, and they should learn what their body language tells people. An assertive posture may ward off trouble before it starts.

•**Know where help is.** Take note of people around you who could offer aid if needed. Know where such people might be located in the vicinity — places like stores, police stations, and fire stations.

•**Don't be alone.** If a woman jogs she should go with a friend or take a dog. Also, it's important to vary the route and not establish any patterns.

•**If alone.** A woman walking alone at night should stay in the open and avoid alleys, doorways, shrubs and secluded areas. If returning to the car, have the keys ready, don't spend time fumbling for them, and be sure to check the backseat before entering the car. If a woman is driving alone at night and the car breaks down, she should lift the hood and immediately return to the car, lock the doors and wait for a police officer to arrive. There are also signs that can be purchased that fit in the rear window that say "call police," these signs fold up and can easily be carried in the back seat.

•**Around the home.** More than half the reported rapes occur in the victims' own home, according Eugene police officer April Norman, so it's important to make sure the home is secure. Don't open the door for strangers, if someone says they represent a business, get identification and if there are any doubts at all call the police. Don't give information over the phone, especially about being alone in the home.

Here are some tips about what to do if attacked:

•**Don't panic.** It's important to keep one's head and try to call attention to the situation by making noise any way possible. Even if help is not readily available, such tactics may scare away an attacker.

•**Self-defense.** If a woman has been trained in a self-protection class she may want to use physical force to defend herself. She must know her limitations though, and be willing to go 100 percent once she starts fighting back.

•**Canisters.** There are a number of self-defense spray canisters on the market, the most common of which uses mace. If a woman wishes to carry these she should learn how to use them, she should remember that the canister can be used against her.

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