

Don't Be a Victim

Sometimes people think that because someone has a developmental disability, they will be an easy victim. Don't let this happen to you. There are things you can do to be a little safer. For example:

- If you are in a crowded area, be sure your purse is closed and hanging across your shoulder where you can see it and hold on to it. Guys, put your wallet in a front pocket or in an inside jacket pocket. Keep backpacks all the way on so no one can grab it and run away with your things
- If you use a wheelchair, look around and be sure you could get away quickly and not be trapped by things in the way.
- If you have trouble seeing well, then go to new places with a trusted friend who can help locate safe areas. If you must travel alone, stick to busy areas and don't let yourself get too far away from other people.
- When you go to an ATM machine, don't use it if other people are so close they could grab your money or read your PIN number.
- Having a cell phone and knowing how to use it can be a lifesaver. Never let anyone take it away from you so keep it out of sight.
- If you ever have to call 9-1-1 , tell the dispatcher if you have special needs that police or emergency people should know.
- If you are looking for someone to help you, don't try to hire someone on your own. Go to or call a disability organizations for assistance.
- Think about taking a class in self defense that is just for persons with some disabilities. Your case manager or advocate might be able to help you find one that is just right for you.

Remember, these things will help but they are not always perfect. Keep safety on your mind and use good judgment! When you need help, don't be afraid to ask.

Thanks to San Francisco SAFE-Safety Awareness for Everyone (SFSAFE.org) for some of the ideas in this article.