

For immediate release

## **THE DARKEST MONTH OF THE YEAR IS HERE – TIME TO BE EXTRA VIGILANT ABOUT REPORTING CRIME THIS HOLIDAY SEASON**

**Vancouver, B.C. (December 4, 2024):** The holidays mean getting out to shop, socializing at parties, meeting friends at bars and restaurants, and going to shows and other special events.

But the days are also getting shorter and darker, and there are ongoing concerns about public safety in communities across B.C. It's time to take an extra minute to think about staying safe, being aware of our surroundings, and ANONYMOUSLY reporting any information you have about a crime to Crime Stoppers.

"Every year, someone becomes a victim of something this time of year, but there are actions you can take proactively to help you stay safe on the streets, in stores or at holiday gatherings," says Linda Annis, Executive Director of Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers. "Crime Stoppers has lists of common-sense tips to help keep parents, children and teenagers safe when they go out. And if you do know anything about who might be behind street violence, random attacks or any other crime, but want to remain ANONYMOUS, call us at Crime Stoppers. We'll pass the information to police, but you will never be identified."

Anonymous tips may be provided through Crime Stoppers' downloadable "P3" app for Apple and Android phones, calling Crime Stoppers or 1-800-222- 8477, online at [solvecrime.ca](https://solvecrime.ca), or by following the link on the Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers [Facebook page](#).

***A summary of personal safety tips is attached, and is online at [SolveCrime.ca](https://SolveCrime.ca)***

### **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](https://@solvecrime).

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## **BACKGROUNDER**

### **PERSONAL SAFETY TIPS FROM METRO VANCOUVER CRIME STOPPERS**

A province-wide survey released by the Save Our Streets coalition in September contained some sobering facts:

- 50% of respondents fear for their safety in their own community - 58% said there are areas in their community they avoid out of fear
- 55% felt the level of criminal activity in their community had increased in the past four years
- Three-in-four (74%) said crime and violence are impacting their quality of life
- 88% believe crimes go unreported in B.C. due to lack of confidence in the justice system

#### **STAY SAFE AT A CLUB/PARTY/CONCERT**

- Where possible, have friends/family with you, don't walk around at night on your own
- Familiarize yourself with the layout of the venue; try to stay in well-lit, crowded areas
- Take note of where to find event staff or security/police officers and first aid
- If you plan to drink, do so responsibly. Don't accept drinks from people you do not know or leave your drink unattended.
- If you see something, say something.

#### **OUTDOORS**

- Know your route, be aware of your surroundings, and avoid headphones
- Always walk in well-lit areas; avoid wooded and dimly lit areas, especially at night
- When out for a run, face oncoming traffic and wear reflective clothes
- 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 and close at hand – crowded shopping areas make you an easier target for purse snatchers and pickpockets. Never display large sums of money in public
- Stay alert when using your phone, be aware of who's near you; be aware of your surroundings in a parking lot
- Don't leave your house keys or portable garage openers in your car where thieves can steal them

#### **TRAVELLING**

- Use a valid rideshare or taxi service. 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 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.