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Our mission is to campaign, educate and support people to help reduce the risk of violence and aggression for everyone.

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Suzy Lamplugh Trust was founded in 1986 following the disappearance of the young estate agent. The aim of the Trust is to raise awareness of the importance of personal safety and to help people to avoid violence and aggression and live safer, more confident lives.

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**KEEPING SAFE**

**Dealing With Aggression**

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# Dealing with Aggression

**No one can say with any certainty what they would do if faced with difficult or stressful situations. Many factors can affect the way you behave; from your own confidence and experience to how you are feeling on the day. There are no right or wrong answers but it will help if you think through the options ahead of time.**

**Be aware of changes in the behaviour** of the person you are with, especially if they seem to be becoming more angry or irritated. It is very rare for aggression or violence to come from nowhere.

**Try to use your own communication skills** to defuse a difficult situation early on. Think about not only what you say but how you say it.

**If the person you are with is getting angry**, try to remain calm. Do not be drawn into their anger.

**Avoid entering the aggressor's personal space** or touching them, as this will make the aggressor feel threatened and can escalate the situation.

## **Remember**

- **Trust your instincts**
- **Never underestimate a threat**
- **If you feel uneasy or alarm bells start ringing — act right away**



## TOP TIPS

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**Beware of your own body language.** For example, standing with your feet apart and your arms folded or your finger pointing can be seen as aggressive or patronising.

**The majority of communication is through body language**, a lot through tone of voice and only a little through words.

**If all else fails...your aim is to get away!**

**Be assertive but avoid** meeting aggression with aggression.

**Use exit strategies** — have a pre-planned way to excuse yourself from a difficult situation. For example, you can't help them so you are going to get someone who can sort the problem out for them.

**Apply diversion techniques** to distract them whilst you make your exit.

**Use your voice** — shout a specific instruction such as "Call the police!"

**Use** a Personal Safety alarm.

**Remember, the earlier you spot a potential problem arising the more choices you have to avoid it.**

**There is no guarantee that you will be able to completely avoid violence and aggression** in your working life. So it is important to know where you can go for help should you experience an incident.

**Find out in advance** what the reporting procedures are in your organisation and who to go to after an incident.

**If something happens to you**, tell your employer. By law they are expected to provide you with support and need to re-assess the risks so that they can put in extra control measures.

**It is important to report near misses** as well as actual incidents.

## **Self Defence**

**Physical self defence should only ever be used as a last resort with the only purpose being to get away from your attacker. Remember also that if you use excessive force, you could be legally liable for assault.**