Reduce your vulnerability to crime

pleasures. Sometimes, however, something rotten happens to the traveller.

It can be a tough, vicious world out there, depending upon where you travel to, and what kind of luck is riding with you.

Travellers are vulnerable because they tend to be cor-picuous -- by their clothing, their cameras and their habit of stopp ig to consult guidebook.

inals, on the omer hand, are on their own turf. They know all the best hiding places, all the diversionary tacties, all the escape routes.

Certain places are notorious for crimes against tourists. But don't act on easy assumptions about relative security.

You may be staying at the premier hotel in the city you are visiting, but -- just steps away -- muggers could lie in wait, confident of easy pickings when some hotel guest ventures out for a stroll.

In Paris, pickpockets tend to congregate in the Louvre Museum, preying on foreigners absorbed in

Grandparents' day

It's "Grandparent's Day" at the Halton Region Museum on Sunday, August 23, from 1-5 p.m. Kids can bring their grandparents and participate in making hand-dipped candles. Anyone unable to bring a grandparent, can bring an older family friend, neighbour or relative to act as their "adopted grandparent".

There is no charge for grandparents and the children who accompany them. All other visitors pay a small admission fee. General tours of the museum will also be available. Pre-register by contacting the museum at 878-3232.

Travel can be one of life's great contemplation of the Mona Lisa or Venus de Milo. TAKE CARE

This isn't to say that we should all become paranoid about the dangers, refuse to budge from home, and give an especially wide berth to

It's prudent, though, to pay some attention to the ways you can reduce your vulnerability to crime while away from home.

Like charity, such prudence



Travel

VINCENT

begins at home. Instead of carrying your vacation money in cash, take most of it in travellers' cheques. At most, they will cost one per cent of the face amount, although many institutions charge no commission at all. And plan to use your credit eards, as an siternative to cash or travellers' cheques, as often as possible.

(Speaking of credit cards, take only one or two major, internationally recognized ones. Leave the rest at home, along with whatever other contents of your wallet or purse you won't be needing.)

Next, decide exactly how and where you will carry your cash, travellers' cheques and credit cards. money-belt or something equivalent to it, worn under the clothing, is essential in my opinion, although some people feel that an inside coat pocket is adequate protection against pickpockets. Never carry anything of value in trouser hip-pockets.

DON'T FLAUNT IT If you have an expensive accessory bag for your camera, lenses and film, better leave it at home. To a thier, such a bag is a walking adverlisement that it contains valuable photographic equipment. Use something inconspicuous instead.

Shoulder bags worn by women should be zip-closed. Small is preferable to large, since it presents more of an obstacle to a lightfin, ered pickpacket.

Experts warn against showing your home address on luggage tags, since that tells people who handle or see your luggage that your home is likely to be unattended. Your business address is safer.

One of the many advantages of travelling with as little luggage as possible is that you are obviously less vulnerable to thievery with one suitcase to looke after than with. say, four.

Whatever the number of pieces, always be vigilant in guarding your luggage. The period of highest risk is the time between the baggage-claim area and your hotel room LOOK AT ME

Once you have settled in at your destination, you may be tempted to let down your guard. After all, you don't travel to far away places only to spend the time looking over your shoulder.

Nevertheless, you should continue

to be wary. You probably won't be able to blend into the local population, but do try not to stand out like a sore thumb if you can avoid it That's a sure way to attract unwanted attention. When you leave your hotel room,

don't place a sign on the door asking the chambermaid to make up the room - that proclaims that the room is empty. Do leave your room key at the hotel desk, to eliminate the possibility of your losing it and a thief finding it.

If you rent a car, never leave any of your belongings in view while the car is parked Lock them in the trunk, and try to park where the car is in plain view. Even a car trunk can be forced open, of course, so carry no more than necessary in the

Upon returning to your parked car, and before getting in, check to see that no one has hidden himself mside. On the road, don't stop for bitchlickers, cruel as that may

SPREAD IT AROUND

its unwise to earry all your valuables eash, credit cards, passport tickets - in the same place. Divide them up, and then if one batch is stolen, you may not lose everything

One theory is that it's prudent, in high-risk locations, to carry a spare billfold containing a wad of bills in small denominations, to be handed over to a thief if hecessary - thus averting the violence that a trustrated thief might inflict on you it you had nothing for him.

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Child's Best Defence

HERE ARE SOME GUIDELINES TO FOLLOW:

General Rule: Tell your children not to go anywhere with anyone without checking in first!

1. Child's identity code word: To be established and used only with parent and child. This word is a special word and the child should know it is only to be known between parent and child and helshe is never to go with anyone that doesn't know the special word.

2. Family Check-In System: There should be a constant check-in program with both parents and child. If this is established when the child is young it should extend through the teen years as well. Please keep in mind parents should have the same consideration of the child in checking in as they expect from the child. (Note to follow: If you are to return home by a certain time, let your child allow 15 minutes to a half-hour to call in and establish a new time or change of plans.)

3. Teach your children to know their neighborhood and the people in the area. Often a child is abducted by someone they know, so it is important to teach them to be perceptive about situations that "feel" right or wrong.

4. What to do in the event of abduction: Teach your child to scream! A child often freezes up when they are scared; teaching them to scream is often a little difficult-so practise. Teach the child what to scream/ e.g. "These people are not my mommy or daddy! They are trying to hurt me!"

5. Safe places to go if lost: If separated, children should know where block parents are or lost and found places and to recognize police officers and security guards etc. If you set out on a day's excursion to, say, Wonderland, first priority is to show the child where the information booths are, and exactly where to go if you are separated.

Conclusion: The Streetproofing Program hopes that three things are attained: 1. Check-In Policy.

2. That the child learns to say "NO" with confiden-

3. Child learns where and how to seek assistance. Bookings are now being accepted for courses in September. If you wish to look into this, call Child Find's Streetproofing Program at 1-842-5353. Ask for Pat Foster.

(A special thank you to these community minded businesses for their support in bringing Herald readers this important message.)



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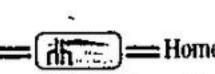
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