



PRESS RELEASE

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UK students live in fear of serious crime

- Sexual assault, violence, theft and credit card fraud are all real possibilities for today's students, according to latest Accommodation for Students research -

ACCOMMODATION FOR STUDENTS

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- 55% of students have been a victim of crime
- 36% feel unsafe when out socialising
- Students believe there is a 62% chance of being mugged or assaulted
- Female students think there is a 70% likelihood of being sexually assaulted or having their drink spiked
- Being the victim of theft or burglary is 48% likely
- Even financial crime: credit card fraud, stolen identity is given a 33% probability

A survey amongst nearly 400 students across the UK by Accommodation for Students (www.accommodationforstudents.com), the UK's No 1 student accommodation website, into students' views on crime has revealed that over one third of students feel unsafe in going about parts of their everyday lives. More remarkably, students believe there is up to a 62% likelihood that they will fall victim to some sort of serious crime.

Students were asked the question:

'What crimes are you most afraid of, and how likely is it that they might occur to you?'

Startlingly, really serious crimes emerged as students' worst fears, and with the highest expectations that they might become victims. Nearly 400 students surveyed believed there was a staggering 62% likelihood that they would be the victim of assault: mugging and violence. Sexual crime (rape, molestation or drink spiking) was also allocated an extremely high probability - 55% (70% among women!). Burglary or theft was given a 48% likelihood of happening to them. Finally, being the victim of credit card fraud or stolen identity was given a 33% probability.

When asked whether they felt safe going about their everyday business, 9 out of 10 felt safe at home or whilst studying. However, when just being out and about (shopping, travelling etc) or whilst socialising (dining out, going to the pub etc), significant proportions, 26% and 36% respectively, said they felt unsafe.

Eve Miller, a recent BSc graduate from Nottingham Trent University, was a victim of both an attempted break-in and drink spiking. Of the latter, she said:

"I was on a night out with some girlfriends. I only had a couple of glasses of wine but I didn't seem to remember much about the evening which I knew wasn't right. The next thing I remember was being in my room later in the evening and feeling very ill. This continued

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through the next few days. I didn't drink again for about 6 months and am now very wary about doing so."

The research findings showed that 55% of those surveyed had already been the victim of at least one crime. Amongst those to have suffered a crime, burglary and theft, affecting 80% of victims, were the most common. Most popular items stolen were: money, 49%, mobile phone 38%, laptop 15%, bike 14%, CD player and jewellery, 11%. However, other serious crimes had surprisingly high figures: physical violence or threat (assault, mugging and intimidation) had happened to 44% of student crime victims; financial crimes (credit card fraud, stolen identity etc) impacted on 18%; whilst sexual crimes (rape, drink spiking) had happened to 18%.

Despite all this, 78% of students felt their local police did a good or excellent job. However, a miniscule 5% belonged to a Neighbourhood Watch scheme. 71% of students said they had excellent or good security on their property. By the same token, nearly 3 out of 10, 29%, said their home security was poor or very poor. In insurance terms, 44% of students said they had reasonable or comprehensive insurance cover whilst a staggering 33%, one third of all students surveyed, said they had no cover whatsoever!

Simon Thompson, director and co-founder of Accommodation for Students, commented: *"Crime is, indeed, an issue for students. As well as enabling our student visitors to quickly find accommodation, our website has other features that help them on a wider basis. Our student reviews rates each university town across various criteria, one of which is safety. We also help students obtain suitable and cost-effective insurance for their possessions via one-click quotes from top companies, like Endsleigh."*

Notes to editors about the research

The survey was conducted online with 372 students from across the UK: England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. It was carried out on 10th October, 2006. Student case studies are available on request.

Some Key Figures

Charts and tables are available on request



1. What crimes are you most afraid of? And give an indication of how likely it is that they might occur.

Mugging		
0-25% likely	139	37%
25-50%	129	34%
50-75%	81	21%
75 -100%	31	8%
Total	380	100%

Assault/violence		
0-25% likely	127	33%
25-50%	130	34%
50-75%	78	21%
75 -100%	45	12%
Total	380	100%

Sexual crime		
0-25% likely	220	58%
25-50%	63	17%
50-75%	50	13%
75 -100%	47	12%
Total	380	100%

Drink spiking		
0-25% likely	177	47%
25-50%	89	23%
50-75%	72	19%
75 -100%	42	11%
Total	380	100%



Burglary(theft inside the home)		
0-25% likely	207	54%
25-50%	110	29%
50-75%	36	9%
75 -100%	27	7%
Total	380	100%

Theft(outside the home)		
0-25% likely	111	29%
25-50%	148	39%
50-75%	99	26%
75 -100%	22	6%
Total	380	100%

Credit card/financial fraud		
0-25% likely	136	36%
25-50%	120	32%
50-75%	81	21%
75 -100%	43	11%
Total	380	100%

2. How safe do you feel in the following environments?

Out and about around home/university(walking, shopping, public/private transport)		
Very safe	47	12%
Quite safe	232	61%
A little unsafe	88	23%
Not at all safe	12	3%
Total	379	100%



Socialising (pub, club, dining out etc)		
Very safe	33	9%
Quite safe	210	55%
A little unsafe	115	30%
Not at all safe	22	6%
Total	380	100%

3. *Have you ever been a victim of crime?*

Yes	207	54%
No	173	46%
Total	380	100%

4. *If yes, what type of crime?*

Burglary (theft inside the home)	74	36%
Theft (outside the home)	94	45%
Assault	40	19%
Mugging	17	8%
Sexual crime	16	8%
Drink spiking	22	11%
Harassment/ Intimidation	37	18%
Credit card fraud	16	8%
Other financial crime (stolen identity, internet fraud etc)	23	11%
Other	15	7%



5. If you have been a victim of burglary or theft, what have you had stolen?

Laptop	27	15%
Bike	26	15%
Car	13	7%
Ipod/Mp3 Player	15	9%
TV	6	3%
CD Player	21	12%
Jewellery	20	11%
Clothes	16	9%
Money	87	49%
Mobile Phone	68	39%
Blackberry/Personal Organiser	2	1%
Other, please specify	46	26%

6. How good do you think your local policing is?

Excellent	24	6%
Good	272	72%
Poor	72	19%
Very poor	12	3%
Total	380	100%

7. Are you a member of a local neighbourhood watch scheme?

Yes	18	5%
No	362	95%
Total	80	100%



8. How good is the security on your property (quality of door/window locks, bars, easy access to common areas: hallways, gardens etc)?

Excellent	53	14%
Good	217	57%
Poor	95	25%
Very poor	15	4%
Total	380	100%

9. How comprehensive is the insurance cover for your possessions against theft?

Fully comprehensive	55	14%
Reasonable cover	109	29%
Basic cover	90	24%
No insurance	126	33%
Total	380	100%

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