

Bentonville Police Women's Self Defense

All women live with a certain level of risk of violent crime. Statistics show that a woman now 21 years old has a 1 in 4 chance of experiencing a violent crime in her lifetime. For them, much information is already available about how to reduce their risk ("stay alert") and how to respond if something bad happens ("fight back").

Danger the Ever Present Evil in the World

But some women are at an unusually high risk of serious assault or even murder. Just watch your local news carefully, it seems that every month or two a woman is murdered, usually by abusive ex-spouses or ex-boyfriends. Most of these tragic deaths could have been prevented.

Betsy McCandless Murray knew her ex-husband was out to get her. She did everything that women are conventionally advised to do, including obtaining a restraining order, filing criminal charges, going into hiding, changing her address, hiring a private investigator, and taking a self-defense class. Despite all these precautions, she was murdered by her ex-husband.

Shelters and other programs offer much information on personal security matters, ranging from what to pack in an "emergency get-away bag" to how to go into hiding. That is good and useful information, because it is always better to avoid a violent attack than to try to survive one. But as Betsy McCandless' situation has shown, hiding doesn't always work, and someone else can't be there to protect you every minute of the day and night.

The Bottom Line is YOU are Responsible for YOUR Own Well Being

Sometimes, violence comes despite the best possible avoidance measures, and when it does, there is often no opportunity to summon help. In those cases, a woman is forced to face her attacker alone, using only her own resources and knowledge to survive. Fortunately, women who are properly trained and confident in their ability to protect themselves can do so quite effectively.

"I've heard the claims. To make women safe, we must change the judicial system, police departments, the way little boys and girls are raised, society's ideas of marriage. . . A woman in a violent attack doesn't have time for that; she needs to be able to defend herself."

"Fighting back" is a difficult and uncomfortable subject for many women to think about, but it does not have to be that way. The concept is easy to understand, **Women should learn to defend themselves physically, harming their attackers instead of walking away or crying, then maybe, just maybe, they could begin to turn the tide of abuse from themselves and their sisters. Maybe if boys and men knew that they could be seriously hurt if they lifted their hands or opened their pants against the opposite sex, their abuse could be kept at bay.**"