

News

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Yates: They provide a 'false sense of security'

Are safety alarms actually safe?

by Heather Chase

Whether it is helpful or not, a controversial personal safety alarm will not be sold or promoted on campus until it is examined further.

Since she took office during the summer, Campus Safety Coordinator Tammy Yates has been contacted by a local distributor of the "Sport Pal", a personal alarm device that emits a 130 decibel noise when activated.

The device, which costs \$37, is worn on the waist and is activated when its pin is pulled. The alarm continues to sound until the pin is re-inserted or the battery wears out.

Yates' main concern is that this device may promote a false sense of security amongst students.

"Only 7% of attacks are by strangers, the rest are by friends, girlfriends or boyfriends, or family. These situations would not lend themselves to an alarm device," she said.

Another of her concerns is that students using this device may be more apt to take unnecessary risks, like walking alone in dangerous places.

She pointed out that locations like the path from the Aitken Centre to Skyline Acres are areas where the alarm might not be heard.

"The best way to fight off an attack is to be prepared for it and know what you can do yourself, scream, bite, scratch, anything to cause pain," Yates said.

The issue will be brought up at future Student Union meetings, expected in early October.

"This device does have some positive aspects. However, I feel that there are also some drawbacks that must first be examined

before this office - or the Student Union - makes any kind of policy," she said.

A local distributor of the alarms for Quorum International, Janice Brewer, said, "We are not trying to create fear by selling these devices, we are trying to increase awareness for personal security."

"This type of product is to help discourage the use of weapons that can be used against the victim such as a knife or mace."

"This alarm cannot be used to harm anyone, it will bring attention to the crime and scare off the attacker."

Brewer said that the sales for this device and its counterparts for use in homes and lockers have been going well in the past three months.

She pointed out that in her work with the police station and discussions with the RCMP, both organizations have said that this type of device should be used as an additional part of personal safety.

"We have been in contact with several local agencies as well as the Crime Prevention unit of the City Police and have received very favourable comments," Brewer said.

However, education is the main component of personal safety and this is a fact that everyone agrees on.

In the meantime, the university does offer safety services, like the SafeWalk program, self-defense courses, and general campus education that are aimed at educating the student body and letting them know what to do if they find themselves in an uncomfortable or dangerous situation.



Photo by Marc Landry

Female Anti-Assault Comprehensive Training System draws large turnout

by Mimi Cormier

The Female Anti-Assault Comprehensive Training System was presented to a large turnout of approximately 60 UNB and STU students in the Ballroom on Tuesday Sept. 14.

F.A.C.T.S. techniques are taught to female participants for a defense against male attackers in a variety of situations.

Besides physical tactics, awareness training is also an important part of F.A.C.T.S. By being aware of sexual assault statistics will provide some protection.

"It was good, it was very interesting," said Kim Fournier, a student who attended.

"You can pick up the moves right away. You'll remember how to do it," pointed out another participant, Monique LeBlanc.

They both agreed that anyone can learn the system.

The course has been taught on previous occasions and generates as much interest each time.

Course instructor Randy Breau and Campus Safety Coordinator Tammy Yates arranged over the summer to offer F.A.C.T.S.

Both the UNB and STU student unions supported the program by sponsoring it in conjunction with the university.

Breau is pleased with the response to F.A.C.T.S. "After re-

ceiving an overwhelming response, we'll definitely be having more of them," he said. There is a possibility of two more sessions this year.

The F.A.C.T.S. course was developed by John Williams, an acknowledged expert on self-defense techniques, who has had a long career teaching self-defense techniques in several countries and to various law enforcement agencies.

Breau stressed that the course is taught in a way that is "realistic". He has assisted Williams in teaching the course throughout Canada and the United States.

At Tuesday's session, Breau was assisted by Dave Simms, Shawn MacNeil, John Hammond, Phil Yang, and René Gallant, all UNB students who underwent training and screening before they were able to assist.

Pamphlets and material are donated by the RCMP and the Moncton and Fredericton police forces. Other information used in the course comes from Statistics Canada.

The free course is normally taught in one 3 1/2 hour session, and participants are welcome to attend future sessions.

Breau said he is "looking forward to the next one."

Police: Assault in Aitken was a false report

by Karen Burgess

The Fredericton City Police have confirmed that a charge of mischief will be laid against a young woman who falsely reported that she had been sexually assaulted at Aitken House during Orientation Week.

Inspector Haines, of the Fredericton City Police Department, explained that after a week-long investigation certain anomalies within the report were discovered.

This prompted the police to hold another interview with the complainant, during which time she admitted that she had filed a false report, he said.

The young woman and the alleged assailant were not students at UNB. Her identity will be protected from publication under the Young Offenders' Act.

Residence hosts forum on women's safety

by Jonathan Stone

After receiving negative press last week over what is now confirmed as a false report of sexual assault, the men of Aitken House will be offering an open forum to discuss ways to make it safer for women in residences.

Despite the false report, the men felt the problem needed to be addressed.

"There's still probably something we can do," said House Editor Crispin Richards, "We want to be part of the solution."

"We want the women to tell us what we can do to make them feel safer," he added.

The idea for a forum came from ex House Don, Father Monty Peters, after the House executive went to him for advice.

"You should always talk to the people who are going to benefit," said Peters. "Men don't set the conditions, they should listen to the women who will be affected," he added.

Richards is anticipating a good turnout.

"The guys are pretty optimistic. They're looking towards this forum," he said.

The forum will be held on Sunday, September 26 at 7:30pm in the Aitken House Library. Everyone is invited to attend.