



SAFETY AUDIT REPORT CARD

Date: March 22, 2007, from 6-8pm

Area Audited: Leslieville Neighborhood - 4 areas audited

A. OVERVIEW OF SAFETY AUDIT RESULTS – Physical Environment

METRAC's Safety Audit looks at how social and physical environments can make an area safe or unsafe. METRAC defines safety as '*freedom from the threat, fear, and experience of all kinds of violence, oppression, and discrimination.*' The physical environment includes streets, lighting, signs, and parks. These features are so common that people usually don't notice them. But the design of streets, parks, and buildings can impact how safe people feel in their neighbourhoods. Small changes in the physical environment can increase peoples' sense of safety.

Four groups conducted the safety audit of the Leslieville neighbourhood.

Group 1- Along Queen St. E. and north on Logan Ave. to Dundas St. E.

Group 2- Along Queen St. E. and north & south on Carlaw Ave.

Group 3- Along Queen St. E and north on Jones Ave.

Group 4- Along Queen St. E. and north on Pape Ave.

**see maps and Safety Audit Survey results in Appendix A & B*

Participants of the safety audit completed a total of 15 surveys. The group consisted of women who access the COUNTERfit program at South Riverdale Community Health Centre, who also reside in the area. The audit was completed on March 22nd, 2007 from 6-8pm.

Although 86% of the women surveyed indicated they feel safe in the area, the safety audit results for both the physical and social environment show that these women have several safety concerns.

There were several areas for safety enhancements with regards to physical features, which are:

- The area is very isolated during the night-time, which results in the women not knowing if someone would hear them screaming if in danger;
- There are some areas with poor lighting, especially in laneways and alleyway's, and on Logan Ave. due to the placement of streetlights only on one side of the street;
- Certain payphones have restricted access in the night hours, which is a cause for concern for the neighbourhood residents (*3 payphones at Pape Ave. and*

Queen St. E. intersection and Boston Ave. and Queen St. E. are turned off between 10pm and 6am);

- A crosswalk is needed at the intersection of Colgate Ave. and Carlaw Ave.;
- The TTC could be more effective and efficient if the streetcar could run more frequently through the area, as well as a Blue Night bus on Dundas St.;
- There was a prominent need for Drop-in Centres and Harm Reduction Centres for women that are open in the late evening, as there is no where for these residents to go at those times.

B. OVERVIEW OF SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT SURVEY

Peoples' attitudes and behaviours affect how comfortable and safe others feel around them. These attitudes and behaviours are part of the social environment of an area. The social environment reflects power relations in society. This means that people who have less power in society, the community, or their families are more likely to be victims of violence.

The Social Environment questions were answered in a group discussion. The participants' responses indicate multiple ways that their safety is impacted and that they don't feel very safe at all. Particular experiences that impede their safety include: incidents of harassment and discrimination, fear of being assaulted, feelings of isolation, not feeling comfortable talking to the police, and feeling generally unsafe in many community locations. Women participants also report several gaps in social services and community support services in the area.

Here are the highlights from the responses received (see Appendix C for full results).

- The majority of women do not feel safe when walking outside at night.
- The majority of the women believed that they could not easily escape from a scary situation in the neighbourhood at night.
- The majority of women feel isolated at night in the neighbourhood.
- Many women do not feel safe in laneways or alleyways.
- 89% of respondents do not feel comfortable speaking with Police Officers.
- There are a number of public services and spaces where respondents DO NOT feel comfortable entering. They include: parks, laneways & alleys, TTC Shelters (with one exit/entrance), recreation centre washrooms, parking lots (No Frills, underground lots etc.), the subway, behind businesses, school yards, variety stores on side streets, drug stores, back yards, elevators, stairwells, abandon buildings
- Streets that are dark make the women feel unsafe. They include: Carlaw, Eastern, Logan, Pape, Caroline. The main streets are safer because of more traffic and lighting.

- Changes that participants would like to see with the services they use include:
 - Addressing the discriminatory attitudes of hospitals, medical professionals, drug stores
 - Businesses that would provide assistance and help poor people out (i.e. left over food, etc.)
 - Addressing police officers assumptions and stereotypes made of street-involved women. For example:
 - *Asking women if they're a hooker.*
 - *Automatically assuming we are a hooker.*
 - *Automatically assuming we are drug addicts (e.g. mistaking mascara for a pipe)*
 - Lack of education / judgment
 - Being able to feel safe walking around in your neighbourhood (i.e. if you have a fight with your boyfriend)
 - There needs to be education for police

- There are a number of services in the area that are either lacking or needed. They include:
 - 24 hour services;
 - Women's drop-in with food (coffee, snack packs, vitamins, etc.), basic items (tampons, toothpaste, etc.), showers, laundry, clothing;
 - Late night drop in (till 6 a.m.);
 - Harm Reduction services need extended hours.

- Incidents of discrimination and harassment have occurred in the area at the following locations:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ On the street ○ In the park ○ On public transit ○ At work ○ At a store ○ At a restaurant ○ Night club/bar ○ Bus shelters ○ Social assistance office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Doctor's office ○ Laneways ○ Parking lot ○ Landlords ○ Cops ○ Corner store ○ Restaurants ○ Coffee shops ○ Trying to use the phone
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- Over 50% disclosed personal experiences of discrimination and/or harassment.

- If assaulted, respondents would get help from:
 - Home
 - Friends
 - Hospital
 - Some felt comfortable going to the police, others did not.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for enhancing the physical and social safety features of the Leslieville neighbourhood based on the safety audit results include the top 5 priority concerns expressed by the participants:

TOP SAFETY CONCERNS	IDEAS FOR ACTION	FOLLOW-UP
<p>Pay Phones:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Addressing the payphones with restricted access on Boston Ave. & Queen St. E. and Pape Ave. & Queen St. E. - Adding payphones at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Caroline & Queen o Pape & Dundas o On Eastern Ave. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contact the Community Police Liaison to report the restricted access phones and frame it as a women's safety issue. If unsuccessful, contact your Councillor's office. - Contact your Councillor's office about adding payphones at the listed locations. 	
<p>TTC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More frequent streetcars on Queen St. - Financially inaccessible - 24 hour service for Dundas bus east (blueline) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contact the TTC Chair Adam Giambrone at chair@ttc.ca to discuss the infrequent and night-time service, or phone 416-393-3030 to make a comment or suggestion. - Also contact your Councillor's office and other supportive services in the area. 	
<p>Cross Walks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adding a crosswalk at the corner of Colgate & Carlaw 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contact your Councillor's office about adding the crosswalk. 	
<p>Lights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Logan only on one side (back of Value Village) - Pape & Eastern install lights - Alleyways poorly lit – motion detectors helpful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contact your Councillor's office about adding lights. 	
<p>Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Soup kitchen - Drop in - Harm reduction open late 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss options with South Riverdale Community Health Centre staff 	

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D. STRATEGIES FOR FOLLOWING UP ON RESULTS

Here is a list of possible follow-up actions in response to the Safety Audit results:

- **Local Politician** – Because the audit was done on public property, following up with the local City Councillor should be done. A copy of this report card will be sent to Councillor Fletcher’s office but it may be a good idea to hold a meeting and invite them to discuss the results. Let them know what needs to be done to make the area safe for everyone.
- **Municipal Services** – If your group has identified things that need fixing in your neighbourhood, try contacting your municipal office.
 - Lights and litter in park: contact Parks, Forestry and Recreation at 416 392-1111.
 - For streetlights, contact Toronto Hydro at 416-542-3195.
 - Contact your local City Councillor to advocate on your behalf.
 - Toronto Municipal office: 416-338-0338
 - If your complaints go unheard, then you can consider contacting the Toronto Star’s The Fixer Column. They are interested in hearing about what’s broken and damaged in your neighbourhood. Go to www.thestar.com/thefixer, and click on the *Submit a Problem* link. Or call them at 416-869-4823.
- **Other strategies** – if the safety issues are important enough, then the community group may have to take matters into their own hands. The group may have to do whatever it takes to make sure that their safety issues are heard. Here are some possible actions:
 - Starting a safety committee in your area
 - Contacting the media
 - Making presentations at governments-initiated consultations
 - Holding community forums
 - Organizing workshops in the community
 - Holding community events
 - Surveys and opinion polls

APPENDIX A: Maps of Audit Walkabout Location

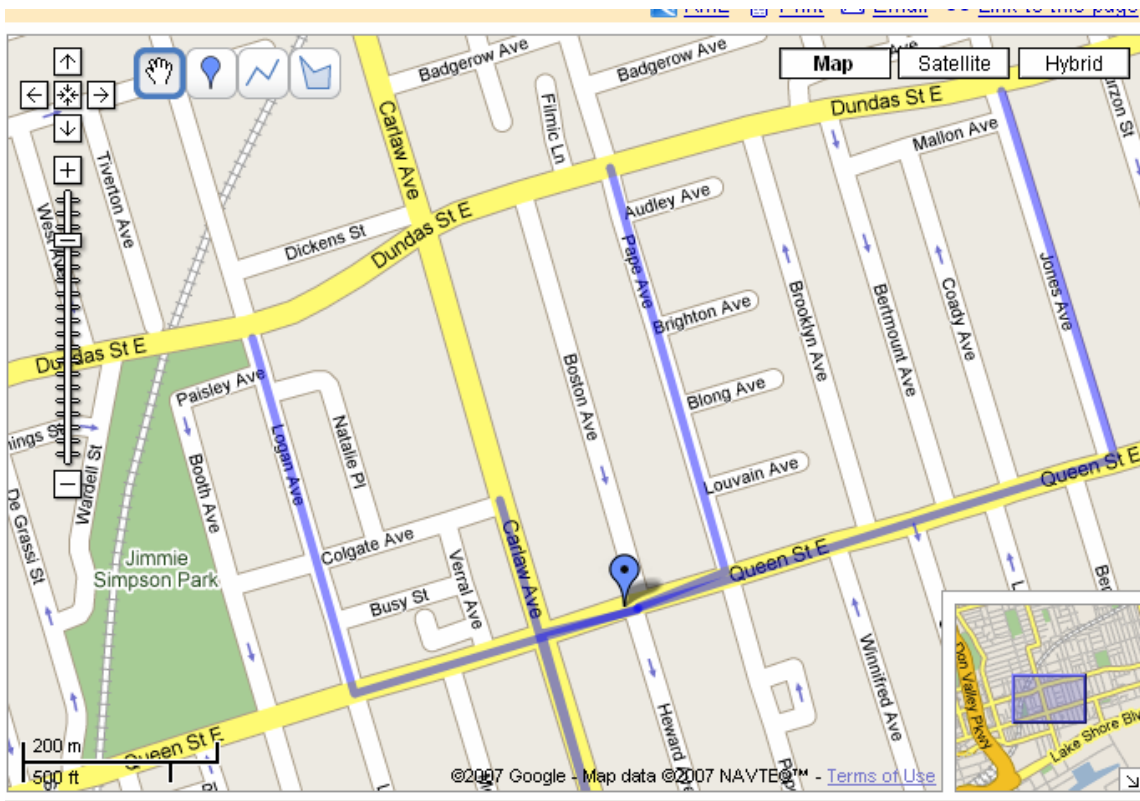
Date: March 22, 2007
Time of audit: 6-8pm
Name of group doing the audit: SRCHC - Counterfit program
of surveys completed: 15

Group 1- Along Queen St. E. and north on Logan Ave. to Dundas St. E.

Group 2- Along Queen St. E. and north & south on Carlaw Ave.

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Group 4- Along Queen St. E. and north on Pape Ave.



APPENDIX B: METRAC SAFETY AUDIT RESULTS – Physical Environment

		Y	N
1	I feel safe in this area	12	2
		86%	14%

Lighting

2	Are all the lights working in this area?	11	3
		79%	21%
3	Do any lights need to be added in this area?	8	6
		57%	43%
4	I feel safe in the alleyways at night	9	6
		60%	40%

Signs & Traffic

5	Are there signs missing in the area?	5	7
		42%	58%
6	Are there any crosswalks, or traffic lights that need to be added?	3	11
		21%	79%

Feeling Isolated

7	Are there enough payphones in this area?	2	12
		14%	86%
8	At night, is this area deserted?	8	4
		67%	33%
9	In the day, is this area deserted?	0	12
		0%	100%
10	If you were screaming, do you think people would hear you, and come to help?	4	11
		27%	73%

Maintenance

11	There is a lot of garbage/litter in the area.	10	3
		77%	23%

TTC

12	Are there bus stops that need bus shelters?	2	7
		22%	78%
13	Are there bus stops that are missing time schedules, or have time schedules that need to be updated?	5	4
		56%	44%
14	Are there any bus routes that need to run later in the night?	1	8
		11%	89%

APPENDIX C: GROUP DISCUSSION - Social Environment Questions

Surveillance/Security		Y	N
1	Do you feel safe when walking outside at night?	4	6
		40%	60%
	If no, what would make you feel safer?		
	more lighting, brighter lights, payphones		
2	If I am assaulted, I know where to get help.	8	1
		89%	11%
	If yes, where would you go for help?		
	hospital, home, friends, boyfriend, don't like cops		
3	I feel comfortable speaking with Police Officers.	1	8
		11%	89%
4	There is enough police patrolling the area	10	1
		91%	9%

Services

5	Check off the services you use the most.	
	COUNTERfit Program	5
	Walk in Clinic/Health Centre	5
	Women's Drop-in	3
	Shelter	1
	Food Bank	5
	Other, please specify:	
6	Do you feel uncomfortable entering any spaces in this neighbourhood? (Check all that apply)	
	Community centre	1
	Recreation centre	1
	Shops or businesses	5
	Parks	6
	Other, please specify:	
	behind business, subways, washrooms, ttc shelters.	

7	What is one change you would like to see in any of the services you use?
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a soup kitchen, services geared specifically to women, more late night drop-ins, more "out in the cold", hospitals discriminating against drug users, and business, more councillors at harm reduction community centres, attitudes in police to change (automatically assume women are crackheads and prostitutes), more sensitivity training and education on how to approach women (anti-harassment and awareness training).

8	What other services would you like to see in this area?
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women's drop-in at night time, 24 hour harm reduction, laundry/showers, soup kitchen, outreach at night, access to coffee/tampons, safe shelter 24/7, access to clothing and food.

Attitudes and Behaviours

9	Do other people make you feel unsafe in this neighbourhood?	5	6
		45%	55%
10	Have there been incidents of violence, assault, or harassment in the area?	6	3
		67%	33%
11	I have experienced harassment, discrimination or discomfort in this area.	7	0
		100%	0%
12	Where did the discrimination or harassment incident(s) occur?		
	On the street	6	
	In the park	4	
	On public transit	5	
	At work	1	
	At a store	5	
	At a restaurant	3	
	Night club/bar	4	
	Other location, please specify:		
	corner store, landlords, cops, coffee shops, using payphones, bus shelters, public transit, social assistance office, doctors office, laneway, and parking lot.		
13	Did you tell anybody about the incident?	3	3
	1 person reported to COUNTERFIT		

Additional Comments

Building self worth while still practicing my addiction. I felt as though our level of life, our ability and freedom of our expressions, be it tears or laughter are non-existent. We are not on the food chain, until we are trying to get clean. Can't we have quality of life as we are. Maybe we will enjoy life more- eventually... I hope.