SAFETREK

2016 Nominet Trust 100 Winner

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MOBILE APP HELPS WOMEN FEEL SAFE

Project URL: https://www.safetrekapp.com/
Project Twitter: @safetrek

- Safety & Security
- Mobile

When Zach Winkler was attending the University of Missouri he began to notice that many of his friends on campus were feeling unsafe, making phone calls when walking alone 'just in case'.

Attacks, especially on women, have become a major issue in the US. The Bureau of Justice Statistics reports that one in five female undergraduates have experienced sexual assault while in college, while the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey says that one in three women will experience intimate partner violence in their lifetime.

Winkler developed a mobile personal safety app called SafeTrek that bridges the gap between doing nothing and calling 911 in an unsafe situation. The way it works is simple. If you feel unsafe, open the app and hold your thumb down on the large 'safe' button. When you are safe, release your thumb and type in your 4-digit pin within 10 seconds. If the situation escalates and you need help, release your thumb and do not type your pin – your location, name and pre-set identifiers will be relayed by SafeTrek to local police.

The app has been downloaded 800,000 times and on average protects more than 30,000 people experiencing an unsafe situation each month, 95% of whom are women, and half of whom are 18–24 years old.

Although the app costs $2.99 a month, or $29 for a yearly plan, the team are also gathering data to help police and campuses improve security. Individual success stories abound. One user relies on the app when getting to and from her car while working night shifts at a hospital, while another used the app when she was attacked on a bus. The police arrived to protect her and were able to reprimand the attackers. Download the app via www.safetrekapp.com

Image courtesy of Georgie Pauwels

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