

SETTING UP A SAFEROOM

A safe room is a place in the home that family members can run to in the event of a break in. They are no longer just for the rich, who can afford hi-tech devices and steel walls. Setting up a functional safe room in the average home is easy and relatively inexpensive. A room that is properly organised will provide temporary shelter in the event of a home invasion and give you time to call for help.

Trellidor shows you how:

- Choose a room with as few windows as possible and a door that opens outwards. The bathroom is often the best place for the safe room as it usually has only one window to secure, and also has a toilet and running water.
- Fortify the door with a high quality sliding security barrier fitted inside the room. This is especially important if you only have hollow core internal doors that could easily be kicked open.
- Fit sliding security barriers to the windows. These will be an escape route for the entire family or a single member that can summon help after slipping out. In the event of a home invasion, you could shout for help out of this window, or sound an air horn to attract neighbours' attention.
- Keep a spare set of keys for the security barriers inside the safe room.
- Have a panic button fitted at child-level in this room, or make sure a portable one is permanently left here.
- Keep the supplies you'd need in an emergency in a cupboard or on a shelf in the room.
- Emergency supplies include a mobile phone and charger (some have battery chargers available now); a first aid kit; a torch (keep a fresh supply of batteries); water and food; defensive weapons such as pepper spray. If a family member is on regular medication or

is inclined to have panic attacks, keep supplies of these medicines in the emergency supply kit.

- Have emergency numbers stored in the mobile phone. In South Africa, the S.A. Police Services recommend you use the SAPS Crime Stop line 08600 10111 or the SAPS Emergency line 10111. Add your armed response service, a neighbour and/or relative, ambulance service, fire department and local police station.
- Develop a family plan for emergencies and practise it without unnecessarily scaring the children. Part of this plan should include the instruction to never play with the emergency supplies in the safe room.
- In an emergency, try to escape first. If this is impossible, lock yourselves in the safe room, phone the police and your security company and sit it out. Do not come out of the room until help arrives, unless there is an opportunity for someone to escape through the window and get help.

Remember, a safe room is only useful if you stay aware of what is going on around your home and are not caught off guard by criminal intrusion. Keep your security barriers closed and locked at all times, particularly if there has been a surge of crime in your area. The noise of someone trying to break through the barriers will alert you, giving you enough warning to escape with your family to the safe room and summon help.

Trellidor North Durban and Dolphin Coast are happy to help you secure a safe room in your home. Telephone them on 031 569 5000 and a Security Consultant will advise you on how to do this.

