

Breaking and Entering



If you are victim of breaking and entering (B & E), you can suffer more than the loss of your property. You may have strong feelings, such as anger and fear. You may also feel like you have been personally violated.

These feelings can be hard to deal with. You can also feel confused by the police and court system, and want to know how to protect your home from other break-ins. This is completely normal.

How You May Feel

Shock and Disbelief

You may feel *shock* and *disbelief* that someone has broken into your home, looked through your private property and stolen things you own.

Sense of Violation

Many people feel *personally violated*. This sense of loss can be for both your privacy and for your valuable possessions. You might even feel like you can't trust other people.

Anger and Frustration

It is very common to feel *angry* with the person who broke into your home. You may also feel *frustrated* because you can't tell the person how angry you are. It's also normal to be angry at the police and court system, especially if the police have not been able to return your property or find the person who did this to you.



Fear

You might be *afraid* that your home is not safe and that someone will break in again. Some people feel nervous when they're alone at home or worry when they're away. Talk to the police and your victim services worker about things you can do to keep people from breaking into your home. Remember, the person who broke into your house was probably not targeting you personally. Most thieves are trying to steal valuable things and don't break into houses because of who or what you are.

Suspicion

Many victims become *suspicious* of strangers. Call the police if you think someone is breaking the law or hurting another person.

Stress

It can be very *stressful* to live through a B & E, and you might have trouble sleeping or eating. If you have kids, helping them deal with their feelings can also be stressful. Sometimes people get stressed when they have to deal with the police and court system.

Guilt

Many victims feel *guilt*, as if there might have been something they could have done to stop the person from breaking into their homes.

*Remember that you are not to blame –
when someone else breaks the law, it is not your fault.*



Dealing with Children's Feelings

Children have the same feelings as adults, but they may have a harder time talking about it or dealing with it. It is normal for children to react to fear, anxiety or anger with:

- nightmares;
- trouble eating;
- trouble sleeping;
- bed-wetting;
- aggressive behaviour (hitting, yelling); or
- withdrawn behaviour (much more quiet or shy than usual).

Talk to your doctor or counsellor for help in dealing with these feelings, especially if they go on for a long time.

What You Can Do

You have been through a scary, upsetting experience. Remember that what you are feeling is perfectly normal and that these feelings will go away. Meanwhile, there are some things you can do to make this time easier and to make things better for yourself in the future:

- Take care of yourself, both physically and emotionally.
- If you are scared, ask someone to stay with you or stay at a friend's house.
- Talk to family and friends about what happened.
- Remember that your kids will need extra help to deal with their feelings. They may be especially worried that their home is not safe.
- If your stressful feelings don't go away, talk to your doctor.



Dealing with the Justice System

The police will ask you questions about the B & E. If they find the person who did it, you may have to go to court and tell a judge what happened. This can be confusing and stressful, but there are people who can help you every step of the way.

You might want to talk to the Crown prosecutor about restitution. That means that the people who broke into your house would have to pay you money to cover the costs of the things they broke or stole.

Making Your Home More Secure

You may want to know how you can be safer in your home. This can also help you deal with your feelings of anger, frustration and fear. You can put extra outdoor lights near your house, put deadbolt locks on your doors, and make sure that sliding doors and windows can't be forced out of their frames. You might also want to get involved in your local Block Watch program.



Call your local victim services worker for help with a victim impact statement, for information about your case or for emotional support in this difficult time:

Fort Good Hope: (867) 598-2247 or (867) 598-2352

Fort Smith: (867) 872-5911

Hay River: (867) 874-7212

Inuvik: (867) 777-5493 or (867) 777-1555

Yellowknife: (867) 920-2978 or (867) 669-1490

Translation is available in your language.

