

8 tips for starting a senior safety program in your community

1 **Identify the catalyst!** One *leader* in the community, normally the sheriff, police chief, district attorney, or elected official, must be willing to promote Triad, reaching out to other agency/organization leaders, asking to join a partnership-keeping seniors safe.

2 **Sign a Triad Agreement.** Usually, about 5-8 relevant community leaders sign a Triad agreement-an official document that indicates the respective agencies and them will participate in Triad for the good of the community.

3 **Establish a SALT Council.** Each agency in a community that works with, or for, the elderly should have a representative on the council. This is usually 10 to 20 persons--entities that have mutual responsibilities for helping seniors.

4 **Locate the seniors.** Members of the SALT Council must identify where the seniors are in the community, that is, where they live, shop, where the shut-in's are, and so forth. The easiest and most accurate way to do this is by contacting the aging office for your jurisdiction, whether county-run or Area Office on Aging.

5 **Conduct a Senior Survey.** One important early step is developing a survey to capture seniors' crime concerns fears. Your local college, university or SALT Council may be able to help design the survey. The survey must be effectively distributed and collected! Senior Centers, Meals on Wheels, and churches are possibilities. Review survey results and develop programs on both factual and perceived crimes.

6 **Develop Programs and Activities.** Now consider programs a SALT Council should undertake. Consider a lecture program at the senior center. Each month invite different speakers to share important community information to seniors. The SALT Council should discuss speakers, topics and issues to address.

7 **Assess the SALT's capacity.** Assess the capacity of volunteers and exploit skills and interests-assign tasks to people who want to do those tasks. Remember-every activity and program has requirements. Choose volunteers willing to meet tasks.

8 **Implement programs and Activities.** With proper planning, your Triad should launch its first activity. If applicable, be sure to invite the signers, city dignitaries, and seniors. Involving media before you need them is beneficial. Consider having a media representative on your SALT Council, but at a minimum, be sure to invite them to a SALT Council meeting, and to your event.