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DANGER AT AMERICA'S DOORSTEP: WHO HAS KEYS TO YOUR HOME?

Results and Findings of New Home Invasion & Burglary Study

Home Invasions Big Business for Burglars

- According to Crime Doctor, Chris E. McGoey, home invaders know they do not have to overcome alarm systems when the house is occupied – many homeowners turn them on only when leaving the house
- In addition, places of residence have become even more attractive targets to intruders, due to the technological advancements in commercial security systems in recent years.
- The Burglary Prevention Council notes that burglars break in to a house, apartment or condominium every 15 seconds
- July is the busiest month for burglars with the highest number of burglaries recorded, according to FBI statistics

Billions Lost In Millions of Home Burglaries

- According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, property crime makes up slightly more than three quarters of all crime in the U.S.
- There were 2.1 million incidents of burglary in 2004 resulting in an estimated \$3.5 billion in losses, according to the FBI
- In nearly 85 percent of all burglaries, the offender gained entry into the victim's residence or other building on the property notes the Bureau of Justice Statistics
- In two-thirds of completed burglaries, the burglar entered through unlocked or improperly locked doors or windows according to the Home Safety Council
- Some 65.7 percent of burglars gained entrance through forcible entry, which includes unlawful use of master keys, unauthorized keys – stolen, lost or copied keys – and lock picks, according to the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting Handbook

How Many Of Your Keys Are Really Out There?

- The majority of American homeowners (64%) have given a key to someone outside the immediate family, and nearly half (45%) have done so more than once
 - Nearly one-third (27%) of American homeowners have given out a key three or more times
 - Nearly 20 percent (17%) of American homeowners have four or more keys floating around out there
 - 13 percent of American homeowners have five or more keys floating around out there

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Who Has Those Keys?

- Nearly three-quarters (73%) of American homeowners who gave out keys have given them to neighbors or friends
- Half (49%) have given a key to extended family members living outside the home
- Surprisingly, nearly 20 percent (18%) have given keys to workers entering their homes, for example: contractors, painters, service men, plumbers
- Some 12 percent have given keys to cleaning people
- 10 percent admitted to having given keys to boyfriends or girlfriends

What If You Don’t Give Your Key Out?

- When questioned, more than two thirds (68%) of American homeowners realized that they have allowed someone to have unintended access to their key
 - Nearly 50 percent (49%) realized that friends, relatives or acquaintances of those they’ve given a key – people they do not know and have never met – had access to their key
 - 28 percent noted that neighbors or friends have unintended access to their key
 - 15 percent indicated that mechanics had unintended access
 - 14 percent indicated that workers in their home had unintended access – contractors, painters, service men, plumbers
 - 10 percent indicated that valet parking attendants had unintended access
 - Other groups with unintended access included cleaning people, babysitters, boyfriends/girlfriends and car wash personnel

An Underreported Threat?

- Some 10 percent of qualified respondents – those who have given a key or allowed access – have reported that someone entered their home illegally with a key
 - The majority of those (6%) reported that it happened more than once
- Nearly one in four (24%) of those experienced burglary, theft or damage to home or property

Are Americans Aware of the Risk?

- Nearly one-third (32%) of American homeowners did not think that anyone, ever, had access to their keys – a troubling, potentially mistaken belief
- More than three quarters (77%) of those who admitted having given keys or allowed access to their keys failed to be concerned about use of a key to enter their home illegally
 - Only 23 percent were concerned: 19 percent somewhat, but only 4 percent very concerned
- Unsurprisingly, women were more concerned than men
 - Nearly one third (27%) of women qualified respondents were concerned that someone could enter their home illegally with a key
 - Only 19 percent of men were concerned

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Are Americans Aware of the Risk?

- When questioned, nearly half (49%) of American homeowners realized that keys they have given out may reach unintended parties; but the other half (51%) continue to believe that keys given out will not be accessible to anyone but their intended recipients
- And, a surprising number of that group (90%) are not concerned about the threat of unlawful entry – *even though their keys are circulated outside of their home and are potentially vulnerable*

Are We Taking Any Steps Toward Prevention?

- Nearly one-half of those who have given out at least one key or admitted unintended access (44%) have done nothing to ensure no one enters their home with that key
- More than one-third (35%) merely asked for the key to be returned, (which does not address the issue that copies could be made)
- Only 13 percent changed locks and 8 percent used an additional lock
- 15 percent installed a security system

Total Universe = 912 American homeowners

Qualified Respondents = 510 homeowners who have either given a key to someone outside the immediate family OR allowed people to have access to their house key in less direct manner

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