

GoodGym launches training for men on women's night safety

Tuesday 7 November, 2023

GoodGym has launched training specifically aimed at men to educate them about how their behaviour impacts on women who wish to exercise at night.

- The UN found that 97% of women in the UK aged 18-24 have been sexually harassed in some way, and this impacts on their ability to enjoy outdoor spaces.
- Many women are forced to alter the exercising habits in winter for fear of being harassed or attacked, and some stop exercising outside completely.
- GoodGym aims to educate men on how their behaviours impacts on women and their feeling of safety.
- GoodGym's membership is 70% female and the organisation believes exercising outdoors is a human right.
- The training includes modules on understanding the experience of women exercising at night, understanding how men can not cause harm while out exercising and how to be an ally to women.

Public spaces remain a dangerous place for women in the UK, particularly at night. This problem is caused, in the vast majority, by men's behaviour and it is therefore men who need to change.

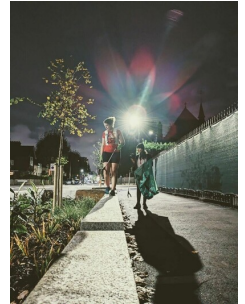
To support this GoodGym has developed training to enable men to become aware of their behaviour and address any behaviour that is part of the problem. The training was devised in partnership with GoodGymers and women who have experienced this behaviour. The training is not about helping women adapt their behaviour to deal with men's negative behaviour, it is aiming to prevent negative behaviour from men affecting women.

GoodGymers run, walk and cycle hundreds of thousands of kilometres every year as they complete good deeds for community groups and older people. Most of these sessions happen after dark, particularly in the winter months. It is therefore essential that women feel safe to undertake exercise and attend GoodGym sessions.

Caroline, a GoodGymer from London, explained how fear of men's behaviour impacts on her: "I run in winter only at rush hour when there are loads of people around and only on well-lit routes. I swerve away from footpaths and vans parked in shadow. I pay close attention to the surfaces I run on - could it cause me to slip/injure myself? Would this make me vulnerable? I never run at my best pace, in case I need a burst of speed in reserve to get away from an attacker"

Ed Field, Head of Growth and Partnerships for GoodGym, said: "Too many women have to change their exercising habits over the winter due to the behaviour of men. Let's be clear about this - this is a problem for men to solve, not women. I am proud to announce this training and urge all men to complete it on order to understand how they can make outdoor spaces safe for everyone"

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