

House break-ins have lasting personal impact

RAA's latest research reveals that victims' stress and anxiety levels are highly impacted following a house break-in.

"We surveyed over 750 South Australians and almost half of respondents (42 per cent) who had been burgled stated their stress levels had been impacted after the break-in," said RAA Secure Services Senior Manager, Ben Nottage.

Over 41 per cent of break-in victims also said their anxiety levels were impacted, and this number increased to over 60 per cent for those with children.

More than one third (35 per cent) of victims said their ability to sleep was impacted after the break-in, especially for females (46 per cent).

"It's really concerning and upsetting to see how much a house break-in can change and affect people's behaviour, but not surprising," said Mr Nottage.

"It is a very personal and highly stressful situation because it's horrible to think about people being in your personal space and stealing your valuable and meaningful possessions.

"Everyone likes to think their own home, family and possessions are safe, and a complete stranger breaking this comfort for you can definitely have a huge impact on your behaviour afterwards."

Nearly half (46 per cent) of respondents said their level of trust with others had changed dramatically after the break-in, and this increased even further to 66 per cent for single parents.

"It's important to try to get back to normal and feel safe in your home again after a break-in, but this isn't always easy," said Mr Nottage.

"Security measures such as an alarm, deadlocks, security screens, asset protectors and light sensors will help to give you peace of mind that your family and possessions will remain safe, but sometimes more is required on a personal level to help you after a break-in."

Victim Support Service (VSS) Chief Executive Julian Roffe said the RAA's research findings highlighted the detrimental impact of a break-in on victims and their families.

"We know that many people feel stressed, anxious or violated in the aftermath of a break-in. These are completely normal reactions to a traumatic event.

"But many people suffer the emotional impact of break-ins in silence, so it's important that they know they don't have to go through it alone.

"VSS provides free emotional support and practical information about personal safety, home security and compensation claims to people who have experienced a break-in.

"I encourage anyone who has experienced a break-in to call the 1800 VICTIM Helpline or visit www.victimsa.org for free information and support," said Mr Roffe.

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