

Don't be afraid to say 'no'

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KOTA KINABALU: Women need to be more assertive and learn to say "no" to avoid being potential rape victims.

Universiti Malaysia Sabah's (UMS) Psychology and Social Work School, Associate Professor Dr Balan Rathakrishnan, claims the reason why is that women have the tendency of saying "yes" because they are too attached to their partners.

"Some girls are afraid by saying 'no' to their boyfriends. That is why some girls will stick like glue to their boyfriends.

"This kind of attachment will lead to girls



Prof Dr Balan

needing their boyfriends' approval to do anything. They would always trust their boyfriends," he said.

Dr Balan said this in response to questions posed by participants on the second day of the Handling of Violence Cases-One Stop Crisis Centre (OSCC) seminar held at the Federal Administrative Complex on Thursday.

Giving an example, Dr Balan said the boyfriend would invite his girlfriend out for a drink at night and the girl would agree without being suspicious or knowing of the potential risks.

He said if the girls are aware of the dan-

gers they could always say "no" so he suggested training is needed.

Dr Balan said humans are always betrayed by pleasures and eventually girls with such tendencies will be led to other negative activities such as drugs, smoking and alcohol.

In UMS, he said assertive training is given to find out why women would have such tendencies and find ways to develop certain assertive traits among them.

"We would encourage them to say no so they could remain safe regardless if they were threatened by their boyfriends," he said.

Among others, Dr Balan also urged parents to keep a close watch on their chil-

dren's movement because many young couples like to hide real facts.

"Usually the young will develop their natural defence mechanism. So we are also trying to help parents to keep watch on their children," he said.

As an example, Dr Balan said when he was young his father had imposed a curfew and from there he had developed a fear of coming home late.

"Until I was in my fifth form, I still needed my father to send me to tuition. My father made sure I always go to tuition. This kind of family values will make the children to decline running away, even if they go out they will still come back.

"I am very confident of that," he said.