

Electronic Security in Daily Life

By: Laura Park

Many young people today do not think about how electronic security impacts their lives every day. Little do they know that all around them, in stores, schools and their homes, locks, cameras and alarm systems are keeping them safe and secure. Growing up I have always been surrounded by various locks. My dad would have locks around the house as he would bring them home to trouble-shoot for customers at his work. My sister and I would sit with wide-eyed stares as he would take apart the wires and lever and then put the whole lock back together. One of my happiest memories of my childhood was the night my dad let me program a lock. It allowed me to spend time with him and get a glimpse into his career and passion.

It was not until years later, that I realized how locks have a major impact in the lives of people. When I was fourteen years old, I began volunteering at a senior's home which houses residents with Alzheimer's and severe dementia. One of the first things I learned at the orientation, was the code for the key pads to open all the doors in the building. At first, I only thought of this as an important way to keep the seniors within their designated areas. I would often have encounters with residents trying to leave their assigned wing in an attempt to run an important errand such as catching the bus or buying groceries. Many thought they still lived at their home. However, my perspective changed after years of volunteering. The locks set in place all around the building were actually giving the people freedom and safety. Being in a contained area within a safe environment allows the residents to be healthy while engaging in fun activities to live their life to the fullest.

I have recently been accepted into the University of Dalhousie to obtain my degree in Therapeutic Recreation. My hope is to one day enrich the lives of seniors with Alzheimer's and dementia through the power of play. The activities I will be someday be planning will all take place in a secure environment, surrounded by electronic security. Monitored portals will be part of my daily work routine.

Recently, there was an article in my local paper about a planned innovative Alzheimer's village to be built in my community. Security will be an important factor of this three-acre village. The town will include housing, shops and large gardens enclosed by an elaborate security system, allowing the residents to wander freely. The tenants can even get a haircut or watch a movie at the theatre down the street. All these activities can be done independently. The village is the first of its kind in Canada. Ironically there will be no locks on the doors giving residents the freedom to move and make choices all on their own. The location will be encompassed by an eight-foot perimeter fence paired with electronic security, made to blend in with the surrounding nature. My goal is to one day work at a facility as great as this one where security enhances the lives of older adults.

Locks have and always will be a part of my life. In the years to follow I will have many interactions with electronic security systems, having experiences and creating memories in a safe and secure environment.

“The good we secure for ourselves is precarious and uncertain until it is secured for all of us and incorporated into our common life.” -Jane Adams