

Crushed in a Crowd What should you know to protect yourself?



At rock concerts, sporting events or any large public gathering, an uncontrolled crowd can lead to tragedy. What should you do to protect yourself? *INSIDE EDITION* took a closer look at the problem.

Stephanie Scheimer was a sophomore at the University of



Stephanie Scheimer talks about how she was injured during a crowd crush at a University of Wisconsin football game

Wisconsin in 1993 when she and 75 other people were injured by a crushing crowd at a college football. When the University of Wisconsin beat the University of Michigan, Wisconsin fans rushed the field. Many of those fans, including Stephanie, were crushed up against a fence that separated the stands from the field.

Stephanie was flat on her back and unconscious after being trampled. Stephanie blames the University for the overcrowded student section and for locking gates that kept crushed fans from escaping onto the field. She eventually recovered from a coma and severe brain injuries.



George Michalik's 15-year-old daughter Jessica was crushed to death at the Big Day Out Rock Festival in Sydney, Australia.

George Michalik's 15-year-old daughter Jessica in January 2001, was crushed to death during a huge rock festival in Australia. The popular rock band, Limp Biscuit, was singing to the frenzied sold out crowd as Jessica lost consciousness in the crush at the front of the stage. She died several days later. Her death is under investigation but Jessica's father feels the lack of safety at the show contributed to Jessica's death.

"There is a lack of

safeguard, a lack of standards, and a lack of safety laws to protect crowds that go to large public assembly events, particularly young people at concerts," says Paul Wertheimer, who heads a company called Crowd Management Strategies. He's particularly concerned with general admission or festival seating at rock concerts where fans stand and are free to crowd to the front of the stage.



Safety expert, Paul Wertheimer
www.crowdsafe.com

This summer, *INSIDE EDITION* took its cameras to concerts around the country. Many had festival seating and fans were packed like sardines at the front of the stage. We routinely found rules designed for safety being ignored or unenforced. Signs banning activities like crowd surfing and moshing were totally ignored. Fire regulations forbidding festival seating were ignored in Denver. Officials claim they modified those rules for the concert. And a concert hall in Milwaukee was packed with concertgoers. City officials say the venue can safely hold 1300 people, but we counted twice that many.



This summer we attended various rock concerts and routinely found rules designed for safety being ignored or unenforced.

So what can you do to protect yourself?

Tips provided by Crowd Management Strategies ©2000 (You and the Festival Crowd)

- Know where exits are in relations to a position in a crowd.
- Move away from a dense crowd when you have limited mobility.
- Try to keep your composure, Remain Alert!
- Do NOT panic.
- In a crowd crush surge, try to escape by moving away from the direction of the crushing.
- Do not stop to pick up personal items in dense and moving crowds.
- Use nonverbal communication to gain attention when noise levels are too high.
- If you fall and cannot get up, you may want to cover your head and curl up, bringing arms and legs close to your body.

For more information on crowd safety, go to www.crowdsafe.com.

If you have a comment about this story or any other story, contact us at ietips@kingworld.com or at (212) 817-5555.

[BACK](#)



www.crowdsafe.com

Why crowdsafe?

WWW.CROWDSAFE.COM is the first website dedicated to [improving crowd safety at music events worldwide](#). It is the brainchild of Crowd Management Strategies, a unique [consulting firm](#) and clearinghouse for information.

Crowdsafe.com is here to help the rock concert industry provide safer and more enjoyable concert environments. Crowdsafe.com is here to help concertgoers better understand their [right to a safe concert environment](#). Crowdsafe.com is here to [help public safety officials](#) better understand the music concert environment so that they can help prevent [safety missteps and haphazard event planning](#).

Most of all, www.crowdsafe.com is here for anyone interested in [improving crowd management](#) at rock-to-hip hop, hip hop-to-pop and rai-to-reggae events.

We offer you the latest concert and festival crowd safety [News & Views](#) (including a look at the latest annual [Rock Concert Safety Survey](#) news release). We also invite you to visit [Crowdcafe](#) to read about crowd safety laws that work, our "mosher-friendly" safety guidelines, Fans First safety tips, a journal of first-hand concert experiences by concertgoers from around the world and much more. And, we hope you will share your experiences and wisdom with our [crowdsafe.com](http://www.crowdsafe.com) visitors.

Enough said. Join us now at www.crowdsafe.com.
There is not a bad seat in the house.

Crowd Management Strategies © 1997 - 2001 . All rights reserved.